

Cold Higham Annual Parish Meeting May 2024

Chairman's Report

Welcome everyone and thank you for attending the Annual Parish meeting. This meeting provides the opportunity for all our parishioners to meet and hear about the work that the Parish Council has been engaged in during the last twelve months and for us to hear suggestions on where support may be needed. The meeting also provides an opportunity for anyone to deliver details of their various activities which they undertake within the community.

I would like to say a big thank you to my fellow councillors & vice chair for all of their ongoing hard work, support & contributions to this report and to Gill our Clerk who works tremendously hard, it really is a great team effort. To our newest colleagues, Richard & Nicola – I hope you have found your first year enjoyable and interesting. Thanks also to Maggie our Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and Colin, our footpath warden. All of our councillors and volunteers are unpaid, working to ensuring that Cold Higham Parish is loved and looked after and able to carry on as the idyllic rural Parish it has always been.

I would also like to say a huge thanks to the Village Hall committee who tirelessly host a range of events throughout the year for our Parish. From quizzes to cream teas they provide our Parish with a Community buzz and opportunities to get together and I am delighted we can help & contribute as a PC. When I asked our Village Hall Committee Chair why she gets involved she summed it up perfectly '*Rural community facilities are few and far between and often get neglected. They are however hugely important and rely entirely on local volunteers to keep them going. I love seeing people enjoy the events we host – it demonstrates how much people value this amazing community facility and makes all the effort worthwhile*', I couldn't agree more!

Conscious of the cost-of-living crisis the PC have managed for at least 2 years to keep the precept the same and absorb any costs through use of reserves and renegotiation of mowing contracts. This is becoming increasingly difficult and although no increase this year this may change for next year.

All contracts for mowing/strimming have been set, still our biggest expenditure as a Parish although we have undertaken tree pollarding & a tidy up this year in the Church Yard, which was a significant spend. The PC are very conscious of the need for some works concerning the Garden of Remembrance. The ground is uneven and the holly tree stump left from previous tree removal needs attention. There was also a review of the cemetery rules and regulations with some small changes. This can be found on the PC website.

It was brought to the attention of the Council this year that there were issues with overgrown rights of way/footpaths. We reported the matter via Fix my Street and raised the issue with our Footpath Warden. There have been ownership changes taking place with Manor Farm but it does seem like things have improved. A planned audit of the rights of way in the Parish, and surveying the condition paths, styles, and gates is a consideration for this year.

HGV issues in Grimscote. Temporary "Not Suitable for Heavy goods vehicles" signage at the South end of Manor Road have been in place for a good while now after some issues of lorries getting stuck in the Village. Several locations were agreed as suitable for permanent signage "No Access for HGV vehicles and these are now in place, we are very grateful to Helen Howard from National Highways for funding the signs. Grimscote also received a new

notice board and thanks to volunteer Parishioners, a facelift for the telephone box which looks lovely. Through productive discussions and working with the Local Highway Authority we have had a number of broken and faded signs replaced through the Parish including new village signs for Cold Higham and Grimscote and new road painting 'SLOW' in Fosters Booth and Cold Higham. It is hoped that this will make drivers more aware that they are entering/in a village and slow down.

A very welcome addition to the Parish is the new Defibrillator on the wall at the Village Hall. Another joint venture between the PC and Village Hall Committee, the PC contributed £1,829 towards the costs.

The Parish web site has been hosted by 2commune since early 2017. They have been doing all the 'technical' aspects of the site, and the parish council populate it with information. Late last year we learned that 2commune were closing down. After a fairly hurried research, the Council decided to accept an offer from Cuttlefish Multimedia Ltd to run the website. In fact, they subsequently took over 2commune complete. The deal involved Cuttlefish charging exactly the same as 2commune had for their services. In fact, for free, that have completely refashioned the site, giving it a much more modern look, easier visitor access and bringing it into line with future legal requirements. So far we are very happy with the new arrangements.

Parish Council Events/Seasonal Activities:

During the past twelve months, the Council has been involved with the following events and activities:

- Litter Pick –weekend 1st/2nd April coincided with the National Great British Clean Up. Nine groups of litter pickers answered the call and collected a host of rubbish from our roads. We are very grateful for their efforts.
- The King's Coronation Celebration. A joint PC/Village Hall committee team organised a lunch. The PC contributed £250.
- The Remembrance Sunday Service with wreath laying was held at the War Memorial on November 12th St Luke's Church on November 12th. Over 30 people attended with soup in the Church afterwards. Donations to the Royal British Legion.

Looking to 2024 we have the D-Day 80th Anniversary in June, we are planning to undertake a project to look at improving the cemetery/Garden of Remembrance, we are working proactively with Pattishall Parish Council to get a speed indicator device within Cold Higham/Fosters Booth and we will be looking for new councillors to join the Parish Council. If you want to know what is happening, what challenges are arising and how issues are being addressed, you can attend a Parish Council Meeting or look on the Parish Council website ([Cold Higham Parish Council \(coldhigham-pc.gov.uk\)](http://coldhigham-pc.gov.uk)) to follow the Agenda and Minutes for each month, plus a calendar of events. Thanks again to our Clerk and fellow Councillors for all of their support and commitment to the Council.

Kim Attenborough
Chair, Cold Higham Parish Council