**Chairman’s Annual Report 2020 – 2021**

The past year has been dominated by the coronavirus epidemic and its implications for all our daily lives.

Due to the restrictions on meetings, we have only been able to hold meetings in July, September and October, 2020, and our first meeting of 2021/2 was on 27th April, which was conducted remotely.

Any matters which required our attention have been dealt with as and when they have arisen, none of which actually required a physical meeting to make decisions.

We have managed our expenses within our budget, and are pleased to maintain the precept on residents at the same total level as previous years, which has actually meant a reduction per household due to the slight increase in the number of residential properties in the village.

We have continued to maintain the village assets for the benefit and enjoyment or our residents and visitors alike; this includes the Playing Field, where we have installed an owl box, the Pinfold and the War Memorial amongst other things.

Despite the lockdown, we were able to once again provide the Pensioners’ Christmas Lunch, albeit as a takeaway meal, delivered by PC members, rather than a sit-down event in the pub, with entertainment. All the feedback we have received has been positive, with an appreciation that we were able to organise it at all.

We also provided and decorated the Village Christmas Tree, even though we were not able to hold the usual Carol Singing and Mince Pie and Mulled Wine event.

We have maintained our programme of litter picking along the various lanes leading into the village (socially distanced, of course) and taken part in the national Keep Britain Tidy campaigns. This will continue this year with a possible date being sometime in June, weather permitting. This will be “advertised” nearer the time. Now the lockdown reduction roadmap programme is progressing to plan, we would welcome the participation of any other residents in this work. Anyone interested in joining us can do so by contacting any member of the Parish Council.

We have asked DMBC to include Burghwallis on the rota for regular visits to monitor fly tipping, including the use of cameras in “hot spots”, but these have not yet been forthcoming, as their efforts have been concentrated elsewhere.

We continue to monitor the local Public Rights of Way and request maintenance and cutting back of trees and vegetation as necessary.

We continue to lobby both the Police and DMBC Highways regarding speed restrictions through the village.

During the past year, we have lost two residents, George Klaiber (The Abbe’s Walk) and Roy Ezard (Scorcher Hills Lane)

Now, an update on our Future Priorities statement from 2018.

As already mentioned, our litter picking activities carry on, with support from DMBC, such as they are able to provide within the covid19 working restrictions.

More wildflower seeds have been planted in the Playing Field, and one of the saplings on Grange Lane was replaced as it had not “taken” properly.

Playing Field (and Pinfold) inspections continue to be made and reported weekly. We need to organise some refurbishment work on the wet pour surfaces in the Playing Field, which seem to be contracting from the perimeter edging.

Burghwallis Hall is still for sale, and there does not appear to have been much activity. A recent offering at auction did not produce a buyer – we can only hope that a new owner is found soon, as there is considerable work needed to bring the building back to its former glory. The war memorial wall still appears to be stable. All other historic sites are in good order; we provided fencing on the approach to the Pinfold, to prevent any young child from straying into the area and potentially suffering a fall down the steep steps.

We continue to support the “public” buildings in the village, although activities associated with the pub are limited at the moment due to the coronavirus situation, and the church is temporarily closed until the roof is renewed.

High speed broadband is now available in the village, giving much faster internet speeds and reliability of signal.

We would like to thank the residents of our village for your continued support of our activities, and we hope that we can rely on your support in the future.

This report is normally presented at the Annual Village Meeting in May, and published on the website, but we have decided on a more direct distribution method this year, so that residents do not have to congregate in the confined space of the pub while the coronavirus situation is still restricting public gatherings.

Dave Maxwell

Chairman