

Freckenham Annual Parish Meeting

18th April 2011

Chairman's Report 2010/11

A vacancy occurred on your Parish Council during the past year and after following due procedure, Paul Gibbs who lives in Mortimers Lane was co- opted and has duly become a valued member of your Parish Council.

Your County Councillor Stephen Frost and District Councillor, Tim Huggan gave their reports earlier this evening, for which I thank them for their concise accounts.

The District Council has commenced this spring season with the regular appearance of their Coffee Caravan to Freckenham. It has been quite well attended since it moved to East View and they do provide a lot of information on the local area. Bring your views to them, have a chat and a cup of coffee or tea also a piece of cake. Your local PCSO Dawn Rowan also attends and you will also find one of your councillors there as well as our Clerk.

On May 5th there will be local elections to elect members for Parish and District Councils as well as a referendum on The Alternative Vote.

There will not be an election for our Parish Council as only four Candidates put themselves forward for consideration and these were current Members.

We will therefore be looking towards co- opting a fifth.

Jeff Gingell who has left the village was our fifth member. I would thank him for the sterling work that he did while on the council and also on the village hall committee.

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

Following the resignation of Geoff Calver, we appointed a new editor Peter Taylor- Whiffen who has brought a new concept to the Pump. You are seeing more colour as well as a different style. You will have noted that we have had, but would like to feature more about our residents, such as details of the work that they do, the interesting life that they have led or have memories about the village that they would like known. So please do not be shy, send some of your thoughts to Peter.

Police

I would thank Dawn Rowan our local PCSO for her report this evening and also her colleagues from Mildenhall Safer Neighbourhood team who do such a sterling job. We do have crime in our village unfortunately 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 as I told you last year we would commence a community speed watch scheme in partnership with Worlington. This is now underway with several volunteers from your village and regular radar checks are done. The speed device SID when utilised, also helps.

A Mobile Police Station will again commence visits to the village on a regular basis and normally parks in the village hall car park.

Suffolk County Council

Roads

During the year, as promised the highways department re-surfaced Fordham Road and The Street as well as patching up in other places as well as filling in the pot holes. There were surface water drainage problems and some of these have since been rectified. Mildenhall Road still has this problem as well as a poor road surface, but I am advised that the road will be re-surfaced this financial year as well as curing the water drainage problems.

Your Councillors continue to monitor the road situation and report to the County Council all aspects of road and pavement conditions that we notice. However as I have mentioned in the past there is every possibility that we do not spot everything, so should any one of you notice any problems, then, let one of your councillors know or alternatively report it direct to the County.

The duelling of the A11 from 5 ways roundabout Barton Mills to Thetford has now been approved following the Public Inquiry. Scheduled to start in 2012. Better late than never!

Bus shelters/ Foot Way.

It was good to note that a bus shelter that has been required for a number of years at Pound Corner was installed this year as well as a pavement leading to it from The Golden Boar.

We have also requested for a bus shelter to be placed in Mildenhall Road and we wait to hear when this will proceed.

Fordham Road Build Out

We continued this year to make further representations to the County Council about the dangers during inclement weather for motorists to view this build out. We have been advised that proposals are underway to find a suitable technical system to have the signs illuminated.

Recycling Point

Finally after some months, a suitable point was found in the centre of the village next to the bus shelter, which is quite a good location. Do therefore use the facility as it is for all our benefits.

Within our village,

The Recreation Field is still well maintained by Ron Cornell who continues to cut the grass and does such a splendid job in keeping the field looking nice and attractive. Christina Engelbrecht and her husband Frank still keep an eye on the bus shelter and paint it when needed as well as others who sweep it out from time to time and the gardener (Ann Wheeler) who keeps the bed in good order between the bridge and the Boar. Also the village sign looked after by Terry Anderson. Our award winning village web site is continuously updated by Rodney Gillington and we are always receiving compliments about the wealth of knowledge it gives. Note again the website www.onesuffolk.co.uk/freckenhamPC

Footpaths

As to footpaths we are still pursuing the County Council in trying to obtain a right of way between North Street/ Isleham Road and Mortimers Lane. We also hope shortly to place picnic benches in the Plantation

I would like to give thanks to Councillor Stephen Frost, who has given us grants from his locality budget for several items in the village, as well as helping us to achieve the bus shelter the pavement and together with the officers of the council the remedial work to the roads.

St. Andrews Church

The Church continues to put on events to subsidise the funds that are needed. The flower festival notably attended also by The Tractor Boys, the shoe box appeal, harvest festival and the return of The Heritage Ensemble which covered a concert of Russian Sacred Hymns and folk songs, last May.

The church after so many years now has an outside green toilet and new hedging has been planted.

At a recent special Church service attended by the Master of Peterhouse and the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich our local resident Reverend Sandie Barton was licensed as a non-stipendiary assistant priest for our group of parishes. It is the first time for over 20 years that a Bishop has been to Freckenham Church. In attendance also was our lay preacher David Ball. Quite an event and well attended.

Village Hall

The Village Hall has again had a very good year and would have broken even financially but it was decided this year to use some of the reserves to renew carpets, flooring and also use for other maintenance issues.

There was also the problem of the fire, which fortunately was not as severe as it could have been but there was still disruption and they were very lucky it was not a lot worse. Rodney Gillington took care of obtaining estimates for the work, the contractors that were needed as well as completing the insurance claim ensuring full payment was received for the work required. Thankfully he was about, to take all of this in hand.

They have lost committee members again this year but some new faces have come on board. There is a new Chairman Campbell Pearson replacing Joanne Duffy who will be leaving the village and a new booking clerk Sue Cornell who has taken over from Jeff Gingell.

More volunteers are needed if not for the committee, but who can help at events.

All of the committee works very hard on organising all aspects of the hall, obtaining (courtesy of Jane Leitch) theatrical events for the benefit of the villagers of Freckenham and also members of the public from outside the village who support the hall very well.

The new Mother and Toddlers group run by Rebecca Gibbs from Mortimers Lane is doing well. More toddlers would be welcome, so if you know of someone who would like to attend, then let Rebecca know.

The hall had very well attended theatrical events this year with shows such as Isla St Clair and Pfaff as well as a Ceilidh plus children's shows. The regular bookings such as yoga, dancing, and bowls are well supported.

Local Housing Needs.

As to local housing needs I cannot confirm when houses are likely to be built, but when they are, they will be in Worlington as the County Council took such a long time to make up their minds as to whether they would release land in our village.

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

To remind you, 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 to do with our village this last financial year but I would like to close by reminding you all that Friday week we have Freckenham's Royal Wedding Celebration at the village hall, so please if you are intending to attend, then return the slip that was attached to the invitation placed through your letter boxes recently, so that the organisers will have some idea of numbers that will come to enjoy this event, so as to ensure sufficient catering supplies are available.

That same evening The Golden Boar is putting on their own event in celebration of the wedding, a fish and chip supper and they would also like some idea of how many people will attend, so please let them know if any of you are going. Fresh fish is ordered so they would really like some ideas of numbers.

Thank you all for attending and we will now pass on to Parish Council accounts.

D E Wheeler
