

Elvaston Parish Council

Chairman Report 2016

Good evening and welcome everyone to Elvaston's Annual Parish Meeting. It is the yearly opportunity for residents to hear about and discuss the work of the parish council... but also to reflect on life in our community and raise any issues of concern and suggestions to improve the quality of life. Since our 2015 Annual Parish meeting there have been some significant events.

Last May, as well as the General Election, the South Derbyshire district election took place and also a new parish council took office. For the 3 district council places we welcome back Cllrs Neil Atkin and Peter Watson. Ann Watson did not seek re-election – and we thank her for her past assistance well - but welcome back to Cllr Hilary Coyle who has previously served on SDDC.

The parish council did not have a contested election. You will see some familiar faces around the table, Toby Mansfield did not stand again, however shortly after elections took place he was co-opted back onto the Parish Council and became Vice Chairman.

Welcome to the new face of Paul Loakes I hope during the last few months you have found the meetings friendly but also business like.

All parish council meetings are open to the public and, at the beginning of each meeting, any resident is free to raise any issues affecting them or the wider community. The number of parishioners who do attend varies from meeting to meeting, but there are several regular attendees who join us come rain or shine, or ice! Thank you to them for helping us to be aware of developing issues – and on our toes! Sadly, I have to report that one regular face we won't see again is Mr Whewell, who passed away last summer. He had an unrivalled knowledge of the Castle and the local area and we do miss him.

The monthly meetings of the parish council are advertised on the website and in the traditional way on the notice boards. The best attendance this last 12 months saw 47 residents here...

That leads nicely on to specific issues. Those 47 residents came to hear Tony Palmer who is the chair of the Elvaston Castle Development Board. He spoke in detail about the way forward and answered numerous questions from the floor. It was very disappointing last year when the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund was turned down. But the development board is in place and the parish is directly represented on it by Cllr Rick Strand. The board is seeking to take forward the 10 year strategy. Rick may want to say more later.

For our parishioners in low-lying Ambaston, the risk of flooding from the River Derwent is a continuing concern. The embankments are many years old and we thank Peter Waters for:

- his continuing vigilance about the condition of those banks and
- applying his wealth of knowledge to getting the necessary improvements to take account of global warming.

Peter may also want to give a short update about the 'Our City, Our River' strategy now led by Derby City Council but Phase 2 should deliver better protection for the downstream settlements at Ambaston, Great Wilne and Shardlow.

Broadband. In 2015 I said "The council has maintained pressure on DCC to upgrade broadband communications in the area but this is proving difficult". In short, that still remains true 12 months later. There has been plenty of activity though. We carried out a door-to-door survey in Thulston and Elvaston to ascertain residents' views about Superfast Broadband. We provided those results to County Hall. There has also been a special meeting at Matlock, organised by our county councillor, where he and two representatives of the

parish (Cllr Rick Strand and George Bell) met up with the Cabinet Member and senior officers. I'm hoping County Cllr Davison will give the latest position when he speaks.

Snelsmoor Lane Development. Last time my report said "Contractors caused various problems during the last year, noise, grit, mud on the roads, contractors working outside of hours, Sunday working etc, just to name a few". I was also able to say "Due to better communication, more input and regular liaison meetings with DCC, SDDC and Persimmon Homes we envisage fewer difficulties in the future". I am very pleased to say that has *largely* come true. The liaison meetings have been especially important in holding the developer to account. However, when a problem does arise we don't want residents to store up concerns or complaints until the next liaison meeting. We want you to contact the developer directly and straightaway, so they can put things right... But keep the parish council in the loop, so we know about the problem and can act if it isn't sorted or re-occurs.

Other issues.

We still need one member from the Boulton Moor ward.

Finally – thanks to County Councillor, District Councillors, members and lengthman for their efforts etc. I would like to give a big thank you to Richard Strand for his continued support he has given throughout the year and also a big thank you to Jonathon Irons our Parish Clerk..

Finally

It is the custom in Elvaston for the chair to serve for two years. As my term of office comes towards an end I can say I have really enjoyed both years. This report, like last year, has concentrated on the problem issues that we want to solve. Our parish is a combination of large estates and 3 small hamlets. Wherever our home is located, overall it is in a nice community. I am confident that the parish

council, together with the Elvaston Communities Group will continue working to make it even better.

Thank you.

Paul Bickerton