

To all residents of Coughton:

Chairman's report 16th March 2015

I am pleased to provide each householder in the village a copy of our annual report. Each year the report looks at how we have fared against the annual Village Plan, over the course of the last twelve months.

Friends of the Ford

Firstly, I am pleased to say that Cllr Len Carter re-established the Friends of the Ford Group and has made excellent headway into tidying this once-desolate area of the village. With valuable help from Robert Turner, the group has protected the old car park area against further onslaughts from 4x4s and the group is now working on the next stage of the Ford's transformation.

Local Community

Last summer saw the most successful village fete so far, which raised just over £1,000. This money has benefited the local school, contributed to the work at the Ford and has paid for clearance and reseeding in the Churchyard at St.Peters church.

The new village website has proved much easier to manage, and we would welcome ideas for developing this further and for some assistance in keeping it up to date. In the last few weeks, superfast broadband became available, and this now offers a much faster internet connection for almost all of the village.

The Cemetery Group and its record number of volunteers continued to transform the site in Sambourne Lane. The grounds are more attractive than ever, and a date has been set for the next clean-up on 11/12th of April.

Flooding

The Flood Group has also been active in liaising closely with the County Highways and ensuring that their drain surveys are completed and pushing for remedial action. Thankfully, the last year has not experienced any severe weather to put our drain systems to the test. Drainage work in Sambourne Lane has helped remove many of the surface water problems there.

Planning

As always, we endeavour to consult residents on all matters that may affect the well-being of the village, and this naturally includes the planning applications that Stratford District Council send to us for comment. I am pleased to report that our efforts regarding inappropriate development in the village have been very successful.

Traffic and Transport

The County Council has now given us a clearer time scale for the demolition of the old railway bridge in Coughton Lane. This will happen during the school summer holiday so as to avoid the impossible job of managing the school traffic when the lane will be closed for a period of six weeks.

As you probably know, the County Council has actively supported our recommendation for a new school car park on land off the A435, and their final proposals are expected very soon. The Car Park will certainly have a very positive impact on the village, but the near misses between children and vehicles that seem to occur more frequently emphasise the

importance of this project. Further details will be posted onto the website as they become available.

Boundary Changes

Finally, I would like to welcome the residents who are now included within the parish of Coughton. From May this year the boundary will move towards Studley (as far as the overhead power lines), and up to Alcester Heath to include the end of Coughton Lane and Bunkers Barn Farm. A total of 20 additional properties.

The draft Action Plan for 2015 was discussed at the March Parish Council Meeting and will be finalised at our meeting on 9th May. If you would like to comment on this you can do so by visiting the village website at www.coughtonpc.org.uk

I want to thank all councillors for their contributions during this time, but especially Cherie King who moved out of the village in December and agreed to stay on for the last few meetings. I also wish to thank the residents who have supported us, in many ways, over the years.

Best regards,

John Gittins

Chair, Coughton PC

Parish Council Elections

The Parish Council consists of 5 members who are elected for a four year term, and which is now coming to an end. This is an opportunity for anyone over the age of 18, who is either a resident or works in Coughton, to help us shape the future of our village. It involves listening to the views of others, putting ideas to their colleagues on the parish Council and representing the best interests of the community. One of our parish councillors has recently moved out of the village so we are very keen for people who may be interested in this position to get in touch as soon as possible. Free training courses are held regularly.

If you have long experience of the village that you believe would be useful to us, or are new to the area and could offer fresh ideas - then you could be the person for this interesting and essential role in the local community. A ballot will only be required if the number of nominations exceeds five.

Contrary to common belief, there is no requirement for political party affiliation, and we have no connection with the parish church. For help or further information, please contact our clerk, Karen Parnell, on 01789 292968, or John Gittins on 01789 765964. Alternatively you can go to our website at www.coughtonpc.org.uk where you can see further information about the Parish council or contact the clerk via email.

The dates of future parish council meetings are:

2015 9th May*, 6th July, 7th September, 16th November,

2016 11th January, 7th March, 9th May

* Meetings are normally held at 7.30 pm in the school in Coughton Lane, except for the next May meeting which will be held at the Old School Nursery in Sambourne Lane.

If you moved into Coughton in the last few years and do not have a copy of the original Village Plan we may order a reprint if we can justify sufficient numbers. Please contact us via the website and make a request if you would like a copy. There is a copy on the website.