

2015 Feckenham Parish Council Chairman's Report

R Williams

After a number of years on the Council, this will be my last Annual Report as chairman. I am pleased to note that Feckenham Council continues to promote the interests of the Parish.

This year we have seen more changes on the Council with Pan Eaton, Liz Atkins and I retiring. But new councillors have come forward to close the gaps and I am to welcome some old die hards joining the cause. Antonia Pulsford stood both for this Council and also for the Ward of Winyates on the District Council where she was successful. Well done Antonia. However that means we now have a vacancy and if there are any of you out there who live in or within 3 miles of the Parish who would like to make a contribution to parish

Once again, a major part of our efforts have been directed to seeing that the roads and drains around the Parish are kept in good order and although the annual pooling's of water in Astwood Lane continue to cause concern, recent works carried out in the Spring have gone a long way to alleviating the problems. I think the District and County Councils have done their best in these financially challenging times and despite the cutbacks. In October we reminded all riparian land owners of their responsibilities to keep the watercourses and ditches clear and this seems to have worked well with no reported incidents this year.

After renewed pleas and the much appreciated assistance of WCC Councillor Phil Gretton, High Speed Broadband is at last coming to Feckenham but not for a while yet. See his report.

The Planning issues at Webheath persist but the outcome remains to be seen.

I was pleased to see that the Mill Lane resurfacing is wearing well and hope that the frontagers in Mill Lane are also pleased with the great improvements the Council brought to lane.

We saw the Council lending its support to concerns over the over intensification of user on the Playing Fields. The matter aroused heated debate and we were graced by the presence of our MP and District Council officers and Councillors at a meeting to discuss a proposed agreement with the Football Club. Much hard work was put into this by members of your Council and it remains to be seen if this will result in better relations all round.

The Neighbourhood Development Planning Committee has been working hard throughout the year and we have now seen the Area Plan accepted by Redditch District Council

The Council has arranged for a mobile Defribulator unit to be purchased and stationed in a Cabinet on the rear aspect of this Village Hall – training soon to be offered and our thanks go to Phil Tricklebank who installed both the electrical supply and the cabinet. Our thanks also go the Village Hall committee for providing the use of the Hall for this purpose.

The Bench on the corner of High St/The Square is shortly to be replaced after some repositioning to avoid the attempts of the bird population to deter users.

During the year the Council approved the installation of a Vehicle Activated Sign to warn motorists of their speed through Droitwich Road and this is coming soon. It is hoped that this will assist in reducing the speed of vehicles passing through the Village. Enquiries were made with WCC Highways officers on the possibilities of reducing through put of articulated and heavy goods vehicles along High Street and diversion of such vehicles. There already is a weight restriction but this is being ignored and your Council continue to press for a resolution to this problem.

I remind the Parish that grants are available and we welcome applications from any interested parties in the Parish– this year we supported the parish church, the youth club, the purchase of ceramic poppies, and the refurbishment of the War Memorial.

Following last year's initiative by English Heritage, a committee has now been formed to raise awareness of our ancient ditches which are all that remains of the Feckenham Hunting Lodge reputed to have been used by King John many centuries past. We shall be seeing some progress later this year perhaps.