

Dennington Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting
Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
Chairman's Report 2020/2021



An aerial view of our Village.

INTRODUCTION:

Welcome to my first Annual Parish Meeting Report.

Since the last Annual Meeting, the good weather and optimism of the summer and autumn was replaced by a long winter, where many have felt fear, uncertainty or unease at some point.

Every family, business and organisation has had to adapt to the daily and weekly changes forced upon us. Some have coped well with change, perhaps enjoying the opportunity to spend more time with their immediate families or developing new business opportunities. Others have fared less well; missing their wider families and friends, fearful for their health or job, worried about debts or their children's education.

The extra risk we face from SARS-COV2 and the health benefits of non-pharmaceutical interventions (i.e. lockdowns) are largely affect by one part of society, whereas the costs and harms from lockdowns are borne by a different part of society. This inevitably creates tension and difficulties within families and communities.

Everyone has had a different experience of these historic times, but I am pleased that our village has worked together. We must continue to look after our families, friends and neighbours.

I would like to thank those businesses who have been providing villagers with essential supplies during the various lockdowns, in particular Jon & Lorna at the Dennington Queen for providing take away food, Vashti at the Neathouse for general provisions, Dave Dunnett for meat, Spencer Whitman for fish, along with Eve and Richard Berrill and Tim Moss for wine. I was delighted that they all offered free delivery of their products to those in the village who were self-isolating.

VOLUNTEERS:

The Trustees of the Consolidated Charities, Village Hall, Sports & Social Club, the Parochial Church Council and individual villagers have continued to work hard throughout the year, maintaining our village and of course clearing snow! In particular I need to thank:-

- Peter Nobbs for cutting the areas of grass in the Village Centre around the traffic directional signs, village seat and pond site. Peter has also cut the long grass and hedge at the edge of the village green and footpaths around Swainston Way. The Centre of the village always looks very tidy.
- Adrian Neill cuts the Village Recreation Field on a regular basis does an exceptional job. I am sure you'll agree with me by having this area of open space kept tidy, it gives us an important recreational area within the centre of the village.
- Roy Steward who provides the fuel for the mower. Fuel these days is expensive and having this provided free of charge makes a considerable saving for the council.
- Nick Watts for providing the labour and equipment at no cost to the council, cutting the hedges around the village green and allotments, and clearing ditches.
- Robert Rous for cutting the grass verge at the Frostley Bridge junction. This is a great improvement and hopefully, by having the grass shorter, it will help to reduce accidents at this junction.
- Ray Dearing for cutting the village hall hedge, grass strimming, the sports club hedge and not forgetting some of the parish footpaths.

The staff, governors and pupils of the Primary school have continued to work extremely hard; providing childcare for the children of key-workers and both physical and virtual lessons for our children.

I would like to thank our representatives from organisations within the village who have submitted reports to the Council.

PARISH COUNCILLORS:

The last parish election was in May 2019. Eight Councillors were returned to office in an uncontested election, resulting in a casual vacancy. This was initially filled by Ken Hoyle, and following Ken's resignation has now been filled by Rebecca Fox. I hope that Rebecca finds the Parish Council work interesting.

Councillors give their time voluntarily to serve you, and to look after village affairs. I wish to thank all councillors for their trust & support which they have placed in me over the past year, and thank those who have taken on various appointments on behalf on the Council.

The Council is supported by our Clerk, Lydia Kirk, who is extremely efficient clerk in every aspect of what she does in connection with Council's business. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated person who has taken such a keen interest in our village.

PRECEPT.

In light of the extraordinary burden that the SARS-COV2 pandemic has placed upon people, the Parish Council froze the Precept for 2021/2022 at £9,998.

PLANNING:

Planning Applications are considered in the Parish Council Planning Meetings. Our comments can be viewed on the East Suffolk Council website.

The Council has reviewed and commented on numerous planning applications. As you would expect, most applications are straightforward and relate to peoples' need to build and develop their family homes.

We have reviewed a more complex and unusual application, for a local charity to build a playschool on land owned by the Consolidated Charities, opposite the village hall. After months of assessment, the District Council Planning committee voted to approve the application.

With appropriate consideration for nearby listed buildings, this application has the potential to provide a sustainable future for the two charities, and to enhance the village through the provision of an essential service in the heart of the village.

HIGHWAYS:

We have made progress with installing posts for the Speed Indicator Devices. I am pleased to report that Suffolk County Council have now ordered the installation works, and this will be completed by the 16th of July.

WEB SITE:

Have a look at our website, <http://www.dennington.suffolk.cloud> this is a local government site and averages around 300 visitors to the site every month.

It contains all of the relevant Parish Council information including minutes, agendas, reports, as well as useful village organisation contacts. There are various links within the site, where you can connect to the School, Village Hall and church web sites, along with an events diary.

Shirley Cunningham is doing a fantastic job in making sure our web site is kept up to date; If you have any newsworthy items or have any forthcoming events, or matters of local interest which can be placed on our web site please contact Shirley.

This year in particular has very been busy for Shirley, especially during this Coronavirus outbreak, as she has been responsible for making sure the Government information has been added to our site and in some cases, this has been on a daily basis.

VILLAGE NEWSLETTER:

The newsletter is produced by the Village Hall Trustees. Four times a year the newsletter helps organisations in the village to broadcast their news and events to the residents.

SUMMARY:

It has been a great pleasure and a privilege to have served you over the last year.

In reviewing last year's report I was reminded of the postponement of celebrations and services to remember the 75th anniversary of Victory-in Europe and Victory-over-Japan Day in 2020. It is vitally

important that we all continue to use, and protect, the liberties that were, and continue to be, paid for with such a high price.

Freedom of speech, with the right of causing offence, at the risk of ourselves being offended, with the individual responsibilities to consider different opinions and to learn from harsh truths, are essential if we are to determine what works well, and what needs to be improved.

With this in mind, I look forward to the forthcoming discussions and hearing from as many people as possible, as to how we can support you, to improve our home.

Matt Lunn

17th May 2020.