### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING REPORTS FOR

### MONDAY 12th APRIL 2021

**REPORT FROM THE CADDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**

Dear Residents,

No-one could have predicted the events of the last year, and to state it has be unprecedented, would be both obvious and a massive understatement.

However, being ever the optimist, after all the pain, problems, inconvenience, and at times boredom not to mention the exasperation for those of us trying make sense of home schooling. It would appear all the indicators currently point to the fact that we are over the worst of the pandemic, and things will slowly return to a facsimile of normal. As this happens, my hope it that we will have all taken a glimpse at a world where we don’t need everything we want, and that when I comes to it, it is the simpler things that we take for granted that we should appreciate the most.

What has been clear to me from the start of the first lockdown is that when tested to the extreme, the resolve and caring nature of the residents of Caddington and the surrounding areas pushes past everything in its way and looks after not only its own, but all those in need of help.

Caddington Care as you would expect have been at the forefront, caring for our sick and elderly. The doctors surgery have worked tirelessly to provide the upmost medical care possible. I could try to name all that have stepped up but will not try as I fear my inevitable forgetful omission would serve to take away from all the good that has been dispensed over the last twelve months. I must however shine a light on the work of Medigreen pharmacy and Stephen Quinn, manager of the CO-OP, who have been awarded Organisation of the year, and Villager of the year respectively. Congratulations to both and a massive thank you from the community.

A brief respite from all things covid, came only to be replaced by rain, and lots of it. Our newly formed emergency response group had its first test with severe flooding along Mancroft rd and into Aley green. If it is possible to have a baptism of fire with so much water around, the response team sprung into action clearing gullies, distributing sandbags, co-ordinating response, even organising overnight accommodation should the worst happen and residents need to be evacuated. I like to think due to their actions the flooding was dealt with, resulting in minimal damage.

Although at times it may not feel it, Caddington has always been, and continues to be, a warm caring community that pulls together when it is called upon, and to this end I would like to thank every resident for whatever part they have played, in even the smallest way, to make this extraordinary year a little easier for all.

Kind Regards, Mark Russell, Caddington Parish Council Chairman.

**Summary of Accounts 2020 – 2021:** The Parish Council began the financial year with a balance of £121,914.28 ending on 31st March 2021 with a closing balance of £115,859.10. The precept for 2021-22 was set at £120,000 equating in an annual increase of £2.41 per Band D property, bring it to £72.90 per band D (£6.07 per month)

**REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS**

**Caddington Watch** has continued with StreetWatch throughout the pandemic.

There was short period during the strictest lockdown when we were asked to stop patrols.

Until very recently we were constrained to operating in pairs. We are now allowed up to six people per session.

Now that lockdown is easing, we plan to restart our SpeedWatch sessions.

We continue to produce the Crime Statistics for the whole of Bedfordshire and these are distributed widely – Town Councils, Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Watch teams.

We have helped with the COVID Vaccine roll-out.

A separate group of people within the village are setting up a DogWatch team. They go through the same vetting procedure as StreetWatch and are also covered by the same Police insurance. Once established, we hope to meet up with them

**Heathfield Friends:**

No customer sessions have taken place since the March 2020.

CBC continue to use the buildings

As a storage and distribution hub for cleaning materials.

For the storage of approx. 400 office chairs, which enables social distancing at their various offices.

The Parish Warden uses the site as a base for his activities.

Heathfield Friends continue to assist at the site.

Opening and closing the rear gates to allow overflow parking for Caddington Village School.

Accompanying CBC contractors as they go about the maintenance of various systems.

Visiting daily to make sure that the buildings are secure and that any new maintenance issues are identified.

The central heating system failed during the Winter but has now been fully restored.

There have been many surveys completed, which will inform planning about the future layout of the five-acre site. Both the Parish Council and Heathfield Friends await the outcome of these deliberations.

Current Government guidelines indicate that Community Centres will be able to get back to some sort of normality by 17th May. We are indebted to Simon Patterson of BRCC for keeping us up to date with the latest guidance for potential re-opening

**Caddington Care:** Jane Payton provided below report:

Our activities this year have been entirely defined by the Covid pandemic.

On 17th March 2020 we met with representatives of the Parish Council, Doctor’s surgery, school, churches, Youth Club, Heathfield Friends, Streetwatch to discuss our response to the impending situation. CaddingtonCobra Committee was created.

Following a Leaflet drop to every house, thanks to the Scouts, we recruited more that 70 new Cobra volunteers. We realised that many of our current volunteers would be in a vulnerable age bracket and although many could continue working from home would not be able to go out and about. Our Cobra volunteers were willing and able to do this.

Our priorities were shopping, collecting medication and mental health.

For the first few months the Office phone was incredibly busy up to 20 calls a day. We manned the phone over the weekends. A daily prescription rota and a cashless system of shopping were set up as was hot meal delivery service.

To try and mitigate against feelings of isolation and loneliness, we set up a network of befrienders, where volunteers phoned clients. Many of these connections are ongoing.

Our usual role of providing lifts to clients has been much reduced as medical appointments, hairdressing and shopping trips have in many cases not been happening. Fortunately, our small band of drivers have been able to meet any requests for transport to essential medical appointments and more recently for ‘the jab’.

At Christmas we assembled and personally delivered 223 ‘bundles’ of goodies to clients. These were really appreciated!

Town and Country Estate Agents asked for donations for CaddingtonCare of tea, coffee and biscuits. With no prospect of our coffee mornings starting up the donations were distributed to 40 thirsty CaddingtonCare clients.

A group of volunteers have been regularly assisting with the vaccinations at the Priory gardens in Dunstable.

More recently, we have delivered 225 Lindt bunnies and an Easter greeting card to our clients as a reminder that we haven’t forgotten them and, fingers tightly crossed, hope for better things to come.

As I write, we are maintaining the services that we have been providing for the last year but looking forward to the time when we can begin to resume some kind of normality. So many of our clients constantly say that they can’t wait for Coffee mornings to start again at Heathfield.

None of what we have achieved would have been possible without the help of the volunteers and the tireless work of the Committee.

I cannot finish without acknowledging the support of the residents of Caddington to their friends and neighbours. I am constantly hearing of many thoughtful acts of kindness.

**Caddington Pre-School:** Niki Summers provided below report:

It has been a tough year for everyone living with Covid-19; staff, children and their families have been affected in many ways due to the virus, be it financially, mentally, physically or health wise.

Caddington Pre-School has continued to be open to children of Key Workers; many working for the NHS and emergency services who have continued working to keep our country running and saving lives during the pandemic.

As an early Years setting, we have suffered setbacks; financial losses, mentally challenging and last-minute guidelines to adhere to, employing new staff members then going into lockdown and logistical changes.

The team at Caddington Pre-School have continually strived to provide a clean and healthy environment to protect children and staff from contracting Covid-19. This has resulted in zero cases of Covid-19 at Caddington Pre-School and ensured we have remained open with no disruption to Key Workers.

With the introduction of Lateral Flow testing for Early Years staff we are able to ensure that staff are not infectious, safe to work with others and continue to offer our services to all children returning to pre-school.

Social distancing is difficult to maintain within an Early Years setting with young children. Staff plan and arrange activities to encourage distancing, promote ‘no touching’ and good hygiene rules. The children have been unable to partake in some favourite activities this year at pre-school however we have tried to introduce new activities to stimulate their interest.

With the support of Caddington Parish Council we have ordered a new ‘Dress Up Trolley’ for our home corner role play area. This trolley is easily movable as it is on wheels. It offers hanging and shelving areas, along with a built-in mirror. The trolley is wipe able so can be cleaned to ensure it is free from germs. We have a wide range of dress up items that can be cleaned, washed and rotated to ensure we provide safe activities for the children.

On behalf of the committee, staff and children at Caddington Pre-School, thank you very much for your support.

**Scout Group:** Rita Tims, Group Scout Leader, provided below report:

The Group has faired quite well due to Covid and has currently got 89 Young People, with 5 new members joining us in May.

We have run zoom Section meetings for the whole of last term, which has proved difficult at times. Thankfully, from now on we can meet in the Headquarter face to face with a limited number of 15 Children and 5 Adults. The good news is we can meet outdoor with an unlimited number of Children, so this term we are going to run mostly outdoor meetings and hope the weather is kind to us.

We currently have

22 Slip End Beavers - who meet on Tuesdays

19 Caddington Beavers - who meet on Fridays

14 Cubs - who meet early on Thursdays

19 Wolves - who meet later on Thursdays

14 Scouts - Who meet on Mondays

We also have the 4th Dunstable Cub Pack using our Headquarter on Wednesdays as they are having their Headquarters re-built.

All Sections are running exciting programmes with lots of fun, doing things outside instead of being limited to inside only.

We are seeking extra Adult Help as several of our Leaders have resigned due to pressure of work. If anyone is interested in joining our Leadership Team, please contact me and join us to help the Children of Caddington and Slip End Villages.

**Allotments:** John Dudley, Caddington Allotments and Leisure Gardens Management Secretary, provided below report:

The allotments now have 67 tenants and we are currently working our way through our waiting list. We expect almost full occupancy by summer.

Since the beginning of lockdown in March 2020, many tenants have reported how much they really value their plots and are grateful to have an outdoor space for both exercise and interest.

The Covid situation last year meant that we could not have any of our usual fund raising activities, such as the plant sale, open days, coffee mornings, etc. This has had an impact on our funds.

Unfortunately, we have to report that there was a spate of vandalism in the autumn. This culminated in our main allotment hut (used for meetings, social events and library) being broken into and seriously vandalised. Volunteers have now restored some semblance of order.

Volunteers also helped restore the main allotment driveway, which had become dangerously potholed. The committee want to thank the Parish Council for maintenance work that included flood prevention by clearing the ditch at the back of the allotments, increasing security by installing CCTV cameras on our hut and maintaining the hedge in Folly Lane.

We all look forward to a return to normality in the summer of 2021.

**GRANT AWARDS 2021/22**

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| **Group** |  | **Purpose** | **2021/22** |
| Caddington School PTA |  | Outdoor sports equipment |  £ 519.20  |
| Caddington Pre-School |  | Toddler Dress up trolley |  £ 360.00  |
| Caddington Recreation Assc |  | Club gent toilet drain repairs & refurb |  £ 2,500.00  |