

Chairman's Annual Report 2018-19

Another busy year for members of the parish council and our clerk. The work of the council and the clerk has been complicated by reason of the long-term absence through sickness of the parish warden. The warden has for more than ten years been responsible for maintaining the cemetery, some of the footpaths and for checking and clearing the playground at Lea. This year we have had to arrange for all these jobs to be done by contractors, or in the case of some of them, by volunteers among the councillors and by other residents who also volunteered their services. Despite this, the cemetery has remained an attractive place and the footpaths for the most part have been usable.

The major events through the year centred around the celebration of the centenary of the ending of the Great War. Our village for the first time, took part in displaying large poppies on all the lampposts. This was funded by a collection organised by Cllr Wright and greatly boosted by an anonymous donation from one of our residents. The celebration culminated in a "candle" light procession along Church Street on the evening before Armistice Day followed by music and drinks in the FN Memorial Hall. That event was attended by over 400 people. I wish to thank our clerk, for suggesting the idea for this event and for doing the planning and organisation as a volunteer in his own time. The cost of this event was met by a grant given to us by Cllr David Taylor our ward representative on Amber Valley Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council.

The regular work of the council has continued with repairs to the buildings for which we are responsible, consideration of planning applications including all the tree work, liaison with the police, and many other things. The restoration and development of the Memorial Gardens has also continued through the work of volunteers – the display of flowers in the Spring was particularly impressive and the memorial poppies in November were impressive too.

Several members of the council have participated in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, a task that we hope will reach its fulfilment before the end of this calendar year.

I wish to thank all members of the council for their work throughout the year. This being an election year means that the current composition of the council will end with this report. For the first time that I have been able to discover a new council will emerge from a contested election. Three councillors will end their terms of office this year - Mike Taaffe-Finn who retired during the year for reasons of ill health, and Cllrs Joan Ward and Bert Sheppard who are not standing for re-election. My thanks to them all for several years of public service.

I wish to thank too, the clerk for a very full year of conscientious service.