

## **Swefling Parish Council Report 21-22**

Following the problems caused during lockdown, due to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, we hoped that that we might get back to some semblance of normality. Unfortunately that was not to be the case.

Firstly, we had the resignation of Martin Wyard who had been a great servant of the Village for a number of years. We were fortunate to be able to co-opt Debbie Smith to fill that position.

Then we had the resignation of our Clerk, Michael Smithson.

Councillor Erika Spall stepped into the role of Clerk and we thank her for that. At about the same time Debbie Smith offered her resignation after an extremely short period in the role. The position of Parish Councillor is a voluntary role and resignations are excepted with immediate effect. These two events put incredible pressure on our ability to function effectively as we had to operate with only five members. Our January meeting was not quorate due to unforeseen circumstances.

We were pleased to find two people within the village willing to stand as new Councillors and so we began the process to co-opt them both. Unfortunately that process was curtailed when ten electors requested a full election. We had to cancel our February meeting when we knew in advance that again we would not be quorate.

As the election process continued only two people completed applications and therefore both were duly elected unopposed.

Now that Jill Abbott and Amanda Daniel have joined us and we are once again at full strength it is hoped that we can operate for the good of the whole Village for the forthcoming year. 2023 will be an election year as our term of office ends for all Councillors.

At their AGM in November 2021 the Hut Committee had a significant number of members retire after long service and were unable to elect officers. They requested that the Parish Council take responsibility for the Village Hut. In 1973 the Hut and the land it sits on was placed in trust for the Village. The original trustees were The Rev. Stevens, Mr. Derek Wilkinson and Mr. James Bromley. Paragraph 2 of the Conveyance suggests that the trusteeship is passed down to each new committee with responsibility for the Village Hut. There is evidence that this has always been the case and that this responsibility is explained to each new committee member as they take up their role.

The Parish Council are duty bound to give this request serious consideration. In many Villages it is the local Parish Council who have responsibility for running the Village Hall or Hut. This matter remains unresolved and should be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

John Stanley, Chairman of Swefling Parish Council