

FROM 1977: THE PARISH COUNCIL

The first meeting of the Parish Council, the successor to the Parish Meeting, was in July 1977, Cameron Fraser was elected Chair. Although he had not been in the village long, he had experience of a Parish Council from the village he had moved from. Bob Boucher was the Vice-Chair and Diane Ashby was the Clerk. In August John Hyde became Chair of the Burial Board. Here are some of the issues that the Parish Council has tried to address over the following years:

Speeding - the coming of the A14 in 1994 and increased traffic levels led to many villagers expressing concerns about speeding. This issue has not gone away and the Parish Council continues to be committed to schemes such as Community Speedwatch and ongoing liaison with the Highways Department to address these concerns. See the article 'A Brief History of Speeding' on the village website for more detail about what has been done.

Street Lighting - there was a review of street lighting in 1987 trying to balance the level of illumination with cost and maintenance. For the same reason this will be done again in 2022.

Litter - Ollie Boucher inaugurated the annual litter pick in 1991. Her initiative won a prize at the Castle Ashby Game Fair - a litter bin!

Village Hall - between 1991 and 1994 one of the key achievements of the Parish Council, along with many collaborators in the village, was the construction of a new Village Hall. This involved the land purchase, design and building work, and fund-raising. Derek Mouland was a key figure in making it happen. Subsequently the Village Hall has become a well-run and financially self-sufficient asset to the village.

Surveys - these have been carried out in 1993, 2001 and 2021. All have been useful in informing the Parish Council on the the decisions it makes. Hard copies are available of all 3 surveys.

Millennium - this was celebrated by planting 2,000 Daffodils throughout the village and the addition of a clock tower on the Village Hall.

Churchyard - as the Churchyard is now closed responsibility for its maintenance has passed to the Parish Council since 2021.

Burial Ground - the extension to the Burial Ground was purchased in 2002 to ensure long-term capacity. The Burial Ground Committee is responsible for making sure all is in order.

Website - a village website was set up in 2001 by Alan Langley, the Chair of the Parish Council, and served the village well for many years. In 2021 a new website was set up by Mervyn Curtis, also Chair of the Parish Council, and has been well-received.

The Spring - improving the Spring trough and area around it remains a priority for the Parish Council. Herculean efforts by the then Chair, Richard West, in 2020 meant that a huge amount of silt was removed and it was possible to see the bottom of the trough for the first time in many years.

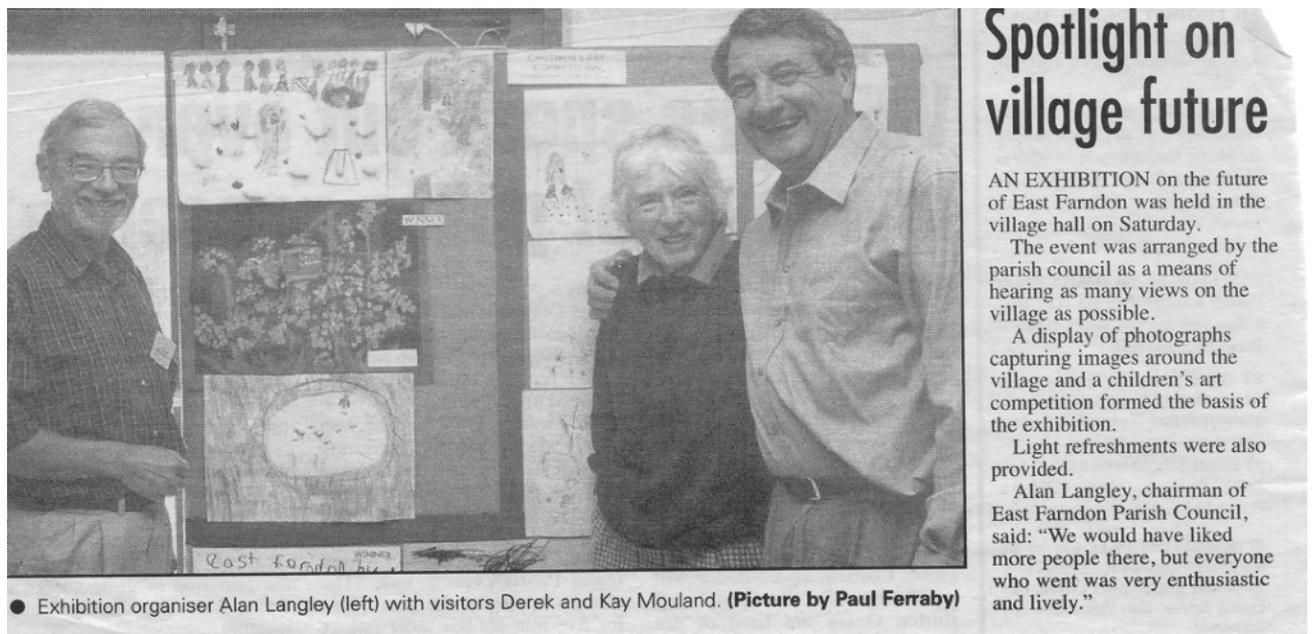
West Northamptonshire Council - the change to a new unitary authority has, in the short-term, caused more work for the Parish Council, particularly the Clerk, with an emphasis on new policies, and getting to understand new processes to ensure a smooth transition.

Clerk's role - this key role has become more professionalised over the years, particularly with new legislation like GDPR and a continual emphasis on risk management.

Village organisations - whilst the Parish Council has a key role in the life of the village many other organisations, initiated or supported by the Parish Council, make the village what it is, including

- Parochial Church Council
- United Charities
- Village Hall Committee
- Footpath Warden
- Tree Wardens
- Community Speedwatch
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Marriott Green
- War Memorial
- Women's Institute (sadly no longer with us)

A huge thanks to all of the people involved! Hope no one has been missed out.



As part of the 2001 Survey an exhibition took place at the Village Hall to help to find out more about people's views. Here the Chair of the Parish Council, Alan Langley, is pictured with Derek Moulnd (and his wife Kay), who was a key figure in the building of the new Village Hall. This article is from the Harborough Mail, 13th September 2001.