

## Cotesbach Parish Council

### Chairman's report

Ed Hunt, May 2024

Following an election in May 2023, we welcomed new Councillors Gavin Bennett, Annie Newton and Rob Morris. Margaret Wild also continued her role as Councillor, so thanks to her and the new Councillors for their input and support over the past year, as well as our Clerk, Pat Nunn.

Outlines roles and responsibilities were defined for each Councillor, and minuted at the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting which included:

- Chairman - Ed Hunt
- Vice Chairman - Gavin Bennett
- Village Hall representative - Ed Hunt
- Magna Park Liaison - Margaret Wild
- 8 Parishes CIC - Ed Hunt
- Highways - Rob Morris
- Planning - Ed Hunt / Gavin Bennett / Annie Newton
- Pond / Environment - Gavin Bennett

The Council also welcome residents contributing to Council activities in a casual manner. Over the past year this includes Claire Mellon as quarry liaison; Aubrey Adcock who continues to support running the activated speed signs; Stephen Adcock who keeps the pond grass trim, and provides other occasional landscaping support; and Fiona Morris who has helped out with some Council activities such as bulb planting and dog bin siting and management. Cambell Lean has also kindly helped on occasional carpentry-related requirements. There are no doubt others who have contributed, who's time the village is grateful for.

There have not been many significant planning applications in and around the village. There is ongoing interest in the land to the rear of West View Cottages being developed with one dwelling, with an appeal for the initial refusal by Harborough District Council. The "holiday lodges" at Moorbarns lane was approved, but construction has not yet started.

Recently, there has been a press release from a warehouse developer reportedly buying land near the tile factory, parallel to the A5, for a large warehousing site. It would be similar in size to the largest warehouse on Magna Park - the Wayfair site which is considerable and expects to add further traffic and HGV movement to the Gibbet Island, and A426. The council has been in touch with Jon Bateman on the matter, exploring why this is possible when the HDC local plan has maximised its warehousing allocation through Magna Park.

More locally, our environment projects have continued over the past 12 months, with a further attempt at the wildflower verge following more thorough ground preparation. There appears to have been some success, although existing grass

cover remains significant. A number of bird boxes, funded by Eight Parishes wind farm fund, have been put up in various locations in the village and surrounding fields, with hopes for more owl and other species nesting.

The Eight Parishes fund has also supported the village hall with money for lighting to increase potential for the Hall's outside use, with the work yet to be complete.

Using money from the nearby solar farm, the Parish Council has also funded the hire of the village hall for coffee mornings. Held each month, this enables any interested villager to come to the hall and meet others for a catch up and change of scene.

Cllr Morris used Eight Parishes funds for 2 dog bins in the village, and has installed them accordingly. There has been a recent increase in dog fouling, so let's hope this reduces that problem. Cllr Morris will be responsible for emptying the bins.

The council has also been exploring the opportunity to use the solar farm money for local energy projects, whether that's to fund a "net zero" energy plan or help contribute to solar or low carbon boiler alternatives for villagers. It is a complex area with no decisions as yet.

Following the annual village audit, a number of pavement areas were identified needing repair which has resulted in new pavements being laid, providing safer walkways for residents.

In short, there has been plenty of useful progress made by the Council with much of it initiated and delivered by the appreciated enthusiasm of new Cllrs, to which we're grateful for their contribution.