

Dear Residents of Chapel & Hill Chorlton

I hope that this letter finds you safe and well and looking forward to Christmas despite the constraints placed upon us all by the Coronavirus.

This has been a year, in which many changes have occurred not only nationally but also locally with the loss of your former award-winning Parish Council in the summer. However, I am pleased to let you know that your Parish Council is now up to five strong having co-opted David Harrison and Richard Montague to join the three Borough Councillors appointed by the Borough Council.

However, Paul, Barry and I will be stepping down in May 2021 at the County Council election, to which this parish council election will be added. Consequently, we are looking for more residents to join us to make up our full complement of seven members. So, if you are interested in having your say on such important matters as planning and Council Services, as well as ensuring the public parts of the parish are in good order, please contact the Parish Clerk at chapelandhillchorltonpc@gmail.com. You will be an equal part of a team, with collective responsibility for helping to foster a community built around the needs of its residents. Please do come and join us – you will be truly welcomed.

Already we have some exciting plans in the pipeline for 2021 in response to suggestions from your fellow residents. Parish appearance is a strong element in those plans and I am delighted that Richard has volunteered to take charge of this. He will liaise with our grass-cutting contractor, look after the notice boards, the BT Box & defibrillator and the flower tubs but if you notice that something else needs a bit of attention please let the Clerk know.

We are also looking to get the grass verges in Hill Chorlton cut by our contractor. Currently this is being done by residents, but they are not insured and they have not sought the permission of the County Council. We will seek this permission (insurance will be needed – hence using our contractor).

We commissioned a report on the parish notice boards by a local joiner who basically said they needed to be replaced. This can be done reasonably cheaply in aluminium or more expensively in hard wood. Some residents have expressed a preference for wooden ones. Richard is looking into this for us as part of his parish appearance brief.

Excessive speeding on the A51 through Hill Chorlton has been on the agenda for some time and action on this issue is planned for next year, following an intensive investigation over the past three months by David Harrison. His report and suggestions can be viewed under the “Community” section of the Parish Council website. Based on that report, at its recent meeting, the Parish Council decided that a second Speed Indicator Device (SID) is needed on the east-bound section of the A51 between Woodside and Sandy Lane. We shall also be asking the County Council Highways Department to consider additional traffic calming measures by extending the double white lines at its eastern end up to possibly as far as the SID.

What also might help with speeding is having better street furniture on the A51, such as village gates/signs at both ends of Hill Chorlton hamlet. These would have signs on them saying welcome to Hill Chorlton, please drive carefully. We are aware that residents in Stableford would also like a sign there. These have worked well elsewhere. We would of course then remove the County Council signs, which are obscured by trees.

Naturally, in order to deliver the above projects, there would have to be a significant increase in the annual precept; Band D properties would pay an estimated £52.60 compared to the current year of £22.69, representing an increase of £29.91. These are maximum and mostly a one-off cost as we would seek external funding. The Parish Council would welcome comments and views from all its residents throughout the Parish on the above priorities, so a final budget can be set in January 2021. Please contact the Clerk on chapelandhillchorltonparishcouncil@gmail.com. Please note your comments will be shared only with all Parish Councillors so that an informed decision can be made.

On behalf of all your Councillors, I wish you a joyous Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Graham Hutton, Chair of Chapel & Hill Chorlton Parish Council and Borough Councillor