

HATHERTON AND WALGHERTON PARISHES ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 17th MAY 2021

The Chairman welcomes any members of the public who may be attending and advise that immediately following the Chairman’s Annual Statement, members of the public may raise any queries or comments either in relation the Annual Statement or any other matter.

Annual Statement

The Parish Year ending at the end of March was incredibly busy despite the extended enforced lock downs due to the Covid 19 Pandemic

Health

Covid 19 has had a significant impact in Hatherton and Walgherton. More residents working from home, and exercising out and about. I have never seen so many people on the public footpaths, and roadside verges, cycling and jogging. We must be a parish of the super fit. For the older residents in our community the ADCA (Audlem and District Community Action) Tuesday and Wednesday lunch and recreation clubs kept going when they were allowed to, with social distancing keeping things as safe as possible.

Local health initiatives continue to be advertised via our noticeboards.

A new activity has been provided for our residents with the help from Parish Council funds. This is the Friday coffee morning 10-12noon at Hankelow Chapel. This is advertised on our website and on our Facebook site.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Wybunbury Parishes Neighbourhood Plan, which was 4 years in the making, and most importantly covers Hatherton and Walgherton Parishes. This reflects residents’ views on how our rural area will develop over the next 10 years. Your Chairman and Cllr Boyes were largely responsible for its countryside, planning and business policies. Reviews of the plan will be needed every 5 years, and a revised Housing Needs assessment will be completed next year.

Planning

Another busy year on the planning front, more than the previous year. The high number of planning applications reflects the vibrancy of our community; it keeps the Parish Council busy as we make recommendations to Cheshire East Council. Cheshire East Council is still undertaking a Parish Council boundary and functions review and we have opted to keep our boundaries unchanged. That has been accepted. We had a disappointing outcome on the Doddington Estate housing appeal, when the appeal was turned down, allowing the 3 new houses in our Parish to be built to support the restoration of Doddington Hall.

Highways

Its good to report that Hatherton Bends road improvements seemed to have reduced the frequency of accidents at this blackspot. However, one of the Vehicle Activated “Slow Down” signs is still currently not working. Cheshire East have a huge backlog of

work as the winter and heavy rain continue to take a toll on the road infrastructure. 40% of all calls to Cheshire East concerns Highways matters, they are in demand. We have an active Hatherton Roads website where anyone can report a Highways issue and we will follow it up with the appropriate authority. Your Parish Council continue to push for improvements. We are requesting weight restrictions on Park Lane and actions to reduce the badly damaged verges on Bridgemere Lane. Flooding at Dagfields is due to be addressed soon.

HS2 (High Speed 2)

It is going ahead and the HS2 parliament bill has passed Royal Assent, with construction traffic using the A51 and Wybunbury Road, Walgherton. Your chairman and the ward councillor have represented the parish at local and national HS2 meetings in efforts to lessen the impact of HS2 construction on the parish. Some work has already commenced in neighbouring parishes.

Finance

The accounts and internal controls of the Parish Council have been examined by the Auditors and found to be satisfactory.

Your Parish Council has this year given donations to

- Audlem Community Responders, a service which provides urgent medical response in the area.
- Wybunbury Parochial Church Council, in support of the upkeep of the graveyard.

Local Policing

We have established regular Police liaison this year and our Local PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) Nick Jervis has attended our council meeting.

Communications

This year we proudly unveiled our new website expertly assembled by our new webmaster Cllr Dibben. This was initially to comply with Accessibility Legislation but has evolved into a much more useful and informative council communication channel. We continue with our Hatherton Roads Website for a reporting and is an update mechanism for local road problems.

We also continue with our growing residents email list, controlled with full GDPR protection administered by our clerk.

Thanks are given to the old and new Webmasters Cllr Tindall and Cllr Dibben. Also thanks are given to Parish Clerk, Selina Clarke and Ward Councillor Clowes for their contributions for the parish council facebook page.

Improvements

Whilst re-organising our new website, your Chairman assessed our policies and procedures against best practice and compared what we have against the requirements for entry into the Local Council Award Scheme. After much effort, we decided to apply for the Foundation Award, and we are awaiting their deliberations.

In November we formed an advisory committee, made up of councillors and residents to address possible improvements we can make in our parish.

We have had success already with the switching on of our long since darkened street lamp. We bestowed Freedom of the Parish to Selina our Clerk for fixing it. There are many more suggested improvements in the pipeline for the coming year.

The Parish Council

The Annual General meeting gives me the opportunity to publicly thank all the Parish Council members for volunteering their time and contributions during the last twelve months, in particular those members who have attended meetings across Cheshire and farther afield (via Zoom) to represent the parish. We welcomed a new Councillors James Du Pavey and Katie Clinton, whilst saying goodbye to Barry Dakin. We also said goodbye to Carol Bell our former clerk and welcomed her keen replacement Selina Clarke and wish her all the best for the future.