

May 2010 to April 2011

Presented to Annual Parish Meeting May 17th 2011

It seems unbelievable this is now my fourth annual report on behalf of Standon Parish Council and that this year we were all up for election.

Previously we have seen changes to the Parish Council and this year has been no exception. First I would like to say hello and welcome to our new Clerk Belinda Irons, whom many of you have already met but also to Ben Harris-Quinney who was elected during the recent elections. I would like to welcome them both formerly to Standon Parish Council and I look forward to working with them and all the other Councillors who stood again for election. Talking of the election we are now in a position where we need to co-opt one person for the Puckeridge Ward to bring us up to full strength.

I would also like to take the opportunity to say goodbye and thank you to Julie Dearman and Emma Painter who decided not to stand again. My thanks go to both of them for the work they did during their term of office.

In particular though I would also like to say goodbye and thank you to John Ingham our previous Clerk who retired this year in January. He had served the Parish Council for nearly 39 years during which time he had seen many changes and had offered a valuable service to the Council.

My thanks as always go to Management Committees of the Community Centre and the Village Hall who both provide an invaluable service to the Parish.

It is always a great pleasure to be asked to attend public events and this year I was especially honoured to be asked to attend St Thomas of Canterbury School to open their summer fete and later in the year a new play train. As I commented at the time never did I think when I was a pupil there over 29 years ago that I would return as Parish Council Chairman to open an event.

This year we have kept the precept the same and have looked at ways of reducing costs to achieve this. We are in the process of looking at our current contracts and have recently awarded a new one in relation to grass cutting and grounds maintenance. We have also recently changed our insurance to another provider to ensure we have the best possible policy at the best available price.

The Community Led Plan is nearing completion and I would like to thank the working group for the hard work they have put in to prepare the document. It is a very important piece of work and will ensure the Parishioners of Standon Parish have a voice through the plan

We have recently taken possession of the Puckeridge War Memorial Plaque from the now discussed congregational church next to St. Thomas of Canterbury School, following concerns from a Parishioner. We are in the process of finding a suitable place to resite it and are considering somewhere at the Community Centre as the fields are also a memorial to the village.

I am also able to announce tonight that the former Puckeridge and Standon Firework Committee have decided to disband, as there is no possibility of another show. My thanks go to them and others before who provided such an excellent show for the villages. I am delighted however to announce that they have generously decided to donate their residual funds of £5.5k to the Parish Council to partly fund improvements and refurbishment work to the play area. The Parish Council have agreed to this and have managed to secure match funding from County Councillor Mrs. Jane Pitman and County Councillor David Andrews.

I would like to formerly thank both the Puckeridge and Standon Fireworks Committee and County Councillors Mrs. Jane Pitman and David Andrews for their generous donations. This will be of great benefit to the Parish leaving a long lasting legacy.

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In conclusion as we draw to the end of both this year and the four years we have served and look forward to the next four I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and all of you, the Parishioners, who make this voluntary role both challenging and rewarding.