

Freckenham Annual Parish Meeting

13th May 2013

Freckenham Parish Council Chairman's Report

Year 2012/13

To commence with I am pleased to say that we have gone through this last year with no resignations from Councillors unlike the previous two years. The current Councillors have worked well within the council for the benefit of us all. It is not always easy with some of the matters we have to contend with.

Just to remind you all that Meetings of the Parish Council are normally held every two months unless a planning application is received, so we would certainly be pleased for any of you to attend subsequent meetings.

Following on, I would like to extend our thanks to the County Council through Cllr James Waters who resides in our village, for all that they have done for us this year, with grants that enabled the Parish Council to have a speed activated device placed in Fordham Road as well as for the recreation field, additional seating. Our Church recently had a hearing loop installed, as well as a Public address system which was covered by a grant from them. The village hall also, and that covered a shed, portable stage, public address system as well as a contribution towards the refurbishment of the kitchen.

I would also like to mention and thank in his absence our previous County Councillor Stephen Frost who provided us with the above from his locality budget and who also served us so well on other matters, but now represents Hardwick in Sth Cambridgeshire.

On outstanding issues with the council, this is mainly with the highways department and covers the flooding that occurs on Mildenhall Road, as well as the deterioration of the road surfaces along Elms Road and at Pound Corner.

The Coffee Caravan commenced its annual visits to Freckenham last Tuesday, parking in East View. It is normally well attended but on this occasion only 4 people turned up. Do give it your support, the staff members provide a lot of information and help, on most matters to do with the public's well being. Bring your views or problems to them; have a chat a cup of coffee or tea and a piece of cake. A parish councillor plus our clerk Rodney Gillington and our PCSO normally puts in an appearance.

The Parish Pump continues to be distributed on a quarterly basis and was also part supported financially on one issue from the county council's locality budget. This continues to be a well-put together publication covering all news, views and issues within our village. This year it was joint runner up in the annual awards for small village publications and this is thanks to our reporters Dawn Dixon/ Cecilia Gillington/ Rodney Gillington our clerk and Peter Taylor- Whiffen the editor, who if you did not know, also competed in the recent London Marathon completing it in a very good time. Remember, if you have any news items then do contact our reporters Dawn Dixon and Cecilia Gillington or our editor Peter Taylor- Whiffen. Next deadline for copy covering the summer edition is 14th June.

Broadband

Details of the recent survey we carried out in respect of broadband speeds was sent to The Leader of Suffolk County Council Cllr Mike Bee and also advised of our concerns in the speeds we are likely to receive. We are waiting for a reply. Upgrading is still on schedule for completion in Suffolk by March 2015. Unfortunately, we will not get super fast broadband in our village. Some 80% of Suffolk will receive 24mbs, which is termed basic by March 2015, but the remaining 20% like us will get 2mbs. We have reminded the authority frequently that this is not good enough.

Oil Purchasing Scheme

I mentioned last year a domestic oil-purchasing scheme promoted by Suffolk Acre had been launched in the village, which county wide is proving successful. Your local co-ordinator for ordering is Mark Russell. A minimum order of 500 litres is required and you will find the discount pricing is very beneficial. Orders are taken at the end of a month with deliveries early in the following month. An annual membership fee is required and as mentioned previously is £20.00

If you are not on the scheme yet, do consider it, because you will find it of benefit as others including myself in the village have done so.

Police

I would thank our PCSO David Cowan for his attendance and report this evening. Crime does occur in our village unfortunately and this last year the bus shelter was also vandalised, but we must try to ensure this stays at a low level by us being even more vigilant. We still need a local volunteer to co-ordinate a neighbourhood watch scheme which would be of benefit. Any volunteers this year?

Speeding through the village is still a concern but our community speed watch scheme in partnership with Worlington Parish Council is still ongoing and our local police carry out speed checks from time to time.

Suffolk County Council Roads

Your Councillors continue to monitor the road situations in the village and report to the County Council all aspects of road and pavement conditions that are noticed. We still meet once a year with the County Councillor and the Highways Department Manager walking the village, pointing out where we consider remedial work should be carried out.

The A11 duelling is well under way north from Five Ways, Barton Mills, but do note the stretch from the roundabout and the traffic lights at Elveden is 40 mph for the whole section.

Paths walks and footways

The circular walking route from Elms Road is waiting for final clearance from the County Council so hopefully before long it will be open.

Volunteers

I would also like to thank all those volunteers who assist the parish council from Geoff Dixon who maintains The Recreation Field keeping it nice and attractive, as well as others who sweep the bus shelter out from time to time, also the gardener Ann Wheeler who

keeps the bed in good order between the bridge and the Golden Boar and has maintained the village hall garden. Terry Anderson keeps an eye on the village sign maintaining it when necessary. Rodney Gillington continues to update our village web site and we still receive compliments about the wealth of knowledge it gives. Note again the website www.freckenham.onesuffolk.net

I would also like to thank all others who give their time towards St Andrew's Church and the Village Hall.

St. Andrews Church

The Church has had several events including the flower festival, shoebox appeal and The Remembrance Day service. The upkeep of churches is very important, needing money for day-to-day running, and comes in the main from congregation collections, as well as weddings and funerals. But, many churches including ours, have small attendances except at special events so keep this in your thoughts and try to attend.

Village Hall

The Village Hall has again had a reasonable year financially and their Annual General Meeting is this coming Wednesday at 7.00pm.

They are still looking for volunteers that could help at some of the events.

The committee has worked hard arranging weekly events covering yoga also dance and bowls clubs to theatrical events for the benefit of adults and children from Freckenham, and, also members of the public who attend from outside the village to support the hall.

However they need more villagers to attend events. A table tennis table has been purchased recently so anyone with this sporting interest, contact them.

Freckenham & Worlington shared housing needs.

Despite the scare last year when Worlington Parish Council were of a mind to refuse planning permission, the building of the houses is now well under way and expected to be completed in June. Our Clerk Rodney Gillington recently attended the topping out ceremony.

Finally, I would thank our Clerk Rodney Gillington, my fellow Councillors on the Parish Council for their attendance at Council meetings.

To remind you again, Parish Council meetings are normally held every two months.

If you, the villagers have any thoughts that concern the village, then do let the Clerk or one of your Councillors know and it will be considered at forthcoming Parish Council meetings.

I believe I have covered most items covering our village this last financial year. Thank you all for attending and we will now pass on to Parish Council accounts.

D E Wheeler