Good evening, this is your Chair’s report for 2021. It has been a very productive year for East Goscote Parish Council despite the challenges we have all faced during the pandemic. Council meetings moved online very smoothly, and I’d like to thank councillors and staff for adapting to this new way of working.

**Council and Staff:**

This year we have had five new councillors join the Council – Nick Shivers, Carren Tate, Rod Axon, Gemma Slack and Victoria Oakes. I would like to welcome these new councillors, all of whom bring valuable skills and experience which will benefit our community.

Two long standing councillors resigned, Cathy Duffy and John Malpus. Both councillors devoted many years of their time to East Goscote - the Council thanks them for their service and efforts.

We have a full council of 10 Councillors. I have recently taken on the role of Chair following on from Cllr Malpus’s resignation. I want to personally thank John for all the support and advice he has given me over the years. I have big shoes to fill!

Our Vice Chair is Michelle Nelson - her support is invaluable.

I’d like to use this opportunity to highlight the excellent work of the Council’s staff.

This year our admin assistant, Caroline Taylor, left to pursue other opportunities. Caroline worked here for 5 years and she has been missed. We wish her well for the future.

Liz Pizer, our clerk for 29 years carries out her role with professionalism and good humour. Liz ensures the legal duties of the council are fulfilled, as well as providing admin support and staff supervision.

Her work is vital in enabling the Council to perform its function and getting things done for our village.

Charlie Cadle continues in the Caretakers role and provides exemplary work around the village.

Cllr Webbon continues as Tree Warden on a voluntary basis and Cllr Shivers as Flood warden and I extend my thanks to them for that.

A heartfelt thank you to all staff and councillors this year.

**Planning Applications:**

During the year 18 planning Applications have been received and considered by the Parish Council.

There has been huge interest once again surrounding the large development application for the Land Off Melton Road. The Parish Council is working with residents and the planning department alike to make sure that views and concerns are heard and that the process is fair and transparent.

I would like to thank Cllr Axon in particular for the detailed and extensive work he puts into research for this application and also to the KEGG group for all that they do to keep residents informed and supported.

The new local plan due to be published and submitted to the National Inspectorate in March has now been delayed and is expected in late Spring/early Summer.

**Remembrance Sunday**.

Covid restrictions meant that this could not take place as it would in normal years. The council still marked the event with the poppies on the lampposts. I sincerely hope that this year we can mark this important event in the usual way.

**Village Facilities**

The Tennis Court continues to be popular with 140 members. During the winter the court is closed for protection and the surface then cleared by our caretaker Charlie. I hope that residents will be able to enjoy the courts this year and get out in the fresh air after such a difficult winter.

The pavilion car park has now been resurfaced. Thank you to our staff and councillors who oversaw that work.

There have been new swings installed on the Ling Dale play area.

We have new village boundary signs – Cllrs Nelson and Webbon in particular did lots of work to make that happen.

A bench was installed on Long Furrow in recognition of Dr Shah’s long service as the village GP.

The council formed new committees to explore the feasibility of having improved Christmas lights, climate change/electric vehicle, a development plan, and youth provision.

**Vandalism:**

The cost of vandalism for March 19 – March 20 amounted to £150 which is extremely low compared to other years. This was mainly damage to the wet pour surfacing on the play areas and some chains and locks being stolen when the play areas were closed.

**Dog Fouling:**

This continues to be a constant complaint received by the Clerk and Councillors, this is despite the fact that thousands of poo bags are sold and there being a plentiful supply of bins around the Village.

The library continues to distribute dog bags at 80p per pack of 50 when it has been allowed to open. Any profit from the sale of the bags is retained by the library towards its upkeep.

We are looking at purchasing large warning signs to deter those who don’t pick up and have them installed in known problem areas.

Allowing your dog to foul without clearing up afterwards is totally unacceptable behaviour and we need YOUR help to catch those people responsible for spoiling our streets and green spaces. If you know an environmental offender, call 01509 634564 or email: cleaner.greener@charnwood.gov.uk.

**East Goscote Library**

The library has had to close for much of this year due to restrictions but hope to fully open again on April 12th.

**Parish Phone App/New Website**

The success of the website and the App continues.

The website has had 16,082 page views over the last 12 months, which is a record number and almost double that of 2020. Our Parish app has had a total of 959 downloads, which again, is up on previous years.

To download the app please see details at the end of this report.

**Neighbourhood Watch**

Cllr Tate has taken on the role of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. More NW volunteers are required around the village.

**Snow Warden Scheme**

East Goscote Parish Council is registered with the County Council Snow Warden Scheme. This means that they supply salt and pay the Parish Council for clearing snow and ice around the village where it is considered dangerous. Charlie and Nick have worked hard spreading the salt whenever we have had snow or icy conditions this last winter.

**Long Furrow**

This long-standing magazine continues to be published quarterly and has been able to return to colour prints and full distribution.

Gareth Roberts continues to design the magazine with help from the committee members and John Malpus has is now the editor.

Volunteer distributors are always needed so please get in touch with the delivery coordinator, using the contact details provided in the Long Furrow magazine.

The Council continue to support the publication.

**Speedwatch**

The Speedwatch Project has not taken place due to covid restrictions. We plan to resume the scheme this year if possible and volunteers are always needed. More information will be issued to residents when we have a clearer picture regarding dates.

Banners are placed occasionally on the bus shelters and residents have kindly taken up offers for stickers onto their wheelie bins to get the message “20 is plenty” around the village.

**Next Year’s Projects Include:**

For next year we hope to continue with the high standard of maintenance around the village.

We are planning some nature boosting projects such a wildflower verges and changes to mowing schedules on top of the mound. Not only will this bring colour to the village, it will also support our insects and wildlife.

A summer holiday club is being planned with Finding Fitness (subject to a lottery grant) to provide children in East Goscote with outdoor activities during July and August.

We are looking at possibly having more Christmas lights on the village this year, or next. Costs and possible sites are being considered.

Our website is being upgraded to make it more accessible.

New cycle racks have been installed by the village hall, the pavilion, and the village green play area.

**Thank You’s:**

I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors, outgoing Councillors Malpus and Duffy, our current County Councillor, Mr Poland, and our MP, Mr Argar for their help and support during the past year. In addition, I would like to thank our staff for their service and expertise during the year.

Thank you to the all the community volunteers who pulled together during this terrible year to look out for their friends and neighbours.

Lastly, thank you to Reverend Tim Day, not only for providing an opportunity for people to attend service remotely, but also for his assistance with Covid support groups and his work around the vaccination centre at the church.

Chair (Laurie Needham)

**DOWNLOAD HERE USING YOUR SCANNER OR GO INTO YOUR APP STORE AND SIMPLY - SEARCH “EAST GOSCOTE PARISH COUNCIL”**

