



Farthinghoe and Steane Parish Council

April 2021

Chairman's Summary of the 2020/2021 Year:

Last year my annual summary commenced with the following paragraphs.

“This has been a most unusual year, the kind of year that few of us have ever experienced before, nor want to experience again.

It has been a year in which most communities have had to react with considerable discipline and fortitude.”

Few of us expected the pandemic and its ensuing problems to continue to have such a fundamental effect of our lives a year later, let alone continue to have an effect for the foreseeable future.

As a village we have reacted with the required amount of discipline and fortitude added to an immense amount of common sense and goodwill.

Thank you to everyone.

Late last year I was proud to learn that both Julia Pepler & Holly Walters were awarded with Northamptonshire Covid-19 Community Champions Certificates by Northamptonshire Acre.

Our school is also an asset that we can all be really proud of. Added to providing an excellent education and social skills for the children who attend I also understand that they have been immensely helpful, during these difficult times, to the children of key workers from other areas.

Our thanks to the staff and to all of those involved in the running of the school for creating this superb reputation and for ensuring that it is maintained.

In last year's summary I had mentioned some projects that were either in progress or were planned for the future. Following is an update of these.

1 Bypass

During the past year we have given a number of updates on the bypass progress.

These can be viewed in the Farthinghoe Chronicle, on the Parish Council website or have been circulated by email on the Parish Council database.

The Public Consultation closed on January 3rd 2021 & I quote from the Northants County Council website

“Following previous consultations in 2015, Northamptonshire Highways have developed four northern routes, which we are consulting on in order to identify a preferred route to be taken forward for further development. The preferred route will be determined by the West Northamptonshire Council cabinet after the May 2021 elections.”

We have also recently received the following statement from Andrea Leadsom & I quote verbatim

“The Farthinghoe Bypass remains one of my top priorities in my South Northamptonshire manifesto, and I continue to work with the local community to press the case for the urgent need for this project to progress.

I welcome the announcement from the Government of the Levelling Up Fund, and I have written to the Secretary of State for Transport for further information on how the Fund may be a viable source of funding for the bypass. He has confirmed that local authorities are encouraged to consider prioritising resubmitting their pinch point projects for the first round of the Levelling Up Fund, and further guidance for larger projects will be published shortly. All applications to the Levelling Up Fund require support from the local MP and I have written to the local authority to confirm that I am happy to provide my backing and any help that they may require.

I have also discussed the project with Cllr Phil Larratt, the new Cabinet Member for Highways at Waste at West Northants Council and have urged him and his colleagues to adopt the bypass as the top road and infrastructure priority for our local area. He has confirmed that it is in their top three list of infrastructure improvements, and that he will help me in seeking funding for the road.”

We will be following this subject up after May 6th & will keep you informed about the future developments.

2 Road Safety Grant by HS2

This project has now been completed.

New more visible lights have been installed at the pedestrian crossing which has a much improved control system.

Additionally a new electronic warning sign has been installed close to the church gate. This sign is linked to the crossing signals such that it operates as soon as the crossing button has been pressed.

It then turns off as soon as the traffic light returns to green

3 HS2 Construction causing traffic to migrate from the Welsh Lane to the A422.

This traffic would be additional to the existing A422 traffic which is already at saturation point.

We have been unable to gauge the extent of this migration mainly because NCC have shown no interest in helping despite being very aware of this threat since 2016, but we hope to see change with the incoming West Northants Council.

4 Queen Street Rush Hour Rat Run.

No progress due to the lack of interest & application from NCC Highways despite the continued & diligent efforts of John Grant

We will raise this subject with West Northants Council after the May 6th elections.

5 Replacement of Bus Shelters

Thanks to considerable effort from Barry Willetts & Dave Weston we have been able to secure a £10,000.00 Community Grant to complete this project.

Both bus shelters should be in place early in May

6 Sewers & Drains

Last year we thought that these problems were solved, but we were wrong.

After all of these years it was discovered that the surface water drains on the Main Road between Baker Street & the Limes Farm entrance have never been connected to each other.

This work will be completed on May 10th which will result in few days road closure.

7 Farthinghoe Village Hall

Despite all of the set-backs & difficulties generated by the coronavirus the village hall situation is still progressing positively.

This is due to the diligent & judicious management by the committee.

Once the hall can be opened & fully utilised by the community all will be more apparent.

We thank you all for your hard & structured efforts

8 Farthinghoe Chronicle

Our thanks go out to Ollie, Rosemary, Vivienne, Julia, Ellie, Alice, Becky, Katie & Annabel for all of your efforts to ensure that we receive our monthly village news regularly & on time

9 Our thanks are also due to Jenny Phipps who has quietly put tremendous efforts in during the year to help to ensure that the village looks spick & span.

10 As always the playpark is looking well manicured & has been a great asset for many this year.

We thank Jon Hampson for this along with his efforts in keeping other green areas of the village looking neat & tidy

The Parish Council personnel this year have remained unchanged and thanks to Dave Weston's efforts & advice we have managed to cope with the essential transition from live meetings to Zoom Meetings.

Dave's efforts & inputs in all aspects of PC activity have been way beyond his remit & for that we sincerely thank him.

Although absolutely necessary in the current climate it is not felt that Zoom meetings will be a replacement for face-to-face meetings.

Next year sees the change from County Council/District Council administration to Unitary Council administration for everyone.

If anyone has any questions concerning this change then we will be pleased to receive them. If we do not already know the answers then we will check further to find out.

Things to look out for:

During the next year we MAY see some Planning Activity on 2 projects which could affect us,

These being

A Solar Farm on the Greatworth/Farthinghoe border, which may re-emerge

A 700 Homes development in the west of Brackley bordering the A422 prior to the Brackley West roundabout.

Let's all hope that the present optimism will prevail and that we will all see life returning to something more normal very soon.

In the meantime please take care

Yours Faithfully

Mick Morris

Chairman