

# Freckenham Annual Parish Meeting ~ 26th April 2010

## Chairman's Report 2009/10

Since last years Parish meeting Niall Martin unfortunately had to resign from the Council due to pressure of work. Niall had been one of your Councillors for a number of years and before my term of office as your Chairman. He had worked hard for the benefit of the village and it's parishioners and we thank him for the dedication he put into this voluntary position. After following due procedure, Lawrence Barton who had put himself forward was co- opted and has duly become a valued member of your Parish Council.

Your District Councillor Tim Huggan gave his report earlier this evening, but since our meeting last year, there have been Suffolk County Council elections and Stephen Frost was duly elected for our ward **Manor** but unfortunately he is not with us this evening. I would give thanks to Councillor Lisa Chambers who represented us, when Roger Pendleton who had been our elected councillor was unfortunately indisposed and also to Roger who gave many years of service to the wards he represented.

Our Village Recorder is Mrs Sandie Geddes and Nial Murphy represents us on The Mildenhall and District Sick Poor Fund. Our thanks go to both of them.

I would also like to say thank you to Geoff Calver the editor for 10 years of our **Parish Pump**, but now due to pressure of work within his own business has had to stand down. The pump is well received I understand by all and we look forward to appointing a new editor shortly. Last year the Pump won second prize in the competition for best parish magazine in the small town section and Mildenhall won second prize in the larger towns category for their Messenger, which is also distributed in Freckenham.

### Police

Our police continue to do a splendid job patrolling our village with PCSO Dawn Rowan and her colleagues from Mildenhall Safer Neighbourhood team who do such a sterling job. We unfortunately do suffer from crime, but this appears to be at a low level compared to other parts of the country, although it is very upsetting to us all when it does occur. Speeding traffic is unfortunately still an issue but regular radar checks are done. The speed device SID when utilised, does help and they have been requested to have these on display more often.

A Mobile Police Station also visits the village on a regular basis and normally parks within the village hall car park.

Together with Worlington, we will commence the community speed watch campaign and have had volunteers put themselves forward to help. Full training will be given and we would hope to start this shortly when the necessary radar equipment is available. Our County Councillor Stephen Frost has kindly agreed funds from his Locality budget to be used, to allow the purchase of the equipment.

### Suffolk County Council

#### Roads

Last year, again because of budget considerations, there was very little repair work done to our roads, but I was assured in a conversation with the Highways department last week that Fordham Road running through to and including Mildenhall Road will be re-surfaced with a completion date by middle of August this year. Some markings as you may have probably noticed, have been placed on the pavements ready for preliminary work.

We continue to monitor the situation and report to the council all aspects of road and pavement conditions that we notice, as well as excessive growth of vegetation that overhang these pavements and roads. But there is every possibility that we do not spot everything, so should any one of you notice any problems, then, let one your councillors know or alternatively report it direct to the County.

I had also been asked to report about the poor visibility at the junctions of Chippenham Road where it meets Fordham Road/ The Street and a mirror was suggested.

The County Council will not agree to mirrors being placed on the county's highways or pavements, due to the possibility of them being misread in traffic situations by the mirror and also becoming misaligned due to one reason or another. Your council would have to agree with this argument and would not go against the Counties decision. Any mirrors that are noticed across the County have been placed on Private property over which they have no jurisdiction.

The duelling of the A11 from 5 ways roundabout Barton Mills to Thetford had been subject to a Public Inquiry as it was felt the proposed scheme by the Highways Agency would give problems due to access onto the roundabout. The Inspector who held the Inquiry has yet to publish his report.

### **Bus shelters/ Foot Way**

The proposal for a footway from the Golden Boar to Pound Corner is on the County's programme for this year ending with a bus stand on that side of the road. Hopefully, we will also be able to have a bus shelter placed there shortly after completion of the footway. A drawing was shown to the attendees.

### **Elms Road Truck Stop**

There was an appeal against the refusal of the District Council to allow the building of the Stop on Elms Road

A public inquiry was held by the Planning Inspectorate to hear the appeal and surrounding villages including the District council also put their case forward to the Inquiry Inspector against allowing the appeal. Many people including local councils pledged sums of money towards legal costs.

No decision has yet been received from The Inspector, but this is not unusual as it is normally takes at least six to nine weeks for decisions to be formalised. **(Subsequent to our meeting the appeal has been dismissed)**

### **Boundary Committee for England, Unitary Councils**

An update on the local council structure for Suffolk has still not been determined and is now in limbo. It has been left to local authorities to determine the best way forward.

### **Within our village**

#### **Recreation Field**

Ron Cornell still continues to cut the grass and does such a splendid job in keeping the field looking nice and attractive. Christina Engelbrecht and her husband also keep an eye on the bus shelter and paint it when needed.

Thanks also to Councillor Stephen Frost who has given us a grant from his locality budget to renew the hard standing for the seat by the bridge, which together with the funds allocated by

Councillor Lisa Chambers for the two new seats covering the play area and the Street, will enable us to shortly carry out the work. New seats have been ordered and received and are currently in storage. **(These are now in place)**

### **Village Sign**

The sign still continues to look attractive due to Mr Terry Anderson keeping an eye on it and carrying out any remedial work when necessary.

### **Village Website**

I am pleased to advise that our Parish Council web site won first prize from One Suffolk for the best web site in the County. Well done to our Clerk Rodney Gillington who set the site up and keeps the information updated on a regular basis. If you haven't already, why not go on line and see the hard work he has done in putting it all together. Log on to [www.onesuffolk.co.uk/freckenhamPC](http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/freckenhamPC)

### **St. Andrew's Church**

A very successful village open gardens event last June and the profits of £925.00 were passed to the Church. There were 13 gardens open and our appreciation and thanks go to the participants who opened their gardens, also the volunteers who looked after the teas and cakes in the village hall, those who sold plants and to Cecilia and Rodney Gillington who were kind enough to host a barbeque in their garden following the event. The open day event was well received by visitors who were very complimentary to all that went on.

A cycle and tandem ride to cover Suffolk Historic churches was completed by James Cunningham who cycled 97 miles on the day and on the tandem, father Barry Cunningham and daughter Louise cycled 24miles. They raised £550.00 of which our church received 50%. Quite, a feat by the three of them.

The Church continues to put on events and the next one is the return of The Heritage Ensemble covering a concert of Russian Sacred Hymns and folk songs, on the 7<sup>th</sup> May. There are still some tickets available and the profits made will go towards the church funds. Congregations are still a disappointment but the regular events like the flower festival £1200.00 last year, the harvest festival and also the shoebox appeal which brought in 170 boxes, attracted many people from the village and afar bringing monetary reward.

Robert Oakley gave an historic tour of Freckenham village, which was well received by villagers and visitors. He gave a remarkable insight and talk on the history and events which have taken place over the centuries.

### **Village Hall**

The Village Hall has again had a very successful year and will show a small profit to take forward to this next year when accounts are finalised. This is despite some of the events not being subsidised as much as before, due to the financial restraints that have occurred nationwide.

Some of the committee retired this year and there are one or two new faces.

They would still like more volunteers if not for the committee, but who can help at events and if anyone has some free time available then please contact their secretary Jane Leitch on 01638 720118.

The whole committee works very hard on organising all aspects of the hall, putting on theatrical events for the benefit of the villagers of Freckenham and for those from well outside the village boundary.

Wedding reception bookings have increased and there are regular evening and day club events including a new Mother and Toddlers group, meeting during school terms on a Monday morning. Rebecca Gibbs from Mortimers Lane set up this group and they are doing quite well but more toddlers would be welcome, so if you would like to attend or know of someone who would, then let them know and telephone her on 01638 721219.

This forthcoming year could well be more difficult for theatrical events. There has been a decline in the number of people attending and the committee are doing all possible to keep the prices as low as possible, so that people are able to manage the entry fees.

### **Local Housing Needs**

This has slowed down but is still ongoing. Discussions are taking place with Suffolk County Council who unfortunately is traditionally slow on making decisions to release land for development.

### **Public Rights of Way and circular walks**

A meeting took place last week between Christina Engelbrecht and Jeff Gingell with County Council representative Claire Dixon. It would appear from that discussion that at least one footpath will be considered. Next meeting is scheduled in 6 weeks.

Finally, I would again like to thank our Clerk Rodney Gillington, my fellow Councillors on the Parish Council for their attendance at Council meetings, as well as the many volunteers, who do sterling work throughout the year, whether it is for The Church, Village Hall or just keeping an eye on our village.

Our Parish Council meetings are normally held every two months.

If you, the villagers have any thoughts for your Council, 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 that concern our village but if not, then please excuse me.

Thank you all for attending.

D E Wheeler  
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