



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2018/19

Wow, what a year! Possibly the biggest occurrence in the history of the Parish Council has happened with the purchase of Turnpike Field. Imagine my shock when receiving the phone call that confirmed that our bid had been successful. This rapidly turned to delight as I realised that the field was now safe from housing development and would be used for the benefit of residents in the years to come. I must thank all residents for their support and pay tribute to the energy of all Councillors, especially Heather Jones in making the purchase happen. The Turnpike Field Working Group of four Councillors and five residents has met on a regular basis and sought suggested uses from villagers. I thank all of the Working Group for their commitment, enthusiasm and effort. Residents, especially dog walkers, have already made use of the field via the temporary access gate. The main idea, subject to planning permission, is to provide a 'green' car park, using a mesh through which the grass will grow. Other uses will be firmed up during 2019/20. In addition to paying increased Council Tax, more than 120 residents agreed to make a further donation towards the cost of developing the field for community use. By the end of April the amount raised was over £16,000, with a further £150+ being donated in the 'blue box' in Williams' Newsagents. This response has been amazing and sincere thanks go to all who have donated. If you wish to make a donation, please contact Bee, our Clerk.

Unfortunately, the take-over of the Playing Field complex is still on hold due to staff issues at both Cheshire East and Fields in Trust.

During the year Heather Jones stepped down from the Council as she and her husband, Howard, relocated to South Wales. Heather's expertise, combined with her drive and enthusiasm has been sorely missed. Owing to work commitments, both Jenny Carlin and Suzie Warren also left and I thank them both for their efforts. However, we have gained Steve Boyes, Nigel Mottershead, Lorna Matthews and Paul Barrett, who were co-opted as Councillors during the year. Their contributions have already proved beneficial to the Council.

As part of Cheshire East's Local Plan 2010 – 2030, all towns and parishes in the Borough have had to provide additional housing sites on top of those that have already been approved. Following discussions with Borough Council's planners about potential sites for development in the Parish up to 2030, Bird's Nest (opposite McCarthy & Stone) and East View (between Bird's Nest and Monks Lane) were determined to be the most suitable sites. They are earmarked to provide 42 properties between them during the remaining 11 years of the Plan.

The Parish Council has financially supported the Music and Arts Festival, ADCA, the Scout and Guide Hall, the Bowling Club and ADAS during the year. The well-attended Village Meeting in May 2018 promoted the local clubs and societies from which residents benefit.

With Parish Council elections taking place in May, three long-serving Councillors took the opportunity to retire: Frances Mary Christie after more than 20 years; Kate Down after 16 years and David Siddorns after 8 years. I thank them for all the work that they have done during these 50+ years. Their valuable expertise and tireless work will be sadly missed.

I have enjoyed my year as Chairman, but unfortunately, due to my wife's ill health, I am unable to commit the necessary amount of time required to the role and I am handing over to Steve Boyes who, I am sure, will continue to take the Council forward. I would like to take this opportunity to

thank my fellow Councillors for their support, in particular my Vice-Chairman, David Higham, for his help during the year. David continues as Vice Chairman. I also wish to thank our Clerk, Bee, for her support and guidance during her first year in the job. She's certainly had a steep learning curve!