

## **Thirston Parish Council**

### **Outgoing Chair's Report 2025**

It is hard to believe another year has passed. Once again Councillors have had a busy year dealing with the regular business of this small but thriving Parish.

Inevitably, planning matters continue to be an important part of the Parish Council's work and can be contentious. A new Liaison Group is underway at Eshott Airfield which hopefully will allow the more constructive relationship we have experienced to date to continue. That said, there continue to be a small number of complaints about flying activities which we are passing on to Northumberland County Council. The application in an adjacent Parish relating to an industrial plant at High Park has been re-submitted. Having listened to local concerns, we (in common with other local PCs) have lodged objections to this. Traffic issues at Pumpkin Pie Nursery have been another continuing theme which we have raised with NCC. We expect they, together with the owners, to come up with a workable solution. In addition, consultation is ongoing around a speed limit reduction to 20 mph through West Thirston to enhance safety.

For a number of years, water leaks have been coming through the Narrow Bank footpath in West Thirston making it less safe in winter. After several attempts, NCC and NWL now believe the root cause of the problem has been identified and fixed. We are also grateful for NCC's work addressing a number of other longstanding issues. There are still a few more to go but definite progress! We have also seen considerable resurfacing work to the pavements through West Thirston. We are fortunate to have a very dedicated County Councillor, Glen Sanderson, and both directly and indirectly he has supported work across the Parish and helped us navigate the complexities of NCC to make progress.

I would like to thank all those volunteers who have helped keep the Parish tidy, and especially once again the local WI who are supporting work on our bus shelters to make them more appealing.

We are pleased to be members of CRAG, a local initiative set up to monitor water quality through the length of the River Coquet from Rothbury. Looking after our environment is critical and this work will help us keep on top of any issues here.

It is a disappointment to end the year no longer able to meet in our Parish (future meetings will be at Gallery 45 in Felton) and with the loss of 4 Councillors, 1 resignation and 3 not standing again (including myself). There is more I could say but I do not feel that will be constructive. Parish Councillors are volunteers who give their own time and effort, doing their best to create a great local environment for their residents. Even if

only from a small minority, they should not have to face unnecessary confrontation and incivility. Parish Councillors do not, and should not, seek to be treated with more respect than others, but by the same token do not deserve to be treated with less.

Thank you to all those Councillors who have served with me and I wish those picking up the reins every success. I know they will look forward to serving our residents in the coming year and beyond. Please work with them, help them and if you have ideas on improvements let them know. Working together, we can retain this wonderful community in which we live.

John Marshall