

APPENDIX A

Cosgrove Parish Council – Chair's Report 2024

The past year has been challenging for the Parish Council with our number now two down on the nine Parish Councillors allocated for Cosgrove. For most of the past year we were served by eight Parish Councillors, but earlier this year we were sorry to lose Carl Peacock, due to family and work commitments. During his time on the Parish Council, Carl provided expertise in the management of the finances and also resolved issues with data collection from the Speed Indication Devices. We wish Carl well and thank him for his highly valued contribution.

Safety in and around the Parish is always a focus of the Parish Council. As traffic increases everywhere, the impact on the roads in and through the village often raises concern. As a geographical dry land island settlement, we struggle to gain the attention of Highways to repair the potholes and patched road surfaces. The PC repeatedly finds itself raising Fix My Street reports to request attention to poor road surfaces. This is something that members of the public can also do, and we believe that it demonstrates to the authority a higher priority and seems to get a better response.

The Yardley Road to Castlethorpe junction now has enhanced signs, emphasising the need to give way. It is the minimum we were expecting to make the junction safer. We accept it is a vast improvement, but it should have been implemented before now, when NCC were the authority. Their retort was that the issues were down to driver error, which are substantiated from witnessed near misses that have still occurred even after the improved signage has been in place. Thankfully, we are not aware of any collisions, and most are using the junction correctly and with due care and attention.

Our speed indication devices have provided us with interesting data that shows that the vast majority of drivers do keep well within the speed limit and show consideration for residents. Like with everything, there are exceptions, and we are left wondering why some drivers don't recognise the risks to others, including animals, when driving in the village and in the 40mph limit on Stratford Road.

Two street light columns in Mansel Close have now been upgraded from concrete to the standard column. These had been identified as a risk from the corroding strengthening steels and it was agreed to get them replaced. This was on the agenda before we became aware of the problems with RAAC concrete, so it's good that it's now completed.

Many hours have been spent liaising with Google who finally got their act together and I am pleased to report that the issues finding the village website have at last been resolved.

Our Parish clerk, Jenny Evans, has now been in the position for twelve months and has managed the steep learning curve extremely well. Jenny has worked very hard to ensure that all the Parish Council's actions and decisions are transparent, with information to Parish Councillors and the public concise and clear.

As with all government bodies there are strict rules that must be adhered to, but we appreciate some may feel we take too long to get some matters resolved. In many cases where specialist qualification isn't mandatory, we attempt to co-ordinate voluntary working parties to get tasks cleared. This not only saves money but also creates an opportunity for people to join us and do something rewarding to improve our village. In April, volunteers removed a concrete slab from the playing field, cleaned and painted the interior of the bus shelter, improved the guttering and set up a donated rainwater storage container to provide water for the planters on Bridge Road.

I close my annual report with a thank you to everyone that gives their energy and time for the benefit of the Community and wish you well in continuing all that you do.

David Smith
Chair, Cosgrove Parish Council