

CRANFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Report 2021-2022



Your Parish Council

In May last year the Parish Council was faced with co-opting four councillors to join the Parish Council and recruiting a new Clerk. To provide some stability I agreed to continue as Chairman and Alison Gorton took on the new role of Vice Chairman. Karen James, Trudy Martin, and Neil Bradley were co-opted in May and Pat Bird was appointed as the new Clerk with effect from 1st June.

With Karen James resigning shortly after becoming a councillor, Ian Jones was co-opted in September and Fergus Gallagher was co-opted in March this year, so the Parish Council now has a full team.

With new Councillors and a new Clerk, initial training was essential. The Parish Council has adopted a Training Statement of Intent and a Training Plan with further training and development planned for Councillors and the Clerk. The latter has recently started the CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) course and is planning to have completed this by the end of 2022.

Projects

A number of long-standing queries have now been resolved, i.e., ownership of the village sign, maintenance responsibilities of the high level path, and the repair/servicing of St Andrews Church clock.

During the year the Parish Council has embarked on a number of projects, e.g.

- purchase and installation of the net for the goal posts near the Memorial Hall
- purchase of a replacement noticeboard for The Green
- Purple4Polio with planting of crocus bulbs
- purchase of a bin at the Pocket Park entrance/exit in Rectory Hill
- purchase and installation of two speed signs
- making the Parish Council website more accessible
- working with representatives from Hanwood Park to identify required footpath improvements between the two communities
- working with the Parish Path Warden Scheme to identify required improvements to the Rights of Way in Cranford, in particular access and waymarking
- the Northants CALC Asset Mapping Project

Some of these projects will continue into the year ahead, together with new projects, alongside an asset maintenance programme as the Parish Council's assets are ageing / increasing.

Working together

Working together as a team, or with members of the local community, other organisations, or statutory bodies is fundamental to the purpose of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council has specifically supported

- the servicing of St Andrews Church clock
- Cransley Hospice with a donation of £250 in recognition of their association with Cranford over 20 years of its annual road race
- Bristol Rotary Club with a donation of £100 to support Purple4Polio, in recognition of their generous donation of the crocus bulbs for the benefit of residents and visitors to Cranford
- the WI with arranging for the ownership of the village sign to be transferred to the Parish Council

- a small local business with the purchase of a new noticeboard to replace the one on The Green
- residents whose property was being damaged by vehicles turning in St Andrews Lane
- the Highways proposal for improving road safety for pupils at the school
- North Northamptonshire Council by contributing to planning application consultations

The Parish Council is also supporting the village's Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June and St John's Church with a tree to replace one of those damaged last year.

More importantly, the Parish Council recognises the support it has received from residents and others with

- checking the defibrillators monthly
- repairing the Parish Council noticeboard following the strong winds late last year
- accommodating the meetings of the Parish Council\
- publishing messages from the Parish Council via cranfordcommunitynews;
- keeping the high level path safe and tidy
- providing a tour of the AD Plant for the Chairman and Clerk
- keeping the Parish Council updated with planned works
- planting approximately 1000 crocus bulbs in Cranford
- organising the Annual Litter Pick
- maintaining Jubilee Walk
- undertaking a weekly litter pick around the village and along Thrapston Road
- helping to keep the drains in Grafton Road clear
- helping to restore St Andrews Church clock back to working order
- providing advice and support to resolve Highways issues
- co-ordinating the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme
- clearing roadside vegetation on Thrapston Road and upgrading the maintenance/security of 'Packs Yard'
- reporting issues with streetlights, dog fouling, overgrown vegetation, etc
- improving road safety with a proactive approach to car parking management on Thrapston Road and Church Lane and improved road signage
- joint working on initiatives with cooperative and close dialogue
- giving the Parish Council a grant for the purchase of two speed signs

Your support is very much appreciated. Thank you!

And Finally

At the conclusion of this first year of a new Parish Council, I would like to thank the team of Parish Councillors and Parish Clerk for their kind support, and energy in bringing both long term and new issues to a successful conclusion. There remains much to do, and new challenges await, but I am confident that Cranford is now served by a proactive and motivated group of Parish Councillors, assisted by a highly efficient and resourceful Parish Clerk. There will always be limitations to what we can achieve at a local level, governed as we are by both limited financial and regulatory constraints, however, it is the intention that we continue to support residents as best we can, and promote local environmental improvements that all can enjoy.

Stephen Pickard
Chair of Cranford Parish Council
May 2022