Chairman's Report 2016-7

In last year's report it was noted that, as with the previous year, it had been a year of planning consultations, applications and waiting for decisions and it was hoped that a swift adoption of South Derbyshire's Local Plan would offer some protection against further speculative developments that would stretch our Village's infrastructure and resources.

Thankfully, 2016 did see the adoption of Part 1 of the Local Plan, and the start of consulting for Part 2. While the number and frequency of speculative planning applications for housing above and beyond that deemed sustainable in the Local Plan has reduced - Part 2 does make provision for an additional smaller development within the Village and so we must continue working to ensure residents views are known and noted for any new planning applications put forward linked to Part 2 or indeed, any additional speculative submissions.

This time last year both Phase 1 & Phase 2 applications for the development at Willington Road had been approved, but we continued to wait for the final landscaping. Fast forward a year and the first of the new houses are up and occupied and while relations between the developers and the Village can, at times, be strained, the Parish Council none the less welcomes Etwall's new residents and hope they enjoy making Etwall their home.

The proposal for a Rail Head at Etwall/Egginton Common has never really 'gone away' and there is a suggestion that it will 'rear its head' again this year. In last year's Chairman's report I stressed that it would be important we unite with Parish Councils and residents in surrounding areas to campaign against this proposal, but that we must also be practical and pragmatic and this comment still stands today. Should this development go ahead, there will be significant recompense to local communities and we must clearly lay out what compensation we expect to gain whilst simultaneously fighting the unwanted development.

Moving away from planning matters, the grant obtained from Tesco's Bags of Helps scheme, topped up by a donation from the Parish Council, was put to good use by the Youth, Recreation and Allotments committee who achieve their aim of having two new and exciting pieces of play equipment installed onto the KGV playing field in time for summer 2016. The Frank Wickham Hall committee also made a number of improvements and upgrades to the Hall with the installation of new windows, repairs to the heating system and a new front door which will, we hope, be installed in the coming months. We hope, too, that we will soon be in a position to make a start on more of the short and long terms plans laid out in our prospects of much needed improvements to the Frank Wickham Hall and village recreational facilities as 106 monies from the Willington Road development start to become due.

To close, I would like to thank the council's staff; Lynne, Yvette, Phil and Earl (who has been with us for almost a year now). We often receive compliments from residents and users of the Frank Wickham Hall on the fantastic jobs they do in and around the Village, we certainly echo these and without Lynne the Parish Council would not operate as smoothly as it does today!

Finally, as this is my last term as Chair I would like thank all members of the council for their support and express my gratitude for the work they undertake and their commitment to doing the best they can for the Village.