

Notes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on 30th April 2012

There were 5 Parish Councillors present, with Ken Durant in the Chair. 18 members of the public also attended.

The minutes from the previous Annual Parish meeting were agreed and signed.

Matters from the minutes:

The tree at the junction of the Street and Gents Lane is now dead, but will not be replaced until the autumn.

Parking on the pavement – the situation has now improved.

Chairman's Report:

Although it has been a year of restraint, with no major projects being possible, village services have been maintained.

7 Planning applications have been considered throughout the year.

New residents were welcomed into Halifax Place and there were celebrations for the Royal Wedding, in the village and at the Bush.

There had been continued support from Babergh and Suffolk CC, with quick responses for repairs to pot-holes, road signs and elimination of flooding in Gents Lane. Speed roundels took a little longer, but a recent speed check caught 2 vehicles.

The village sign has been repaired and Ken thanked Halifax Trust for their contribution. He also thanked Charles Pugh for overseeing the work to insulate the village hall and to John Sinclair for redecorating it. The hall is now a much brighter and inviting environment.

Next projects are to clear area around Coal House and renovation of the phone box. No volunteers to be Co-ordinator for bulk-buying oil.

Thanks given to Steve Cornelius for his work keeping website updated and to Sarah Smith for production of the Parish Newsletter.

Ken then thanked the Parish Councillor, the Clerk and residents for their support over the last 5 years, or so.

Financial Report:

Expenditure on the Village Hall resulted in reserves carried forward being less than last year, however, the budget was on target. Thanks to Halifax Trust, new seating had been provided to the Play Park.

Thanks for other donations towards projects and events.

County Councillor:

Richard Kemp thanked Ken Durant, the Parish Councillors and the Clerk, reminding those present that the Parish Councillors are volunteers and receive no payment. He outlined changes the County Council, which had had £50m in grants withdrawn.

Some services had been taken over by volunteers, CICs or private enterprise. Although there had been no rise rates, but felt small regular increases were sometimes better.

District Councillor:

James Long spoke about re-organisation of Babergh and Mid-Suffolk Council. These measures and some cuts have saved approximately £50m. CAB still funded by Council. 42% of household waste now recycled. CCTV, staffed by volunteers, has helped keep town centres safer.

He congratulated Shimpling on the housing project and for the thriving community within the village.

He thanked Ken Durant for his hard work and said he was happy to be of service to the community he represents.

Reports:

Hallifax Trust: Jenny Pine listed the objectives and Trustees. During 2011/12, grants have been made to Lawshall School, St George's Church, the Village Hall, Play Park, Village sign and Jubilee celebrations. 12 bursaries have been made to students within the village.

WI: Mary Tuffen reported that there were 25 members, with an average attendance of 19. She listed some of the talks and events and stated that new members would be welcome.

Alpheton & Shimpling PCC: Charlotte Robertson told the meeting that joint working was going well and gave the new pattern of services.

15 Joint fundraising events had been organised over the course of the year. Lent lunches had provided a new classroom in sister diocese of Kangera, Tanzania and Christian Aid collections and harvest gifts had gone to Scope. Charlotte listed repairs to St Georges.

She and Richard Blyth are now licensed as Lay Elders. They were congratulated on their forth-coming wedding.

Play Park: Well-used and children have respected the equipment. Dave and Linda Campen were thanked for keeping the area clean. There was a request to report anyone allowing their dog to foul the area, as they could then be prosecuted.

New trees will be planted in the autumn.

Village Hall: As the VH AGM followed the Parish AGM, the report was given later.

Police Matters;

No report available. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator still needed.

Other Matters:

Telephone Box: purchased for £1, to be used as a small library.

Jubilee Celebrations: Events listed

Broadband: Improvements to begin 2012 through to 2015.

12,000 service users registered requests for improvements.

AOB:

Richard Kemp mentioned the Great British Story featuring excavation around Long Melford.

Jackie Saunders then proposed a vote of thanks to Ken Durant who had given notice of his intention to retire from the Parish Council. This was unanimously agreed by all those present.

The Next Parish AGM will be Monday 29th April 2013 at 7.30pm.