**Parish Council report to village 2023 - 24.**

**What the Parish Council does**. We look after various village features and amenities, for example the playground, footpaths, ditches, street lighting, bus shelter; and we are consulted by the District Council planning dept on all applications in the village within the parish boundaries (which include Edingthorpe Green and Stow Hill).

The Council receives its main funding through about 3-4% of residents’ Council Tax which comes to us, which last year translated into not quite £6,500.update

**Planning applications.**  We were consulted on several during the year to which there was no objection check

**Playground**  The playground continues to be popular with families not just from our village but from all around the area. It is monitored for safety by council members and inspected yearly, and some of the old equipment has been removed. A motion sensitive camera captures images to discourage anti social activity

**The Sir William Paston Charity** owns the almshouses and some farmland. It is administered by trustees, currently Nicky Emberson and Jonathan Care. The Parish council has no formal involvement other than appointing the trustees (as provided by the Charity Commission scheme which set it up), though we have in the past helped sort out problems.

**Highways.** An electronic sign warns drivers exceeding the 40mph limit through the village and also monitors traffic speeds. details

**Footpaths** Yarmouth Way and Sandy Loke are now on the definitive map. The County Council have signposted Sandy Lane and cut back protruding branches. Hemp Lane, which led from the former blacksmiths to the cliff top, is the subject of an application by the Open Spaces Society’s for re-instatement and registration. The County Council have refused the application but there is an appeal pending.

**St Margaret’s Church** – is part of our national heritage which is in our village and for which accordingly we have some responsibility. It is no longer considered viable just as a place of worship, so work is now being carried out to enable it to be used for functions and events, particularly needed since the village hall had to be closed because of lack of support. the creation of an open area at the rear, laying on water, and installing toilets and kitchen. Also the restoration of the medieval wall paintings has been completed by Arte Conservation under the direction of wall painting expert Tom Organ. The paintings are now more clearly defined, and over the chancel arch the curly- haired angel and his wings are now clearly visible**.** The cost of all of these works totalling a little under £300,000 was funded from grants, from the village hall site net sale proceeds, and some big personal donations. trees

**The pond,** cleared last year by Pip Clabon and his team, - our thanks to them- and now really looks like a traditional village pond, and teems with wildlife raft

**The Paston in bloom** bulb planting project has been extended with the planning of many more bulbs, while the flowers along the wall in Pond Road have now matured and thickened out. This is organised by the Community Group, our thanks to Denise Mckeough and Maggie Brett and also to those who have generously donated the plants and bulbs. Village also took part in tree planting

**Village amenities generally** The playground and flowers are two examples of initiatives to improve the general look of the village. But those efforts can be let down by things outside our control, for example what residents do with their homes and gardens so long as they do not breach any law. We do what we can and involve the District Council where appropriate.

**Website.** We’d like toremind people that on the village website pastonvillage.org.uk will be found date place and time of next meeting, agenda, minutes of last meeting, yearly accounts and the council’s adopted policies. There is also information about the village plus in the news section any major happenings or developments.

**Help needed.**  Anyone who would like to help or might be willing to come onto the Parish Council when there is next a vacancy, please get in touch with any member of the council (list with some contact details on the website)