

This last year, my third as Chairman, is not one I would care to repeat. It was extremely difficult and stressful after discovering that our previous Parish Clerk had defrauded us of a large sum of money and even more difficult not being able to pass any of the details to the residents in the village, until the case had been finalised in court. I would however, like to thank all the Parish Councillors who stayed with the Parish Council and worked through those troubled times.

I would also like to thank Sally Dalley for stepping into the breach and helping us by being the Minute taker at some of the PC meetings. We have been very fortunate in recruiting Denise, as our new Parish Clerk, as she is not only a very experienced Parish Clerk, but also the person who completed our investigation into the fraud, so she was aware of all the facts!

Earlier in the year two Parish Councillors decided to step down and I thank Jerry Lay and Jeremy Adams for the time they gave to the community. Last month, because of work commitments, we also said farewell to Paul Watson, who had been a councillor for 8 years and we will truly miss his planning expertise and advice.

I also thank our District and County Councillors as they always strived to keep us informed of what was happening in the Huntingdon and Cambridge councils.

The Youth Group continues to be very successful as each month there are a large number of children attending each of the sessions. The Parish Council thanks the local businesses and County Councillors for their support, without which the Youth Group would have not been able to exist. The number of Volunteers fluctuate, and more helpers are always most welcome.

The Parish Council newsletter is now only produced a couple of times a year, as we have been trying to cut costs and we find that all the information can be supplied via the excellent Parish Pump magazine. In another cost cutting exercise, the Parish Council has changed its website provider, to a local firm. The website, still looks the same but has a slightly different address of .co.uk instead of .org.uk.

The Parish Council works closely with the Church and once again organised two 'tidy up' sessions of the churchyard, which were well supported by many residents of both Alconbury and Alconbury Weston.

The trees in the community orchard are growing well and I thank Steve Tarabella, our Tree Warden for his enthusiasm in caring for these trees as well as keeping a watch on other trees around the village. Hopefully in the next few months we shall be able to label the trees in the orchard with the variety of fruit.

The Parish Council continues to be involved at Joint Parish meetings at Alconbury Weald and is also in negotiation with Highways and Urban & Civic with regard to new 'entrance gateways' to the village, to try and deter large articulated lorries taking the wrong turn.

We have close links with the Environment Agency and have been looking into the new documents they provide with regard to flood waters and insuring our properties.

The Parish Council continues to support village groups and will endeavour to continue to do so.

We do enjoy hearing from our parishioners and are always pleased when a few join us at our monthly meetings. Despite all the financial difficulties the Council continues to strive to make the village an attractive and enjoyable place in which to live.

Judith Aylott
Chairman