

## Parish Council Annual Report 2023

It has been a busy year since our last annual Parish meeting on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022 , we celebrated Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee to be followed by her sad death in November and more recently the coronation of Charles 3<sup>rd</sup>.

From a Parish Council perspective Julia Dunncliffe stood down as parish clerk in May and I wish to thank her for all she has done running the Parish Council.

We are pleased to appoint Mark Eggleton. The role of the clerk is very important and we are most grateful to Mark for all he is doing. We are still in a battle with Barclays Bank to get the statements sent to his address.

Under planning the biggest issue has been the application for development of land south of church road, the Parish Council objected to the proposal which was refused by Mid Suffolk District Council, the applicants took the matter to appeal and lost. There were less contentious applications for Units at Westhorpe Lodge, window replacement at Town Yard and work at Shrubbery Farm.

A section of the village lost its power supply in 2021 and despite the Parish Council's concerns expressed to UK Power Networks only the area from Shrubbery to Peartree Farm has received proper attention other areas of the village remain at risk from falling branches. In the hot weather due to wires touching at the entrance of Westhorpe Hall a fire caused limited damage we were lucky it did not spread further.

A major success has been the appeal to restore the St Margarets Church bells, thanks to the fund raising by many people a large sum was raised and the church bells committee under the leadership of Clive and Rosemary Mees with great support from Penny Simmonds were able to secure lottery funding to enable the project to commence, I can remember back in 1959 the church bells ringing but the restoration will ensure we have a full peal of bells which has not happened for a very long time.

We are grateful to Richard Brown for maintaining the Speed Indicator Device it has slowed traffic down.

Sadly we lost the regular bus service which helped people in the local villages go to and from work, the alternative for a service one day a week is inadequate.

We are grateful to Andy Mellon for his support as both a District and County Councillor his regular attendance and input at meetings and other times is much appreciated. The locality money donated to the village hall was very welcome.

The Rural Coffee Caravan has been a regular visitor to the village and this community support is greatly appreciated. In addition the Westhorpe Café run by Martin and Suzanne has been an excellent venture.

Westhorpe has a good community spirit and this was obvious by the large number of residents who helped with the church yard late hay cut. To enhance the bio diversity of the churchyard the hay needs to be taken away having allowed the wild grass and flower seeds to shed.

There has been a particular flooding problem at Pheasant Cottage which has only been partially resolved.

The annual village litter pick took place recently and we are grateful to everyone who tackles litter throughout the year, we are generally lucky that the parish remains clean and tidy.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Parish Councillors for their support and efforts this past year, we all help in many different ways from audit to assessing the insurance, I am please all the councillors offered them selves for re-election the only problem being that Steven Christian's nomination was rejected due to the council not updating their electoral roll despite being notified of the change of address.

David Barker 11.05.2023