

## Hadnall Parish Council - Chairman's Report 2014-15

Hadnall Parish Council was formed about 1894 according to the records we have. In the intervening years there have probably only been a couple of more challenging years than the last. Perhaps two World Wars would have demanded the amount of time and effort than the Council has had to devote in the last year. At times it has felt like war – trying to defeat developers who wanted to flood the village with a 50% increase in the number of houses. Did we succeed? In a small way we have fended off some of the increases. At the moment the only sign of actual building is the 11 houses off Haston Lane which was a brown field site and to which we agreed support planning permission. How long it will take to build the houses planned, we cannot say. It will depend on market forces and finding builders willing to take on the sites. Sansaw Estates plans (once passed) may be the first to be developed but they will not be in a rush as they will have houses to sell from the current tranche.

As I said earlier, the Council has spent a great deal of time in the last 12 months trying to understand and apply new planning strategies. Particular thanks must be given to Councillor Nigel Clifford and the others on his Planning sub-committee who have had to handle large quantities of paperwork on our behalf.

Shropshire's new adopted SAMDEV plans provide Hadnall with its next great challenge. The new developments will generate substantial amounts of money for the village and its infrastructure. The Council currently receives just over £9000 per year to run its various activities – burden enough! However CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) could produce upwards of half a million pounds in the coming years. How should we spend it? The current Parish Plan never envisaged house building on any scale and did not expect to get very much CIL and so was not able to consider the scale of expenditure that we might now be able to plan for. As a first response to this we have set up a new group to look at what the parish might aspire to/need in the future. The Community Led Plan Group consists of volunteers from the Parish under the leadership of Councillor Nigel Clifford and is charged with producing a new plan (Parish Plan, if you will) to take into account all the changes that will happen and look at the needs of the village in relation to this and all other village issues. It is still possible to join this group if anyone with a connection (residential or commercial) would like to. Please contact Nigel.

Among all the things mentioned above, Council has been busy on other aspects of the Parish Plan. I suppose the most noticeable thing is the new crossing. This was one of the most requested ideas when we did the survey back at the end of 2012. As we all know this takes time to happen. Without Councillor Neil Duxbury's expertise and contacts, I wonder if we would ever have got the crossing! It is noticeable in this context how economies in Shropshire Council are really biting. Services aren't being cut – just the number of people working in the departments. This results in jobs taking longer than expected. However we are lucky to have the crossing – the teething difficulties we have experienced will disappear as drivers become aware of the new crossing. However we will never be able to compensate

for the poor standards of driving and driver awareness that we have seen in recent weeks. We must all remain very wary of the crossing and take particular care when doing so.

Street lights have probably generated as much discussion in council meetings in the last three years as any other topic that I can think of. Trying to get repairs done, get replacement poles has proved to be nearly impossible. However two lights have finally been replaced and a third due for re-erection is at the costing stage (around £2500). The really good news is that a more satisfactory arrangement for maintenance is in place and small repairs have been dealt with in good time. Of course, the new crossing required 10 new street lights to achieve the required safety levels and these have proved to be a real bonus. It should be remarked that these lights will be funded by Shropshire in future and not by Hadnall PC. Indeed, 4 of the lights we did pay for have been removed and so our costs will be reduced as a result.

The field by the Church was renamed "The Ease" and is now in full use for children and adults. The two benches that were installed should prove a popular thing if we have a decent summer! It is not a dog-friendly area at all. The trees have had their first full year and are doing well. They are all in bud again for the coming year. It is hoped that the infestation of small rodents that we had last year will not re-appear as they damage the grass – perhaps the local owls will keep them down!

On a less exciting front, Hadnall PC has been busy updating its paperwork to comply with new government guidelines/regulations. The work can be inspected on the village website for those we can see that and for those who cannot requests can be made to Jane our Parish Clerk for any of the documents.

This year has not proved to be totally successful. We have still not found ways to address the car parking situation and youth provision still remains poor to non-existent. These issues will be carried forward.

Hadnall PC has welcomed two new councillors this year and has a vacancy for another. Meriel Rees-Pullman and Andy Brisbane have joined us. Andy is the fifth Brisbane who has served on Hadnall PC. Meriel's financial expertise will be very important to us.

This year has seen a dramatic rise in the number of members of the public who have taken the time to come along to our meetings and contributed in no small way to what we have achieved, by their often candid views! The work of the Parish Council would happen without the hard work of our Clerk Jane - she keeps us up-to-date with developments and chivvies us along to get the work done on time. The number e-mails from her which drop into my inbox is a measure of this! I must of course reserve special thanks to my fellow councillors who give up hours of their time to follow up issues so that we can make (hopefully) informed judgements about our concerns.

T Collins