Chairmans report for APM 2025

First of all, welcome everyone to this annual parish meeting. Thank you to all those village groups that have submitted reports for the last year. These will be available on the Parish Council website, along with reports from the District and County Councillors

This has been another challenging year, working without our full complement of Parish Councillors. We do have vacancies, so please see the clerk if you are interested in helping your community grow and flourish. Thank you to our District and County Councillors, Brian Mills and Peter Fane, who have worked to support our Parish Council.

Thank you to all my fellow councillors for the visible and the invisible work done in the Parish to make Stapleford a better, supportive, more sustainable and environmentally friendly place to live.

We have had outstanding help and support from our former clerk, Belinda irons, and assistant clerk Kerry Byrne. Belinda, in her role as clerk, has kept the Parish council informed, up to date and focused, and her work and advice have been invaluable. Kerry has worked tirelessly in looking after the cemetery. Now is our chance to say a huge thank you to both of you and welcome you here this evening. As a token of our thanks, we would like you both to accept this small gift.

The Neighbourhood Plan has reached another stage, more about that later, but thanks to Jenny Flynn and all those helping with this.

Thank you to Chris Cooper for arranging microphones, screen and support for those giving presentations.

We were challenged again with a traveller incursion which fortunately was resolved very quickly with little damage to the village, unlike the last occasion about 10 years ago. Measures have been taken to strengthen the recreation ground entrances to prevent this happening again. CCTV installation is part of this, but it also helps to make the pavilion and recreation ground safe places for everyone.

Another defibrillator for the village has been installed in the telephone box by the Rose.

Christmas lights were much appreciated, and the wild flower areas have received compliments from residents as well as from those outside the area. The tree project group, from whom you will hear later have been working hard to increase the numbers of trees in the village. All of these improvements are managed and enabled by volunteers, so thank you to all of them.

A new groundworks contractor , Bradgate, has been appointed and already the village is looking much tidier and well cared for, with the wild flower areas left to flourish.

The disruption caused by major building works in the village is decreasing, now that UKPN has completed their work and the Strawberry Fields construction is in the next phase of development. The damage to Haverhill Road remains, but it is hoped that this will be resolved. A 20mph speed limit application for the village section of Haverhill Road was unfortunately rejected.

Sawston Greenway will be the next project through the village and this will inevitably cause disruption and alteration to road junctions along Church Street and at London Road. No start date has been announced.

The pavilion renovations will be starting later this year, but we do not have a start date. The plans are out for tender and a start date will be announced as soon as we have information,. This unfortunately will mean closing the pavilion and car park for 3-4 months while the work takes place and will obviously impact those village groups, and others, who use the pavilion. Effectively the pavilion and car park will be out of use in the autumn term.

The Parish Council has continued to oppose the Busway through the green belt and the objection has been taken to the Secretary of State, for Transport. The Parish Council has agreed to cap the amount contributed to this action to £50,000.

The precept has risen this year, because of the planned building works, planned work on the car park, necessary work on the cemetery, staffing costs, increase in energy, water and general rate costs, as well as increase in costs of general supplies and the increased cost of grounds maintenance.

The village weekend plans are gathering pace and we hope to see you all at some point over the 4 days, 26th June to 29th June. You will be receiving information through your door about this, and about the village show. Information is also available on the Stapleford weekend website. Thank you to all those working hard to make this annual event as much of a success as it was last year.

Finally a welcome to our new Clerk and Responsible Financial Offer, Max Barrett and to Assistant Clerk Lesley Watts. If you have any issues, please address them directly to the clerk, rather than to individual Parish Councillors