

Chairs APM Report 2026

Over the last year the Parish Council has been busy across various fronts, some of these have been good and positive, however we have also had the need to intervene, or more likely get the Local neighbourhood policing team to intervene.

So to summarise (not in any particular order), but to give an indication on the depth and variety of matters that the Parish Council do on your behalf, these are all discussed openly at our meetings, and any members of the public are welcome to come along and watch the Council in action, or partake under item 3 on every agenda, public forum.

The council has considered a total of 11 planning applications - we have commented on all.

The council has funded and organised two First Aid and Defibrillator training sessions to enhance the potential for life saving to people in the village until the arrival of the emergency services. As a result of these first aid training sessions the Parish Council has facilitated the setting up of a local First Responders Group (currently affiliated to Stradbroke) and currently two volunteers have undertaken training, as mentioned this has been supported and in conjunction with First responders in Stradbroke until we can set up our own unit. Coupled with this we have purchased all the regulatory first aid packages and a mobile defibrillator, so there are now two defibrillators within the village, along with trained volunteers.

The council has given funds to the Community Centre (£1454) to help towards the refurbishment in the changing rooms, toilets and storeroom and associated passageway

The council has also made donations to the High Suffolk Community Bus (£337.50) and Mid Suffolk CAB (£337.50) this has helped a number of parishioners who have had need to use these services

The council contributed to St Marys Church towards the grass cutting at the cemetery, along with making a donation towards the reinstatement of the footpath through the church yard to help people who walk through the village to avoid the danger on the bend

The council has made a donation to Suffolk Accident rescue (£341.50), who provide emergency services in the event of an incident within the village and just recently the council has made a donation to Worlingworth Local History group for poles for the fire engine that was refurbished by BBC's Repair Shop (£378)

The council has supported tree planting at various locations within the parish to improve biodiversity within the village (£376)

The council has purchased two new dog poo bins (for Water Lane and Rectory Road) to replace damaged bins - we now need to train the owners to remember to pick up after their pets and use these! There are now 11 bins in the village that are emptied as part of a contract with Suffolk County Council.

The council has requested that the road markings throughout the village be enhanced, this includes the 30mph roundels and the zig-zag outside the school. We have also purchased new directional finger posts to replace those that Suffolk CC deemed not necessary, but the council felt let the village down, these were at the Tannington end of the village, on New Road opposite Honeypot Farm.

We have had two new members join us within the year to help make the village a better place, Crispin Durant has joined as a full council member, and James Connelly as our new Footpath Warden, both have been very active from day one of joining us. We have also had two parishioners from New Road who have taken it upon themselves to volunteer to litter pick in the vicinity of New Road and Church Road, please see the front cover of the village magazine this month for the level of rubbish cleared, and at the opposite end of the village James Connelly has also collected a large amount of rubbish, along with a fly tipped child's pram.

The council is in the process of forming a Community Speedwatch team to assist in speed reduction throughout the village, Suffolk Police are to start training soon, so watch out you speeders

The council has purchased and installed two new speed detection units, one as a direct replacement and a further one located in the middle of the village, to remind drivers that it is a 30mph limit ALL the way through the village, we will again start gathering data from these units to pass on to Suffolk Police in order that they can take any action they feel necessary.

The council has purchased and installed a further seven planters, and had these filled with plants as directed by Suffolk CC to help increase biodiversity within the village, it is hoped that this will also stop vehicles driving on, or parking on areas of "green" within the village.

The council has been involved in the early stage discussion with the Diocese for St Mary's church to help with the potential to 1), Install toilets within the church fabric, currently an outside "porta potty" with no water available, no lighting etc, not ideal, and with no facilities for disabled parishioners, and 2), to install a kitchen/welfare area again within the fabric of the church.

The council made contact with Suffolk CC to have the pavements, where present in the village to be cleaned and the edges tidied, to ensure safe passage.

The council applied unsuccessfully for the use of a thermal imaging camera to identify areas on properties within the village in order that their insulation can be increased, and thus bills reduced by access to funding from the "Warm Home Suffolk" funding (Nick Christo), as the use is limited we were not successful on this occasion, but will try again as and when funding becomes available.

The council had the pleasure of awarding the Jubilee cup for 2025 to Nora Ingate, she is one of the many people who do a lot of quiet work within the village mostly not getting great accolades, however actions that are invaluable to things moving forward.

The council did endeavour to make monthly meetings at the Community centre with the Rural Coffee Caravan where people could go get some tea and coffee, and a slice or two of cake, as well as getting help with matters like Pension credits, CAB, water bills, as well as a number of other avenues, unfortunately these were not well attended and we thus had to cancel in order that others may benefit

Now, unfortunately, some negative points. The council has been called on a number of occasions where parishioners have experienced anti-social behaviour, with our contacts at Suffolk Police we have been able to arrange visits within 24 hours by police officers, who have offered advice, given comfort to the residents and have continued to monitor the situation, with individuals having been spoken to.

The Council has had to purchase a new notice board to be installed at the junction of Mill Road to replace the unit that had been damaged/vandalised by individuals, we have also had to replacement a lock on the new notice board outside Willow Tree yard where individuals felt it OK to prise open the doors to install notices that were not for the benefit of the village , but to advertise services.

Whilst Storm Babet may seem a long while ago (October 2023), the council has been engaging with various bodies (River Waveney Trust) to see what additional measures can be put in place to prevent a re-occurrence of this, whilst progress is slow, we are making progress, We have also had Anglian Water undertaking full CCTV surveys of all drainage throughout the village, they have identified a number of "unauthorised" connections that helped surcharge the foul drainage network leading to problems, these are in the process of being rectified, they are further planning future works and applying for further finance to increase capacity in the hopes of preventing a re-occurrence of the problems previously encountered, this work is ongoing.

The council is actively engaging with Eye Town Council and Framlingham Town council, who suffered from Flooding as a result of the storm, and are preparing papers for submission to Suffolk CC floods authority in order that all and any future development takes into account of capacity within the village, currently planners delegate to the floods authority who have little power to enforce works , or object to developments on capacity grounds.

Back to a few more positive points:-

Looking forward, the council will once again be running both the annual Walking day, to ensure all our network of footpaths are in a usable condition, and report any problems to the Suffolk CC Footpaths Officer for them to take remedial works and we will also be doing the annual Village Tidy, this on top of the works that individuals are doing on a weekly/daily basis, to try to keep the village clean and tidy.

As an update from earlier expenditure , the council gave monies to assist with the repairs and restoration of a large painting, originally held in the church, of Lord Henniker and the Worlingworth Volunteers, we are pleased to report that all works were completed and the painting is now in the Hold in Ipswich should you wish to visit.

As you can see we have had a busy year and schedule, we have further undertaken a survey of all assets that fall under the remit of the Parish Council, items like the village sign, the village bench, the speeding indicators, the Welcome to Worlingworth signs/gates as well as general grass cutting on public areas throughout the village. We have to ensure that all are maintained to comply with public liability insurance, yet another "hidden" cost, we are having a "sinking fund" to cover for all maintenance and replacement works going forward, as you are all aware we were having elections this year, then they were stopped to allow for the unitary authorities, under which the parish may have taken on a different role in regard to issues like planning etc, but we were not assured what levels of funding would or could be associated with this additional role, a "U" turn was made and the elections are back on for May, however we have now been advised that in 2028/9 three unitary authorities will be forthcoming. What our role will be is still unsure , but by all indications it will be a greater input, however with that will come potential addition costs should we need advice outside the specialisms within the council, ie Legal, planning appeals, etc,

The council is therefore looking to the future and hopefully preparing for what comes out of this "reorganisation" and any costs, the council has set its precept for this financial year with no increase, however if we are required to fund additional things in the future we may well have to apply to increase this precept by a factor of 5 or 6 times , this will impact on all within the village , in these times of a cost of living crisis it is something that we endeavour to avoid, and with the situation in the middle east costs are only going to rise, we however do not see additional funding being made to the parish to cover all these matters , things are going to get tighter.