

Community Services Committee

The year has been a busy one with many improvements to the village for the benefit of the residents. Unfortunately many projects take a considerable time to come to fruition this is due to the fact that many proposals have to go through a number of committees including District Council and County Council before they are approved. However the Parish Council works tirelessly to improve facilities for the residents.

Throughout the year the Council has continued to maintain the Cemetery on Middle Lane. The maintenance carried out by Swiftwell throughout the year continues to make the Cemetery a peaceful, visually pleasing resting place for loved ones. I visit the Cemetery regularly as my parents are buried there and I am always impressed with how well it is maintained. This year we have prepared two rows for new burial plots. With the inclement weather I must thank Swiftwell Environmental Services for the excellent job they carried, out with minimum disruption, together with ongoing maintenance.

A continuing problem which annoys the residents is speeding in the village. The traffic calming measures on Shawhurst Lane has seen a noticeable drop in speeds this has been confirmed by the post scheme data. County Councillor Adam Kent has succeeded in getting a zebra crossing installed, this should be in place later this year. There is now hard standing on the Alcester Road to facilitate the speed monitoring van. Parking outside schools in the village continues to be an ongoing problem and faced by all residents in the UK who live near a school but the Council monitors this continually and investigates ways to solve the situation of children being collected and delivered to school. More double yellow lines have been added to the most congested areas and the disabled parking bay on May Lane is now in operation.

Street furniture such as bus shelters, benches, notice boards and grit bins are regularly inspected for damage and degradation. County Councillor Charlie Hotham has agreed to supply a grit bin for Selsdon Close but it will be the responsibility of the Parish Council to fund the contents and fill it. Subject to the County Council granting a Licence to site a new notice board on the land fronting One Stop at Drakes Cross this will replace the board removed from Simms Lane.

Two footway lights have been ordered for Tilehouse Lane; hopefully these will be in situ soon and improve the lighting for the residents walking to and from the Station. Electrical testing takes place regularly and parts such as bulbs are replaced as necessary.

The Bromsgrove Place team continue to respond quickly to requests such as signage cleaning, cutting back overgrown hedges and verges etc. They also do litter picking but there are individual residents who pick litter around the village on a regular basis. Our sincere thanks to the stalwart band who help to keep the village tidy. The Countryside Carers continue to do a sterling job making sure the Public Right of Ways are kept in good order. They clear footpaths, repair and replace posts, stiles and damaged bridges. They submit a detailed report to council every year listing the work they have carried out. A useful map with footpath references can be found at the link <https://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk>

There are many events taking place in the coming year. As usual we will be staging a Best Kept Frontage competition which will be sponsored by a local business. Prizes will be awarded in several

garden size classes, the winners will be presented with their awards at the Wythall Carnival. The Council applied to the Tesco Bags of Help scheme last year and was awarded £1000 so that we can renew some items of street furniture, the Station Road noticeboard has already been replaced and the remaining funds will be used to fund a new noticeboard at Drakes Cross.

The Parish Council have a number of projects planned for the forthcoming year which will benefit the residents. The trees at Gorsey Lotts need some surgery but these are subject to Tree Preservation Orders and we await permission for the work to be carried out. We hope to make improvements to the area around the War memorial in time for the celebration of the ending of World War One a hundred years ago. The Parish council is striving to make Wythall a dementia friendly village. The dementia Café which began in December last year is held every third Wednesday in the month at Wythall Village Hall. It is a fine example of the community working together to break down the stigma of dementia. Wythall Together have paid for the hire of the hall for many months to come also they supply the transport for those who otherwise would be unable to attend, the chief chauffeur being Cllr Stephen Peters. My thanks to the many businesses which have given their support and the stalwart band of helpers who make the tea and cakes. The Phoenix Group are organising Wythall Walking Friends an opportunity to take a short walk which not only has health benefits but helps to prevent isolation for the more elderly residents. The Parish Council has agreed to waive the fee for one allotment plot which will be available to be used by plot holders who have relinquished their plots due to advancing age. This will enable them to keep fit and be sociable reducing the risk of isolation.

Cllr Dianne Taylor
Chairman.