Chairman’s report January 2025

The Parish Council wishes the residents of Stapleford a very happy and healthy new year.

Max Barrett has been appointed as the new Clerk to the Parish Council and Responsible Financial Officer. The outgoing clerk, Belinda Irons will work alongside him for a short time to ensure smooth transition and contact with the Parish Clerk will remain the same. We welcome Max in his new role.

2025 will see the start of renovations to the pavilion. This will inevitably mean some disruption to the availability of the pavilion and facilities for health and safety reasons, but it is hoped that the time taken will not be too long. Work should start later in the year, and the residents will be kept informed.

The Parish Council agreed to continue with the objection to the planned busway and agreed in principle appoint a solicitor to create a defence strategy. The Parish Council is working with other Parish Councils and Trusts and individuals to support this objection. The Parish Council agreed to limit the contribution to costs.

Cemetery regulations are being updated to make the cemetery a quiet, respectful and reflective space. A noticeboard will be placed at the cemetery entrance to keep parishioners aware of important notices, burials etc.

A grounds maintenance contract has been agreed with a new contractor.

A tree inspection, required every 3 years, will be arranged to look at trees on Parish Council land regarding their health and safety. New trees planted by the tree project group and those in the David Pepperell Orchard will be included.

The budget for the coming year was discussed and an increase in the precept was agreed, rising to £115,000. The precept is the amount of money a parish council collects from its residents through council tax to fund its operations and is the Parish Council’s main source of income. The increase is necessary because of increased costs, salary costs for the clerk and assistant clerk with their increase in hours for the work needed in the Parish, planned work on the pavilion and other areas in the village, as well as necessary safety inspections. The planned increase is not excessive and in line with other Parishes.

The next stage of the Neighbourhood Plan, Public Consultation is in progress until 12th February. This is your last opportunity to comment on this extensive document before it goes before the independent examiner.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is on Thursday 6th February at 7pm in the pavilion. Members of the public are, as usual, invited to attend.