

Drinkstone Parish Council Annual Report June 2025

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The previous 12 months has seen the Parish Council embark on improvements to its two primary assets, namely The Cricket and the allotments.

On The Cricket, the Parish Council has invested a considerable sum from CIL funds replacing the childrens play equipment which had reached the end of its life. The substantial works were completed by Playdale Ltd, whilst some preparation work was undertaken by volunteers. The Parish Council has planted a hedge to the southern aspect of The Cricket, this work primarily being undertaken by volunteers and the hedging provided by MSDC. The surface of The Cricket has become quite weedy, and we commissioned a sports pitch treatment company to treat the area, for which we received a grant from SCC.

Following an approach from The Allotment trustees, the PC has commissioned the installation of fencing around the Rattlesden Road Allotments to reduce the crop damage by wildlife. A similar scheme for Gedding Road is pending further design input as the perimeter to this site is not straight forward. Once again the substantial work was undertaken by a professional contractor with some preparation work by volunteers.

The PC organised an Easter Egg Hunt and Childrens' Christmas Party, both of which were successful.

Last summer the PC and volunteers refurbished the village sign which is located at the entrance to Green Close.

We have installed additional Dog Waste bins following requests from dog walkers and volunteers have repaired/replaced broken posts as necessary.

Highways continue to be a topic that affects everyone. The PC has conducted a number of pothole surveys, forwarding these results to SCC Highways Dept, and we have kept up a productive dialogue with SCC and our local MP. Obviously we are limited by SCC's finances and overall road maintenance plans however our continued communication ensures we are not overlooked and in recent weeks we received details of an extensive resurfacing plan for Drinkstone to be undertaken in the next 12 months. We cannot guarantee that these works will actually materialise, nor can we advise on the quality/longevity of any work undertaken as this is entirely in SCCs hands, however I believe we have done our best in raising the profile of our highways issues. The PC has acquired a third SID (Speed Indicator Device) for which we received a grant from SCC.

The PC's finances are in good health. Our annual precept is approx £11,000, Recent CIL grants (for infrastructure projects) have been significant in the past two years amounting to

approximately £30,000 of which £25,000 has been spent on allotment fencing and play equipment. CIL grants are particularly lumpy, (i.e. large sums at infrequent intervals). Other grants (highways and pitch treatment) amounted to £3,500. We hold reserves of approximately £20,000.