



19<sup>th</sup> May 2020

## **Chairman's Annual Report for year ending 2020**

This year we had to hold a Parish Council election because of the number of applicants wishing to serve our village. All existing members were re-elected.

### **Annual Parish Council Meeting**

I was elected to return as Chairman after two years away. Many thanks to Robin for keeping my chair warm and doing an excellent job, he is now our vice chairman. Patricia Rosthorn continues as our very competent Clerk and Financial Officer.

Our Borough Councillor, James Starkie, stood down after many years in office, and also as the Mayor of Pendle over the last twelve months; we wish him well. Our new Borough Councillor is Carlo Lioni a well-known restaurant owner in Colne, we have worked well together as a team over the last twelve months.

### **Annual Parish Meeting**

At the end of May we had the Annual Parish Meeting which was a very successful evening with a good turnout and plenty of questions for us to try and answer, followed by wine and cheese. The following Saturday we had the village clean up in preparation for the best kept village entry, quite a good turnout of villagers on the day so well done and thank you to all.

I would also like to thank all people responsible for planting and maintaining our planters throughout the village and most of all Mel Saunders for all his work on the rockery at the top of the village and the gardens in the village centre.

As custodians of the Village Hall we try to help fund as much as possible with our limited budget and this year we were successful in securing a grant from Barrowford and Western Parishes for £3,500 which was a sizable amount towards new windows. As we know the committee works hard to make the books balance and keep the hall in good repair (old buildings are in need of constant repair).

### **Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition**

This year we once again entered the Lancashire Best Kept Village competition as you will all be aware, we did quite well. The village school buildings and grounds came 2nd in Lancashire. The church came a well-earned 4th place. Our new notice board came runner up in its class and to top it off we won the Champions Best Village in all Lancashire, so it does not get better than that. Myself and Councillor David Forest were pleased to be invited to the presentation at The Villa Hotel at Wrea Green. It was quite a big event with ten mayors and one hundred and fifty guests

from all the other villages. We were presented with our wining plaque, a rose bowl to keep for one year and an oil painting of the village hall, plus several certificates for the school and the notice board. Thank you to all villagers for keeping our fantastic village looking so good. Bring on next year.

## **General Information**

We contracted Pendle Council grass cutting team again this year after the satisfactory work last year. The village green spaces looked good all summer even with the very hot weather. The Methodist Chapel grounds are owned by the Parish Council and also maintained by us. This year we took advice and were advised to have all the old grave stones checked for safety as it is our duty to make sure they are safe. We drafted in Pendle Council grave inspectors to do a survey and they presented us with their report on all the one hundred and fifty graves and of these only seven needed urgent repairs. Our Lengthsman team removed one large tree that had grown through a grave and will be repairing the others.

## **Seniors Christmas Party**

Once again, we had a full house ready to dance the night away and our new caterer, Paula from The Kabin at Barley, cooked a very nice Christmas meal on site which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The entertainment started with carol singing, we had twenty-nine children from the school, which everyone enjoyed and then the entertainment continued with Four Shades of Gray, some games and a drinks bar which all made for a great evening. The night was organised by Lucy and Pam with help from other PC members and a great night was had by all.

## **Other News**

Early this year were disappointed to see the Old Post Office stone roof slates replaced with concrete tiles. This building is in the conservation area of the village; however, we have been advised by Pendle Planning Department that there is nothing they can do. Planning rules have been relaxed since 2015 by the government to increase building and as usual as they do not live in the village it does not affect them. We have also had several controversial planning applications this year for example 11 Westclose Ave, Acre House and Stone Fold Farm all of which we have had to lodge letters of concern.

At the end of March, we had to respond to a flooding problem at the rear of houses on Acresbrook Road where water was pouring into the back gardens. Our Lengthsman promptly arrived on site and replaced a drain and made the surrounding area much dryer.

You may also have noticed the spout has stopped running but we hope to have it up and running again shortly as unfortunately our man is furloughed at the moment.

Our CCTV system should have been up and running by now but like everything else it is on hold.

After the reorganisation of Borough Councils as set by central government, Higham And Fence are now joined with one Borough Councillor represented on Pendle Council.

The Spout Magazine will be back in print after lockdown. Thanks goes to Lucy, Margaret, Bernard and all other contributors for another successful year of publication.

All Parish Council Meetings are being held remotely until after lock down. Any queries or concerns can still be emailed to either [chairman@highamparishcouncil.com](mailto:chairman@highamparishcouncil.com) or [clerk@highamparishcouncil.com](mailto:clerk@highamparishcouncil.com).

Our interpretation board is now in pride of place next to the notice board on Kiln Hill. A vast amount of time, head scratching and research has gone into developing it and it looks wonderful; a super edition to the Village. Thanks goes to Robin and James for all their hard work and also to David Forrest for the installation. A great job, you should all be very pleased.

### **In Memoriam**

Sadly, in February we lost one of our own, Mr John Hammond. John had been a Councillor for many years and was involved with most events going on in the village. He ran the pub quiz for many years and was always there to help. He was a pure gent and he will be missed by all. Rest in peace John.

Also, remembering Donna Gadd, the wife of former Parish Councillor Richard Gadd, who passed away recently. Rest in Peace Donna.

Finally, may I thank all my fellow Councillors for another 12 months of hard work and dedication to our village. Keep safe and well.

Kind Regards

Mike Tetley  
Chairman  
Higham Parish Council