

Chairman's report – May 2023 – Jeremy Clayton

A quiet year in 2022/2023, a welcome relief after the Covid years and a welcome return to the normality of meetings held in person.

The parish council has been carrying on its normal work, making sure the recreation ground, play area and buildings are looked after. Our sub committees have as always done a great job with no fuss.

Making the most of grants that became available, we now have broadband up and running at the recreation ground with free Wi-Fi access available around the buildings, plus two Electric Vehicle charging points. I believe these are the first to be installed by a parish council in south Cambs, we should all be very grateful to Malcolm Bird and Keith Austin for their efforts.

Ginny Belson, whilst not now a councillor, has again kindly organised the litter collection with her helpers, I dread to think what our village would be like without their efforts. It amazes me that people think it okay to drop their litter on the roads and streets.

On road safety in Steeple Morden we now have the 40 mph gateways, our speed monitors and we have bid for a twenty is plenty zone around the school. Our records would indicate that our efforts have slowed the traffic down but unfortunately there are some people who, whatever we do, cannot help themselves and recklessly speed. I know this frustrates many parishioners as it does the parish council.

We would like to transform our sports facilities, this however needs buy in from all the clubs. We have provisionally set aside some funds but the clubs will also need to raise significant amounts. Discussions are on-going and this is a long term project.

Potholes. I, like pretty much everyone, am very fed up with the state of our roads. We have asked whether we can do some repairs ourselves but have yet to receive a reply. It should not be necessary for us to do this but I believe there are around 150,000 potholes reported in Cambridgeshire. The council budget allows for 60k to 70k to be repaired per year. So the problem is unlikely to be solved unless funds are diverted from other areas. We continue to push for repairs in our villages.

I am grateful to all councillors for their help, wisdom and practical contributions. In particular, I would like to thank Nick Badger our vice chairman, who has ably stood in for me when needed and Sally our clerk who keeps us in order and handles our accounts and paperwork.

I would also like to thank our district and county councillors, who keep us well informed and are very supportive of our villages, fighting our corner as necessary.