Fiddington Parish Council – Chairman's Report 2023

Somerset became a Unitary Authority in April 2023, Local Community Networks were establish based on a similar premise as the old cluster groups, has it affected Fiddington Parish, not really. Our two divisional councillors are Mike Caswell and Brian Bolt.

There were nine new planning application received during the year, six supported by the council and three not supported. An update on the outstanding applications from previous years are: Keenthorne Nursery is still on-going as the council are waiting on ecology reports of which are seasonal, and Mill Farm, recently been granted permission for the 58 new touring pitches, Muga, facility and relocating the trampoline building.
We also monitor neighbouring activity at Inwood Farm, Nether Stowey Parish and Cannington Enterprises, Cannington Parish.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Jenny and Rod Cole for all the work involved with understanding / unravelling the Historic Planning and Licensing at Mill Farm.

I hope everyone agrees the new village signs looks wonderful, thank you to Hinkley Point A & B for their Support.

August 2022, Hinkley Point B power station entered decommissioning and ceased generating electricity, we have all this activity at Stolford and yet we produce no electricity.

Some positive news for the village, operation HAROLD was discontinued - EDF announced if there is an incident on the road between Cannington and Hinkley point large vehicles will no longer be diverted through the Parish.

A new door and painting of the phone box at Coultings an excellent job conducted by Fraser Everett.

Over the winter we have met and discussed road issues with Highways, solutions, or lack of come down to funding and budgets. Anyone can report problems online go to service.somerset.gov.uk and follow the links or www.fixmystreet.com

This has been a frustrating year not as a chairperson but as a councillor we should expect fairness and transparency and this in my view is not the case.

It was with sadness that we received the resignation of Wayne Hawley as a Parish Councillor.
We lost a proactive councillor, and I was disappointed to lose a very supportive vice chairman.

Again, thanks to all the councillors and Tina our Clerk for their support and effort throughout the year.

VILLAGE HALL

CHAIRMAN REPORT MAY 2023

It is a great pleasure to report on a normal and reasonably successful year without any cancellations due to Covid.

Our Art Group and Home Education Group continue to use the hall and we have had 5 weddings, some of which were postponed during The Pandemic.

The monthly Book Swap coffee mornings have continued and have been well attended, particularly the cooked breakfasts that have taken place during the winter months.

Due to rising costs, we have had to increase our hire charges and impose a winter fuel surcharge. These increases are in line with other nearby village halls and have been accepted by both current and new hirers.

In late 2022 we took the decision to buy a new marquee as even with the help we have had from Mill Farm to regularly repair the old one, it was beginning to look very worn and scruffy.

The major events in the hall have done well this year.

Our late Queen's Jubilee in June 2022 was celebrated with a BBQ and a wonderful selection of cakes and deserts.

The Christmas dinner was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Celebrations for The Kings Coronation were highly successful, and the weather was kind to us. Once again, our committee members and volunteers produced a sumptuous feast.

Music for this occasion was provided by a Bristol band "Running on Empty "at no cost to the village hall.

There have been numerous other events including Jumble Sales, Quizes, Book Swaps, and a Flower Show.

The Committee are looking forward to another prosperous year ahead with seven weddings, and several private functions already booked. This will provide a valuable source of income. Our finances are robust, and we hope that this will continue.

The more recent members of our committee have been a welcome source of new ideas and energy ensuring a continuation of our thriving village hall. We are fortunate enough to be able to call on non-committee members from our local community.

Including Wayne Hawley for mowing the grass in the field, Ruth Brazier for helping with the cooked breakfasts, Richard Brazier for looking after the housekeeping and the Mowing Rota people who do the mowing around the hall and playground.

In summary, the hall is in a good financial and physical shape, and we can continue to be of service to the village.

FIDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL AGM

From Fiddington PCC

In the March issue of the Fiddington News the Revd Alison Waters, the Area Dean, explained the forthcoming changes in the churches of Somerset. What directly affects Fiddington is that the Quantock Coast Benefice, which we have been a part of for more than 15 years, is being disbanded. We are to become part of a new benefice incorporating Cannington, Stogursey,Stockland ,Combwich and Fiddington. Whilst the changes are grinding their way through the Church of England bureaucracy, the decision has been taken to implement the changes on June 1st. Our new vicar will be Rev Alison Waters, who is based in Cannington.

After more than 12 years valiant service as Churchwarden, Paul Matthews retired from that role. Robin Kinahan has taken over and has implemented a rota of volunteers, who will take on the responsibilities during various months of the year.

Despite the uncertainties of the changes, we have managed to maintain our normal events for the village. The return of the Sausage Sizzle Quizzes has been welcomed and well attended and we held the annual August Bank Holiday Strawberry Cream Tea in aid of the 2023 Deanery Charity the Fortress, which helps young women in difficulties in Uganda. As before, the donations at the Harvest Festival were given to the Bridgwater Foodbank and the Stockmoor Lodge Care Home.

The possibility of the churchyard being extended into the village hall grounds has been parked for the time being. The Charity Commission rules make a free transfer almost impossible. A new survey of available space in the churchyard is to be undertaken to try to create more space for future use.

Declining numbers and church finances mean that we view the future with a little apprehension, but we are grateful for the support the community gives our little church and congregation.

Thank you