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## **Chairman's Report 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

Looking back over my Report last year, you may be pleased to hear that this one will be slightly shorter as we have not had quite so many changes and new matters to deal with this year! It has been more of a year of steady activity and various improvements - out of which I will just highlight the following:

- While hardly exciting, our most important (and costly) improvement has been the extensive **drainage work on the park and football field**, carried out by our Lengthsman – not a lot to see, or talk about, but it certainly appears to have been successful in alleviating the previous increasingly soggy problems; and we managed to cover more than half the cost with some judicious funding applications!
- We had an unexpectedly fun time when **the Spout water flow** dried up for almost the first time in living memory - and our thanks go to Brian Sutcliffe who literally waded in and helped overcome the problem at the Well Head tank; this may need more attention in the future.
- In relation to the **Four Ails** we took action to secure a six-month moratorium period to prevent immediate disposal and keep it open - which gained time for negotiation of a successful private purchase; the pub is a huge and historic asset of the village and we are delighted that it now appears to have a more secure future.
- We achieved an excellent result in the **Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition** - bettering last year's sixth place in the elite Champions' Class with a "Highly Commended" Third Place Certificate and some flattering comments in the judges reports, of which I liked best *"Unable to identify any areas for improvement in this proud village"*.
- We saw the installation of **new handrails at the Village Hall**, for which we again secured a contributory funding grant - and thanks must go to Cllrs David Forrest and Terry Butterfield for their work on this and other village hall maintenance work; I divert to comment that this illustrates the importance of our linking with and supporting the Village Hall Committee in the ever-ongoing need to maintain and improve the Village Hall, another of the most historic and important assets of our village.
- We held the usual successful and popular **Seniors Christmas Party** - thanks to Cllrs Lucy Willighan, Pam Whitehead and John Hammond for organising this; John has done it for many years and is now handing over to Lucy and Pam, so special thanks to him for all his past work on this.
- We have joined with our fellow local parishes in the shared purchase and use of a **new SPID** (Speed Indicator Device), which has recently made its first appearance in the village thanks to the efforts of Cllr Mick Tetley who has taken charge of this.
- We are currently involved in submissions under the **Pendle Council Electoral Review** to decide a new Borough Councillor Warding Pattern which could significantly affect Higham's representational status in the future

Also this year I am pleased to say that we have secured our full complement of eight Councillors – having seen the return, in fine form, of Mick Tetley and then the welcome addition of Pam Whitehead. Thanks to all Councillors for everything they have done and for giving me great support throughout the year.

Finally and once again, but sadly for the last time, I must give honourable mention to our Borough Councillor, James Starkie. Despite being heavily involved in his many activities as Mayor of Pendle during the year, he nevertheless continued to afford us his usual high level of attendance and support. We were proud that he chose this village and church for his Mayoral Sunday Service and Parade. He is now stepping down after twelve years' service as our Borough Councillor and will truly be missed.

We look forward to another interesting and progressive year.

Robin Willoughby

Chairman

Higham with West Close Booth Parish Council