

**Dennington Parish Council**  
**Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Annual Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**Chairman's Report 2021/2022**



**Dennington looking west**

**INTRODUCTION:**

It feels like I had only just finished writing the last annual report, and suddenly we are here again another year later.....

**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. In particular I would like to thank:-

- Robert Wardley for cutting the Green. After 40 years of maintaining the Green, Robert has recently decided to pass the baton on to Ian Mann. The copse on the Green has also thoroughly tidied and the brambles cleared by the hard work from Yvonne & Trevor Mouncer
- 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 for cutting the Village Recreation Field on a regular basis. 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 & Sam Steward who donate the fuel for the ride-on mower. Fuel is incredibly 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 helps to reduce accidents at this junction.
- Ray Dearing for cutting the village hall hedge, grass strimming, the sports club hedge and some of the parish footpaths.

This year a Jubilee Committee has been formed to co-ordinate the festivities for the Platinum Jubilee. We can already see the results of their efforts with a new oak tree on the green plus the red, white & blue flowers along the edge of the Green.

I would like to thank our representatives from all the 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. Since the last election, we have had a turn-over of 4 councillors and now have 3 vacancies to fill. Earlier this year, Mary Mann resigned from the council after serving the community for 40 years. Rebecca Fox has also recently resigned as she will be moving to a new village with her family. I am pleased to report that residents have come forward and that we should be in position to co-opt new councillors at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

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

The Council is supported by our Clerk, Lydia Kirk, who is extremely efficient 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 January, the Parish Council effectively froze the precept for 2022/2023 at £10,000 which is a £2 (less than 0.1%) increase over last year's precept.

### **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.

### **HIGHWAYS:**

In November 2021 we were awarded a £4700 grant by Cllr Lydia Freeman from the East Suffolk Enabling Communities Budget. This was used to purchase a new speed sign and solar chargers. The new sign has been installed on the A1120 and is shared between the two sites on the Badingham & Saxtead Roads. The existing sign and new solar charger have been installed on the Laxfield Road. This has reduced the maintenance burden associated with these signs, reduced the working at height risks to council volunteers when moving the signs and increased availability of the speed mitigation measures.

Highways maintenance and repair is an on-going issue with the County Council. We continue to hold our county councillor to account, and we are aware that he shares our frustrations.

We are also working with Suffolk Highways and the primary school to investigate whether a School Crossing Patrol can be provided. Initial traffic surveys have been performed and we are awaiting the results of a second survey later this term.

A resident's suggestion to link the paved footpath along Saxtead Road with the lane leading to Maypole Green is also being explored with Suffolk Highways and the adjacent landowners.

#### **WEB SITE:**

Our website, <http://www.dennington.suffolk.cloud> 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, forthcoming events or matters of local interest which can be placed on our web site please contact Shirley.

#### **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 and I thank you all for the support that you have offered.

In June we will be celebrating the Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of dedicated service to the nation, by HM The Queen. This year also marks the 50<sup>th</sup> year of service as a Parish Councillor by Robert Wardley. On behalf of the council, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Robert for his dedication and long service.

Yesterday was the also the 77<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. War once again casts a shadow over Europe. I'm aware that in neighbouring villages we have new neighbours; refugees from the brutal war in the Ukraine. I trust that Dennington will extend a warm hand of friendship to all those fleeing war and persecution.

The war in Ukraine is a timely reminder that liberty is never secure, and that freedom and democracy was, and continues to be, paid for with enormous suffering. Please use your liberties to challenge and engage with the parish, district and county councillors and our Member of Parliament. Engagement does sometimes change things (albeit slowly). Apathy changes nothing. Less than 3 hours flight from here, fellow Europeans are fighting and dying for the democratic rights that we too often choose to ignore.

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 community.

Matt Lunn  
9<sup>th</sup> May 2022.