

## Parish Council Chairmans Report for Annual Parish meeting May 20<sup>th</sup> 2025

I would like first of all to thank Mark Eggleton who stood down recently as clerk to the Parish Council for his considerable efforts on our behalf in recent years.

We are delighted to welcome Ginny O'Hegarty to the role and look forward to working with her. We probably did not realise the importance of the clerk until we had a short period a few years ago without one!

May I also thank all my fellow councillors for their support and commitment over the past year.

Also our thanks to Andy Mellen who as Suffolk County Councillor and Mid Suffolk District Councillor for his attendance at every full meeting, guidance and support. Thank you also for the `Pride in Your Place` grant which has helped in several ways.

The General Election on July 4<sup>th</sup> last year has brought considerable change not all welcome the demand from Government to build 1.5 million houses annually has put even greater pressure on local government and this subject will be discussed shortly.

During the year we have had five full Parish Council and one planning meeting. As usual a lot of items have been covered.

Flooding was a particular problem in 2024 we have as a Parish done what we can to address the problem by making sure culverts were cleared, and early this year the ditch between the Crescent and Westhorpe Hall entrance has been cleaned out, we have tried to encourage more water to go in this direction to take pressure off that arriving at the village green, ironically since the ditch was cleaned we have had little rainfall.

Maintenance to trees and branches obstructing the power lines has been a cause in the past of losing power to some properties, after considerable persuasion we have ensured UK Power Networks have tackled the issue and I am sure that has helped address the problem.

We have continued to receive regular visits from the Rural Coffee Caravan.

Thank you in addition to Steven Rooney for his work with the village website.

The highlight of the past year has been the restoration of St Margaret's Church Bells which were dedicated by Bishop Martin Seeley on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

The January meeting devoted time to discuss speeding vehicles in the village as a result a note was sent to every resident.

We received an unexpected notification of £2,407 in Community Infa-Structure Levy due from a bungalow built at Potash Farm, Wyverstone the property was actually in Westhorpe, the money has been received and spent by Wyverstone Parish Council!

We discovered that BT were due to remove the Telephone Kiosk, fortunately many years ago we had the kiosk listed, just in case it might be taken away hence we now own the kiosk having paid £1.

On February 19<sup>th</sup> we held a planning meeting which I did not attend to consider the application for Westhorpe Hall to be returned to a private dwelling, this was supported.

Finally on March 18<sup>th</sup> we presented Mark Eggleton with a voucher to recognise his work as clerk.

