

Walton Parish Council - Chairman's Report: May 2018

I am pleased to report another exceptional year of action and progress with all councillors contributing to the delivery and progression of some exciting schemes that benefit and improve life in our village.

First, thanks to Helena who has continued to do a superb job as Clerk in co-ordinating the council efficiently and most effectively ensuring full compliance, accountability and transparency in all that we do.

Early in the year we took a decision to consider the matters that we felt would make an impact on village life and allocated tasks to each councillor to lead groups that would deliver results and involve as many people in the village as possible. The success of this has been seen at many levels and I thank you all for your support.

Councillor Prudhoe's village working days really exemplified our aims to create a more inclusive role for all in the village. Nothing has brought me more 'pleasure' in my role as Chairman as seeing Walton residents showing the 'can do' approach and undertaking painting, hedge cutting and minor repairs that just make the difference. Having said that, I am not sure that all residents' responses were simply altruistic as perhaps the reward of beverages and sandwiches in the Fox did carry some sway!

In terms of other projects, the Cycle Path continues to be a great success and the progress of additional amenity space and a new playground are soon to be delivered next to the Village Hall. Thanks to Councillors Sharp and Simpson for all their efforts in securing planning and £10,000 of funding from LCC to deliver this project.

You will also have noticed the provision of improved access around the village, dropped kerbs in a number of locations to improve and make safer the road infrastructure of the village. My thanks to Melvyn Wood who really drove this project and again shows what we can achieve with persistence, commitment and a desire to make things happen.

Of course the main project for the year and building on the efforts of many in preceding years has been the creation and delivery of the village Neighbourhood Plan. This project, expertly co-ordinated by Councillor Clark, is now out with the examiner and represents a superb document in intention, content and design. It shows the village's ambition, but also represents a deliverable programme to make our village even better over the next 15 years. Once again thanks to all involved and to all in the village for your input and comments.

A brief comment on Police matters. I am delighted to say that for another year crime has been minimal but I do urge you all to be vigilant and do all you can to ensure this remains the case.

Finally to the future, I would like to see more of the same! Councillor Prudhoe I am sure has more tasks to complete, and I was delighted to see the Parish Council working with the Church and supporting other organisations in the village. It is an ambition that will become reality as the Parish Council and the Village Hall work together in developing the playground and amenity area and I encourage you all to use both facilities as you have the Cycle Path. I also hope the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted this year providing the opportunity for further projects to be implemented including creating further footpaths around the village as well as addressing issues such as congestion and speeding through the village and controlling future developments in the area.

Once again thanks to all the councillors for all their hard work this year and I trust we represent an approachable group so that if you as a resident have any concerns or ideas as to how we can improve 'our village', please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Here's to a successful 2018.

David Aspland, Chairman, Walton Parish Council.