

# **WESTONING PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Annual Report to the Parish Meeting 6th May 2021**

The 2020/2021 year has been unusual, difficult, challenging and sadly for some residents, a time of sadness, loss and grief. However, it has also been a period in which our village can take great pride. 'Westoning Cares' was set up shortly before the first lockdown and it was remarkable how quickly over 70 residents volunteered to help in different ways. The community spirit that was so evident showed what a caring village we all live in.

The PC supported Westoning Cares from the outset by producing a record number of WoS editions and a few online only editions.

The PC has completed a number of major projects during the year including:

- Resurfacing the hard play area
- Replacing the Recreation Ground fence
- Fitting a gate to the allotment access track
- Converted all PC street lights to energy saving LED lamps
- Erected a new village notice board
- Organised the West-Lights initiative to brighten up the village
- Purchased the first batch of Planters to be put out in the Summer
- Upgrade of Flitwick Road Bus Stop
- Supporting the Football Club in improving the senior and junior pitches in the Recreation Ground

In many of these activities the PC has been well supported by residents in the village. Street couriers have delivered newsletters, Santa's annual tour of the village helped brighten up the difficult period we were going through and very many residents joined in the Thursday evening 'Clap for the NHS' and the socially distanced VE Day commemorations.

While it was not possible to hold the Remembrance Service in the customary way, with the support of Rev Nigel Washington, The Royal British Legion, the WI and representatives of village businesses and youth groups, we were able to hold a much shortened service to ensure that the sacrifice of so many village residents was remembered appropriately.

The use of ZOOM has become an accepted way of facilitating meetings and in addition to holding 14 virtual PC meetings the PC has hosted the regular Spensley Trust meetings while the Village Hall has been unavailable. Zoom also allowed the key organising group of Westoning Cares to meet regularly and safely.

Westoning Lower School, our village pubs and restaurants and the Recreation Club have had a particularly hard time over the year and its good to see things returning to the new normal with outdoor dining and drinking back on the menu. The PC is liaising closely with the Recreation Club to ensure that is able to continue giving effective support to sport and recreation in the village.

I would like to thank all members of the PC, past and present, for the time and energy they give to our community and to the Parish Clerk for the excellent support she gives to the Council. I know that I speak for all members of the Council when I say that we are privileged to serve our village because Westoning is more than a collection of houses, it is a community that is made by the people who live in it.

**Andy Rayment**

**Chairman, Westoning PC**