

REPORT TO BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL ASSEMBLY 2019 FROM THE PROGRESS GROUP

The Progress Group as a Working Group of the Parish Council have had another successful year. We have been able to support the PC with various projects and tasks. We have been very pleased to welcome Ian Tack to the Group. He answered our request for help to produce some Emergency Procedures (Community Reliance and Response) for the Village and following his research into the requirement has been very successful in obtaining offers of help and assistance. The Community Reliance and Response Group is now firmly established. It has its own website and Ian has the details of all the volunteers and the skills and equipment they can offer.

Ian has also taken on the task of updating the Village Life part of the Blisworth Parish website and is assisting with the Parish Council area. It is hoped that organisations will let him know of all events so that the village calendar can prevent clashes and provide a full schedule of 'What's On' in Blisworth.

Both the Old Cemetery and the Chapel and St Johns churchyards continue to be maintained by a willing band of volunteers. Please visit them at this time of year as the spring flowers are abundant and thanks to Paulette Kennedy and the work carried out in the Old Cemetery, the blossom, bird song and flowers make it a lovely place to sit a while.

The Group decided that a Village Survey should be undertaken and as a first step held a very successful weekend asking the village what is most important to them. Although the number of residents attending was not great, the topics and ideas have proved very enlightening. As always roads and pavements feature prominently and we asked the PC to invite Helen Howard of Highways to visit again to see the problem areas. Helen Howard visited in March and we are hopeful with the support of our County Councillor, Adam Brown that improvements will be made. Residents are also concerned at the lack of dropped kerbs and we have asked those with pushchairs, wheel chairs and mobility scooters to highlight the problem areas. We understand that as a disability matter, funding is separate and once identified should be implemented. With so much going on in the village and with the local councils, we will need a lot of help with a full Survey. Unfortunately we are a bit too late to do a Neighbourhood Plan which might have informed any new Unitary Authority as to our wishes not just in planning terms but with our environment.

Another area highlighted in the Survey and from residents is the need for outdoor play equipment not just at the Playing Fields. We were unsuccessful in a late bid for funding for a first piece of equipment but we are looking into the possibility of producing a full project plan for equipment for older children and adults to include sites, maintenance and health and safety considerations, If feasible we would apply for funding from the South Northants New Homes bonus.

We were heavily involved in the commemoration of end of World War One. Jointly with the Heritage Society a wonderful book giving details of the lives of those from the village who died in WW1 and life in the Blisworth at that time. Copies of the book are still available and information is still being discovered about those involved. We were pleased to co-ordinate the displays of knitted poppies around the village. All the organisations and many individuals made the hundreds of poppies and the WI made a display by the village sign.

The Litter Group have gone from strength to strength under the chairmanship of Tony Hillier, again producing a winning entry to the CPRE Litter Heroes Competition. The Litter Champion initiative is firmly embedded into the Primary School life with certificates and badges awarded to those who take part in the campaign. Various village organisations have donated money towards the purchase of new bins and together with the prize money some are already in place around the village. Others are awaiting decoration by the Art and Craft Group. Other equipment to help the litter pickers has

also been purchased and the Group have been successful in persuading the Council to include the new bins in their regular rubbish collections.

Last year as 2017 winners of the Best Village competition we were not eligible to enter the competition. Now renamed Northamptonshire Village Awards under the sponsorship of CPRE the entry is being spearheaded by Andrea Holton. Many thanks to her for taking on the task and we wish her luck with the judges visit.

We are always happy to raise issues brought to us by residents and help the Parish Council with the more time consuming items.