Chairman's Report – 2022-2023

I must start by first thanking Jan Burdge, who after 20 years as our Clerk, decided to retire last autumn – she has been a very valuable part of this Council and a presentation was made to her as thanks on the village's behalf.

We have been very fortunate to employ Philip Edwards as our new clerk, coming to us with CiLCA qualifications which have allowed us to resolve that we now meet the criteria for the General Power of Competence, freeing us from some of the restrictive legislation that we had to previously adhere to. We have also started on a journey to update and modernise some of the processes that we have traditionally used, which should allow us more flexibility in the way we operate.

We hosted a well-attended public forum last autumn to initiate phase 2 of our on-going pedestrian safety and speed reduction initiatives in the village. David Wood kindly arranged for 2 members of BANES Highways to attend to listened to the public's concerns and broadly suggest what might be achievable. We were fortunate to then receive £10k of funding by David Wood to employ specialist consultants to professionally scope potential improvements. The results of this piece of work, with any potential options, will be presented to the village and Council at a future meeting when complete.

We have also recently benefited from a long-overdue resurfacing of the main road and some side roads through the village, and whilst this obviously caused some disruption whilst undertaken, has greatly improved the road surface and reduced tyre noise from vehicles using it.

The Village Hall Committee have continued to raise funds to update the building, and continue to do an excellent job of running this important village asset. They liaised with The Crown to put on a Jubilee event with a well-attended street party and children's activities in the pub garden. We funded and supplied commemorative mugs for the children, which were presented by long-standing Councillor Peter Wood. They also hosted a Christmas filming event for a Tesco TV advert which generated a lot of interest, along with a number of other fund-raising events.

Our CIL funding has paid for the repairs to the Bus Shelter roof and an additional defibrillator, which was gifted to the Village Hall and will be fitted outside the main door shortly.

We have also recently completed our annual spring litter pick, and I would like to thank the volunteers who turned out to assist, and also to a young member of the public living in the village, who elected to litter pick for quite some time as part of his work towards a Duke of Edinburgh award

With this year being an election year, I am sad to report long-standing Councillors Paul Hutton and Peter Wood have decided not to stand again, Peter after over 48 years of service, and so we shall have some new faces on our Council, who I would like to extend my congratulations to and welcome aboard.

Finally I would like to thank David Wood for his valued support and contributions to our meetings, and the Parish Councillors who continue to work hard on behalf of the Parish and give all of their time freely.

Richard Ireland
May 2023