

# Chairmans' Annual Report 2023/2024

St Nicholas Hurst Parish Council

My eighteenth and final report as Chairman of St Nicholas Hurst Parish Council. As I look back over the years and my time as chair, it's been an honour to serve the residents of Hurst. Our Councillors have had some amazing achievements and delivered a great service to the village.

For most of my tenure, Maria, our trusted clerk, has been by my side and ensured our compliance and suburb financial management. I would like to thank Maria for her continued support and hard work over the past 14 years – couldn't have done it without you!

## Councillors

Also saying farewell is Paul Palmer. Paul has been a very proactive Councillor, masterminding the Jubilee and supporting me with our pond project, amongst other things. He has also looked after our social media presence and marketing.

Alastair, after 15 years, is also sadly leaving the team. Famous for decorating our annual Christmas tree and has been an integral part of the group, supporting on various projects around the village.

Kate, after 3 years, left us due to work pressures. Kate was invaluable with her help/support and guidance on a number of important planning applications.

## Precept (Hurst Parish Council Resident Tax) for 2023/24

Our annual precept for 2023/24 was set at £57,288, representing an increase of £2.66 per household per annum.

## Planning

For what has now become the norm, planning took up most of time again during the year, I must thank all councillors for the time they dedicated, some were very sensitive and created a lot of village interest.

## Grants/Donations

Once again in March, we considered all grant applications put forward. We were delighted to be able to award grants to the following organisations to support their valuable work within our community:

Keep Mobile- £550

The Link - £450

CAB - £600

Arc Counselling - £400

Hurst Youth Club - £1,800

Hurst Cricket Club - new bowling machine

## **Additional Dog Bins**

Following various requests from residents, we fitted 2 new dog bins at Lodge Road and Broadcommon Road.



## **St Nicholas Night**

St Nicholas Night was once again a great success with a record turnout. In December, Revered Graham Theobald kindly switched on the lights.

Many Thanks go to....

Chocoholics - Liz and Roger Cossey for the Chocolate filled Goodie bags

Richard Hardy for the Mulled wine

Chris Zeal - Haines Hill for providing his support and equipment to ensure the tree made it safely into place.

Waltham St Lawrence Silver Band

## **Parks and Play areas.**

New benches were installed at the community Orchard, Davis Street and Martineau green.

New trees in the community orchard.

Updated all the electrics at School Road playpark, including new lights/electrical sockets and new underground supplies.



In April this year our dear friend John Edwards sadly passed away. John will be remembered for so many projects in the village. One project, as a Governor, was the organisation of the school extension, bringing excellent and much needed improvements to the facilities. He was also chair of the Village halls committee for many years, seeing the halls through some very challenging financial times. He successfully oversaw the Millennium activities along with the new roof and hall refurbishments.

During the last 15 years John has chaired the Hurst alms-houses charity, organising various major projects, including the new properties in Hinton Road.

For the last 2 years he also chaired the Hurst Neighbourhood plan

Our thoughts are with his wife Pat and the family - RIP John and thanks for everything.

On that very sad note, I say goodbye, thanks for everything Hurst!

Wayne Smith