**Annual Meeting with the Parish April 2021 – Chairman’s Report**

Two years have gone by since the last Annual Parish meeting. Some highlights effecting Steventon include over this 2 year period include:

At that time we still had hanging over us the appeal from Network Rail to demolish Steventon Railway Bridge. The Appeal process had been going on since the Vale of White Horse District Council refused permission for demolition of Brunel’s Grade II listed Railway Bridge in August 2018. This was withdrawn in 2020 thus ending the threat of having our High Street closed for almost a year and the logistical transport headache for residents, businesses and people in neighbouring villages.

In February 2020, after a long battle with Oxfordshire County Council to demonstrate the need for a Pedestrian Crossing on Hanney Road, it was finally installed.

The play area has been upgraded and been added to with the installation of a concrete table tennis table, zip wire and 3 picnic tables, all of which are in regular use.

Since March 2020 we have experienced unprecedented times with the wretched COVID-19 Coronavirus. The Parish Council would like to thank residents of Steventon for their community spirit, comradery and ingenuity during these stressful times. It was a delight to see the support given to the NHS and front line workers and the messages given in the form of painted/chalked stones, pavements and walls plus trinkets dangling from trees.

A thank you goes to all the staff in the Co-op who have maintained a vital supply of food to residents and delivery to vulnerable residents, well done.

I would like to thank fellow Parish Councillors for all the hard work they have done during the past two years and Angela, as clerk, for all her support and advice. Thanks also go to residents who come along and take part in virtual Public Participation, as ever you do like to keep us on our toes and take part in lively debate, an important aspect ensuring that key issues affecting the Parish are tackled.

From the endeavours of the Parish Council and volunteer’s this last year some highlights to look out for are:

* Speed signs (similar to that in use in East Hanney) to be installed on Hanney Road and the High Street;
* Outside gym equipment to be installed on the Village Green;
* Art work, funded by developers s106 contributions, installed around the village including:
  + Benches
  + Village map
  + Heritage trail;
* The Environment Agency will, over a 6 month period, remove restrictions in the Ginge Brook and clear a major blockage in Milton. This we are informed, result in both an increased flow and a noticeable reduction in height of water within the Ginge Brook. We look forward to the outcomes of this work and the continual maintenance of the Ginge Brook that are intended to alleviate flooding concerns of residents in close proximity of the Ginge Brook, and;
* The long awaited referendum on Steventon Neighbourhood Plan.

**Dr Chris Wilding**

**Chair, Steventon Parish Council.**