

# Coates Annual Parish Meeting

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## Chairman's end of year statement 2020/21

### FINANCIAL POSITION

We end the year in a healthy position, we have set a 2021/22 budget that allows the Parish Council to continue to deliver services to maintain its assets and invest in the village.

We made provisions for a level of increased expenditure during this new financial year which meant we needed to increase the Parish Council's precept request to CDC.

### COUNCIL ASSETS

We continue to maintain the Playground equipment on Coates Lane.

We have carried out a review of the future use of Victory Green and have received many suggestions from residents. It is hoped that as a first step we will see a few benches on the Green.

### YOUR COUNCIL

Since the last APM two of our councilors, Libby Harrison and Keith Austin stood down. The Parish Council wishes to express its gratitude, on behalf of the Village, for their excellent service as councillors.

In March 2020, we employed a new Parish Clerk and RFO, Caroline Coates. We welcome Caroline to the Parish Council. We welcomed Barry Wainwright as a new Councilor. We wish Caroline and Barry every success in their new position.

### SUMMARY OF KEY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

At the last APM residents shared concerns with the Council about speeding through the village. As a result, the Council met with the police in early 2020 and underwent Speed Watch training. The Council purchased its own Speed Radar and carried out various Speed Watches in March 2020. Our thanks to Keith Austin for making this all happen.

The Parish Council members have spent considerable time and effort negotiating a Lease for the Coates Cricket Field with then owners of Bledisloe, to enable the area to be used for recreation. This was on the verge of completion, but Bledisloe was sold in 2020. The new owners of the Bledisloe Estate, Mr and Mrs Bellamy (who we welcome to the village) have agreed to look at options to retain a Cricket Field in the village.

As the pandemic took off in early 2020, the Parish Council (led by Councillor Andrew Hobson) offered COVID-19 Support (and continues to do so) inviting residents to contact the Council if they need help. Considerable time and effort went into establishing this support by a group of residents in the village; too whom we offer a gratitude of thanks.

The Council has spent considerable sums of money repairing and replacing parts in the playground because it regards playground safety as a priority. The Parish Council are considering options for replacing the playground equipment over time with new pieces.

The Parish Council owns the land that forms the entrance to May Tree Close and is grateful to a number of village residents that have done an excellent job tidying and planting around the entrance. This community space is something we can all enjoy and we encourage everyone, where possible, to help maintain the planted areas.

Over 400 hedge and tree saplings were planted in and around the village by a group of volunteers. This important activity was championed and led by Simon Large, our parish Tree Warden. We would like to thank Simon and his volunteer helpers for helping making a difference in the village.

### **SAYING THANK YOU**

So many people in the village have done so much to help others and to make improvements to the village we all live in; all of whom we say a big thank you to. Whenever, you make a list it is inevitable that we inadvertently miss people off. If there is someone in the village that has done something special recently please say thank you on all our behalf.

### **FUTURE AMBITION**

The Council and many villagers would like to continue improvements to Road Safety in the village and surrounding areas and we will be continuing to focus on this throughout the year. Also, litter and fly tipping continue to be problems in and around the village and we will continue to look at ways to keep our village clean.

On behalf of your Parish Council

Richard Harrison, Chairman Coates Parish Council