

HOLTON ST MARY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

WEDNESDAY 28th April 2021 8pm

Via zoom

Minutes

1. **Chairman's Welcome** – The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, she stated that the previous year had been a difficult year because of the pandemic and informed the meeting that in response to the Pandemic an Emergency Response Group had been organised in the Village providing assistance to villagers who needed any help with activities such as prescription/shopping collections. She further advised that a 'Meet the Village' event will hopefully be arranged this year, further details follow later in the agenda.
2. **Apologies for Absence** – 6 Villagers
Present 13 Villagers, District Councillor, Chair and Parish Clerk
3. **Minutes of 2019 Annual Parish Meeting** – The minutes from the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting were agreed.
Proposed by Jan Cheng, Seconded by Claire Rowan.
A meeting was not held in 2020 because of the Pandemic.
4. **Matters Arising** – None
5. **Parish Council: Chairman's Report**- The Chair advised that there are two big planning applications at the moment, Brett Vale Golf Club and an application for a rehabilitation facility in the Village, this is explained further in her full report attached in Appendix A.
6. **Parish Council: Financial Report** – The Clerk presented a copy of the audited 2019/2020 accounts and explained any significant variances from the previous year. There were no questions.
7. **Speeding & Road Issues Report** – Mark Anderson advised that speeding through the village had been worse during the lockdown periods and informed the meeting that the Village had been placed within the top 10 in a league of speeding in Suffolk Villages. He advised that the village should shortly be having ANPR cameras installed on a recurring temporary basis, further details in his report. Issues with the road surface have been reported to SCC Highway's and a site inspection of the roads by them is occurring soon. Full report attached in Appendix A.
A villager advised that the road surface in Roseacre is starting to show signs of tree roots – he was advised that villagers should report any problems on the SCC Highways reporting tool.
8. **Parish Church Report** – Report attached in Appendix A₁
9. **Social Club Report** – Report attached in Appendix A
10. **Village Hall Management Committee Report**
Re-election of committee members
Full Report attached in Appendix A – Chris Haste further advised that the Hall had been closed most of the year because of the pandemic, during this time some improvements had been made. It was **AGREED** that the committee members were re-elected en bloc, members are Alan Beak, Rob Clarke, Tanya Kunz, Geoff White, Jan Cheng, Chris Haste, Erik Ellis.
11. **Millennium Green Trust Report** – Full report attached in Appendix A, Pam Quare advised that the Green had been an asset during lockdown, it is well supported by villagers and she thanked all who helped maintain it.
12. **United Charities Trust Report** – Report attached in Appendix A, there were two new trustees this year, Sally Thurlow and Peter Cheng.

13. **District Councillor's Report** – Full report attached in Appendix A, John Ward advised that he had just heard that the High Court Challenge to continue to allow virtual meetings had failed. Sally Thurlow advised that there is a Government 12 week call for evidence at the moment on the experience of virtual meetings. John Ward advised that any occurrences of fly tipping should be reported to Babergh District Council.
14. **County Councillor's Report** – Gordon Jones was not present – his full report is attached in Appendix A, the Chair expressed thanks to him for the support that he has shown to the village.
15. **Constable Country Medical Practice Patient Participation Group Report** – Jan Cheng advised that the past year had involved the surgery making many changes in how to deal with patients during Covid, full report is attached in Appendix A. She further wished to thank all volunteers who had helped both with the running of vaccination clinics at the surgery and all who helped make masks for the patients.
16. **FFOTMLC (First Friday of the Month Lunch Club)**- Report attached in Appendix A
17. **Slow Stitch Group**- Report attached in Appendix A
18. **Green Gym Group** – Richard Appleton advised that only one session had been missed because of the weather, full report is attached in Appendix A.
19. **HSM Womens' Book Club Report** – Report attached in Appendix A
20. **FaceBook** – Report attached in Appendix A
21. **Village Local History Recorder Vacancy** – Marjorie Haste has been the Village History Recorder for the last 15 years, she would like to hand the role to someone else, and a volunteer is needed.
22. **Meet the Village** – The Chair advised that it is proposed to hold a 'Meet the Village' event this summer on Millennium Green, this will be an opportunity for new villagers to get to know the village and become involved.
23. **Any other Business** – The question was raised if there were any plans for installing wi-fi in the Village Hall, it was suggested that there should be a joint discussion involving the Parish Council, Village Hall Management Committee and Social Club. The suggestions of film streaming in the village Hall, and an outdoor cinema on Millennium Green were put forward.

The Meeting Closed at 9.06 pm

Appendix A Reports

Parish Council Chairman's Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 2021 (Sally Thurlow)

Following last year when the pandemic lockdown meant we were unable to hold our Annual Parish Meeting, we published a booklet of all the reports from the groups in the Village. This year we are endeavouring to hold our meeting over Zoom (hoping to avoid any "Jenny Weaver moments") and also issuing a booklet of the reports to every household.

The meeting is Chaired by the Parish Council (the civic district) but receives reports from all the village groups, including the church, social club, village hall management committee, charities (Millenium Green Trustees, United Charities Trust), and informal groups, and also from our elected District and County Councillors.

Obviously a lot less face to face and social activity has been possible this year but where possible, we have tried to keep things going and my thanks go to everyone who contributes to Holton St Mary Village life, in whatever capacity.

So, to the Parish Council report. There are seven elected Parish Councillors who are:

Sally Thurlow (currently Chairman)
Erik Ellis (Deputy Chairman)
Mark Anderson
Richard Appleton
Jan Cheng
Oliver Green, and
Claire Rowan

Our Parish Clerk (administrator) is Liz Sims who is contactable at hsmparishclerk@gmail.com

We manage a small budget of approximately £7,000 for Village matters, from insuring and maintaining the Village assets such as painting the phone box to buying consumables for the defibrillator (located on the outside of the Village Hall) and keeping an eye on things like the trees, footpaths and footway (pavement).

Planning

We do not grant planning permission but we do get consulted on these and our contributions are supposed to be taken into consideration by the local planning authorities (Babergh District Council for most, Suffolk County Council for waste and mineral extraction). With regard to planning, we usually discuss these either at a dedicated session or at one of our bi-monthly scheduled meetings (2nd Wednesday, May, July etc).

This year there have been a number of householder applications that have been made, and we have continued to take a low-key approach to these except where they impact on another household.

In contrast, there was a large application to import construction site waste to the golf club in Raydon and we worked closely with Raydon Parish, and our elected District and County Councillors to make our concerns known. The application has now been withdrawn from Babergh because it is primarily about waste and discussions are underway between the applicant and SCC (Suffolk County Council) before an expected application to them.

The other large-scale application is to put a rehabilitation facility on agricultural land at Holton Hall Farm. This remains live as I write this report and we are concerned that although it does not meet the criteria in their own strategic plan or the draft local plan, apparently the company applying has been given every encouragement in the pre-planning process (for which they pay planning officials). We are concerned because we believe it is the wrong place for it and it directly contradicts the conditions set out for development in the planning authority's own policies. If they do not follow their own policies then planning becomes a cowboy business and it becomes impossible for consultees to understand which areas are legitimate and which are not. It could result in legal challenges that are costly to mount and defend. Babergh has previously lost one in East Bergholt and costs were all paid from tax payer revenues.

Highways

Mark Anderson will report separately on this as he heads (and does a fabulous job) for the Parish Council on this.

Maintenance of Village Assets

This year we have settled an insurance claim related to the damage caused to the Church Square fence posts and have paid the extra. We have also paid to have the gate posts replaced on the wooden gate into the churchyard and onto the footpath that is by Church Cottage and have replaced the noticeboard next to the phone box.

We receive something called community infrastructure levy (CIL - used to be called section 106 money) when a residential dwelling is built in the Village. It is available for us to use on infrastructure projects and spending. We could apply for more, over and above the Village allocation, but have not done so to date. It is available to us for five years, and if unused, is returned to the central Babergh pot. Related to this we are working with some of the groups in the Village to explore how this could be spent to ensure best benefit for the Village and our residents. We received our pot in October 2019 so there is a window of time to consider how best to use these funds.

Welcome to the Village

I want to just extend a welcome to the considerable number of new residents in the Village and apologise that we have not been able to welcome you properly. A few years ago we held a “meet the village” event and we are hoping to repeat this, weather permitting, on Millenium Green - think tables for clubs and societies at a University Freshers' Week - combined with a welcome drink and snack - an opportunity to find out about things that go on and get to know your neighbours. We hope to welcome many of you (and maybe some longer standing residents) as well as many of our established active residents.

And finally I would like to take the opportunity to thank Gordon Jones, County Councillor, for all of his efforts on behalf of the Village and Parish Council of Holton St Mary.

Let us all hope for a better 2021!

Parish Council – Financial Report (Parish Clerk- Liz Sims)

This report may appear to be a year behind but this is because the accounting year ends in April and the accounts are then audited and agreed before they are reported to the Parish.

The audited end of year accounts for Year 2019/20 are summarised as follows:

Income	2018/19	2019/20
Precept	£4972.00	£6830.31
VAT Reclaimed	£281.68	£0
Interest	£10.79	£16.19
CIL		£7376.96
	£5264.47	£14223.46
Expenditure		
Payroll	£3,927.13	£3,639.96
Admin	£148.66	£26.71
Hall Hire	£115.00	£112.00
Grass Cutting	£605.28	£1070.00
Defibrillator	£235.00	£73.00
Insurance	£400.61	£405.00
Audit	£170.40	£174.00
Subscriptions	£136.04	£176.02
Website	£50.00	£60.00
Poppy Wreath	£20.00	£25.00
Dog Bin		£90.20
Elections		£126.46
Flowers		£34.00
Training		£159.60
	£5,808.12	£6,171.95

The total expenditure was lower than income in 2019/20, this is because of receipt of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds of £7,376.96, no call for a contested election (budget saving of £509.05), anticipated clerk training not happening (budget saving of £597.29) Payroll was lower in 2019/20 because 2018/19 accounts included a payment of holiday pay in the previous clerks final salary payment.

Assets **£2744**

Balances at 31.3.20

Current Account	£729.47
Reserve Account	£12,172.73

Financial Year 2020/2021

The Budget was set at £8175 to cover expected costs, including the cost of replacement of the post and rail fence and bollards on Church Square (subject to an insurance claim), general maintenance and building reserve funds towards a new computer, defib batteries and other maintenance as required.

The accounts will be audited by the Internal Auditor within the next few months. All the required documents including a copy of the Asset Register, the Certificate of Exemption and the Governance and Accountability Statements for the year will be published on the village website over the next few months. You are welcome to email the Parish Clerk if you have any queries about the accounts.
hsmparishclerk@gmail.com

Budget for 2021/22

The Budget has been set at £8016. This includes costs towards general maintenance, training, subscriptions, installation of new noticeboard, insurance, and building reserves towards a new computer, defib batteries, and other maintenance as required.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Parish Council also has a remaining amount of £5656.57 from the Community Infrastructure Levy, £1717.39 was spent in January 2021 towards the replacement

fence and posts on Church Square and gate posts for the footpath leading to the churchyard. (CIL is levied on the developer of new properties when any new homes are built, this money has to be spent within five years of receipt on infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on our Village).

Speeding and Road Issues Report 2020-21

We have no new survey data for speeding or vehicle movements to report for the last 12 months, to recall, the last survey showed that the percentage of prosecutable speeds was at 48.9% and we have over 36,000 vehicle movements a week. Because of this high percentage, we get regular safety camera visits with continued support from Suffolk Police.

We are still waiting to hear more about the possibility for the use of a speed camera system, trials have been carried out in other parts of Suffolk and a budget has now been agreed to roll out a scheme by SCC.

Local businesses that have HGV's and regular use of large vehicles (LJ Transport, Phillips Brothers) have continued to be very supportive to make sure their vehicles drive slower through the village.

We still have the ongoing support from Suffolk County Council with the placement of the temporary speed warning sign.

Regarding road issues, the Parish Council is aware of the problems with the road surface with water running off the road into residents' driveways when we get heavy rain and also the many number of uneven spots where the drain covers are sunken and lower than the road surface, causing loud noise disturbance when HGVs and other large vehicles drive over the area, this has been reported to SCC Highways. Any issues identified (including issues with footpaths and signage) can be reported at any time by a resident using the online tool: <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>

Mark Anderson

REPORT ON HOLTON ST MARY PARISH CHURCH FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2021

I think I can say without any doubt that 2020 was the most difficult year for the church in living memory. We were affected by Covid-19 in the same way as many other businesses and organisations in our community: closed churches, fewer physical services and the need to adapt our offering with on-line services and PCC meetings.

We were able to hold only 11 physical services, whereas we would normally expect to hold 25 or more. Moreover, for almost all of 2020 we were in Interregnum (for the second year), and with no priest to lead us, we relied on the very talented youtube productions of the vicar of Elmsett and Hintlesham, the Reverend Jackson Compton-Battersby, and who better to show us what could be achieved by on-line services with his slick, engaging and often entertaining delivery, perhaps the only positive point to come out of 2020. But we got through it and were able to celebrate Christmas with a Midnight Mass service at HSM.

The other piece of good news in 2020 was that we appointed a new Incumbent, the Reverend Manette Crossman who arrived in our Benefice just before Christmas. Prior to coming to Stratford/Holton/ Raydon/Higham, Manette was based in Thurston near Bury St Edmunds, so was already part of this Diocese. Needless to say, we have been delighted to welcome her.

After a gap of three months during the latest lockdown, physical services have now restarted with 2 services in HSM over Easter. For the time-being, there will be a service at 10am on the second Sunday of each month, with perhaps more when we know the future is more secure. Please keep an eye on the website and the Quartet for more details.

May I take this opportunity of thanking the Parish Council, and Sally Thurlow in particular, for the support it has continued to show us in 2020: for keeping the churchyard tidy with regular mowing (thanks to Keith Jeffries), for supporting us with work to our common boundaries, especially with hedging, and for generally keeping the church in its thoughts during its regular meetings. I think I can say that thanks to this, the church remains at the heart of the village community.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank those in the village who assist with the upkeep and administration of the church in any way, whether that be sitting on the PCC, helping with fundraising, participating in services, assisting with church clean-up days, decorating the church with beautiful floral displays, polishing the brass,

reviewing the church accounts, locking and unlocking the church, and anything else which serves to keep the church a living and vibrant part of our community.
PAUL TORRINGTON

Holton St Mary Social Club Annual Report 2020/21

Like everyone the Social Club was greatly affected by COVID. The club was closed for most of the year and made a loss of nearly £500 due to the annual expenditure for insurance, licensing fee and hall rental.

Fortunately, we have around £11,000 in reserves so we are not in a disastrous position.

The most disappointing thing was having to cancel all events for the year. We were planning to move the VE Day to 2021 but with the continuation of lockdown it was decided that we will now organise an event to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on the 4th June 2022.

It is hoped the club will reopen on 21st May and that we can run a couple of Quiz nights during the rest of the year.

I would like to thank all the past and present committee members for their support during the year.

There are vacancies on the committee so if anyone is interested please contact me.

Bob Holmes
Chairman

Village Hall Management Committee Report April 2021

2020 started well and as normal and then the term 'Covid 19' became part of our daily lives and on March 20th the hall was shut.

Risk assessments were carried out and changes were made to make the hall as best possible 'Covid 19 safe', another new term.

Changes made included; A professional deep clean, removal of entrance porch door, hand sanitising stations, kitchen mirror for better vision, floor markings and numerous government regulation signs along with a one way in and out system.

A new door was then later fitted in the porch entrance with vision panels and the fire exit door was replaced.

The bar was eventually opened for a few Friday evening sessions with a limit of six per table with table service and the 'First Friday of the Month Lunches' managed just two sittings before lockdown was again imposed. And remains so.

In order to improve the hall further an alarm system has now just been installed in the disabled toilet with a sounding beacon within the main hall.

Although the hall has been closed for sometime, the Covid secure measures that have been implemented throughout the last year remain relevant and should allow us to open at the earliest opportunity

With government hospitality grants the hall has not suffered financially and we look forward to re-opening late May/ early June 2021 if allowed.

We have a competent and enthusiastic management committee who work to keep our hall in good repair for the use of all, both present and future, and I most heartily thank them for their commitment.

Chris Haste
Chair Village Hall Management Committee

Current Committee Members:

Alan Beak Treasurer
Rob Clarke General Sec.
Tanya Kunz Bookings Sec
Geoff. White
Jan Cheng
Erik Ellis Parish and Social Club Representative

HOLTON ST MARY MILLENNIUM GREEN TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Financial: There was a surplus of £532 for 2020 due to an increase in members into the 100 club and a reduction in outgoings. Interest rates are continuing to go down, but Zurich Insurance kindly gave us 3 months free insurance. The Millennium Green Trust is in a healthy situation of having £10,000 available for any improvements or maintenance required on the field.

2020

It is worth mentioning that in 2020 it was just 20 years ago when dozens of volunteers planted 1400 native trees on the Millennium Green and today villagers are the fortunate recipients of a lovely mature open space that can be enjoyed by us all.

The eight Trustees who manage the Green on behalf of the village continue to be enthusiastic and willing and are regularly involved in grass cutting, managing the hedge rows, monitoring and maintaining the trees and creating a habitat for wildflowers, birds, bugs and beasties!

The year was challenging for everyone having to manage two country wide lockdown because of Covid 19. However, during the warmer spring and summer months, the Green was a wonderful space to safely walk around to get a little exercise. When permitted, it also enabled villagers to get together safely for a socially distanced drink on warm summer evenings.

The earlier part of the year grass cutting was problematic following a very wet winter into spring to be followed by a very dry summer and through this Richard Appleton needed to water the willow tunnel to keep it alive. We thank Richard for doing this. Unfortunately, during one of the gales in the spring, a relatively mature oak tree split down the middle and one whole branch had almost sheared off.

There were hopes that there would be some regeneration, but this was not to be and the decision was made that the tree had to be felled.

Unfortunately, due to Covid 19, the annual fire work and bonfire was cancelled. This is a very popular village event on the Green and so we hope it will be able to be held again when Government restrictions permit.

Our grateful thanks go to Chris Haste who has continued to repair and monitor the dozen bird boxes on the Green; also, Chris has kindly installed new ones when required. Five boxes had been used for nesting and one appeared to have been to roost.

In conclusion, it has been wonderful to have our Green especially through such challenging times and so a huge thank you to all the Trustees who continue to work hard so that the Green remains a special and valued place for all

The Trustees

HOLTON ST MARY UNITED CHARITIES TRUST

Balance as of 27 th August 2020	£	4,659.65
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MADE UP OF:

Capital (from sale of Charity Field)	£	3931.75
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Accrued rent and interest to 31/05/20	£	727.90
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The sum of £727.90 is available for charitable works. An application to access these funds can be made to the trustees via Paul Torrington.

Frances Torrington

Treasurer 6th April 2021

Balance Brought Forward:	£4,843.39	
Interest accrued 30/11/2019	£	9.67
Interest accrued 31/5/2020	£	6.59

		£4,859.65

Payment made on 27/8/2020
following an application

£ 200.00

Balance as of 27th August 2020

£4,659.65

Trustees: Incumbent (Reverend Manette Crossman), Peter Cheng, Richard Noel, Sally Thurlow, Paul Torrington, Treasurer: Frances Torrington

Brett Vale Annual Parish Meetings 2021

Babergh District Councillor's Report

A lot has happened at Babergh since this time last year, when we were really only at the start of our response to the Covid-19 crisis. As you will see from this report, in addition to the extra work that Covid-19 has required, we have been able to maintain a near normal service and we have made some notable achievements.

Covid-19

Since the start of the pandemic, we have distributed a large amount of government support to businesses in the form of an ever-increasing array of finance packages, distributed our own community grants, worked with our local government, health, probation and police partners to ensure all homeless people had somewhere to go and also worked with our partners in the county through the Suffolk Resilience Forum to support the vulnerable. At the same time, we have kept all our normal services running, with only temporary pauses of things like garden waste collection.

The Home, But Not Alone free phonenumber has helped thousands of people and families across Suffolk, who often didn't have a network of family or friends to call upon, to access emergency support such as food and medicine deliveries and befriending schemes during the lockdowns.

There is a lot of countywide information available for all things related to the current Covid-19 situation in Suffolk, including statistics, how to access testing and the latest on the vaccination rollout.

But we do now seem to be on steady path out of this crisis, due to the really excellent vaccination programme and a well-oiled testing system. Here is Suffolk, from being a laggard at the beginning of the year we are now the best performing county in England. The Covid infection rate has dropped from an alarming 650 per 100,000 in early January to about 14 per 100,000 now.

I want to thank all the volunteers in the district for everything they have done to support their neighbours during the pandemic – and also the Babergh and Mid Suffolk staff, many of whom have put in a huge amount of extra time to support the Covid response as well as their day jobs.

Planning

The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan was approved at council meetings in November and, following the final consultation, we submitted it for examination on 31st March.

Both Councils also recently published their Five-Year Housing Land Supply position statement, evidencing that Government housing requirements can be met by the districts until 2025 and beyond.

We provided responses to the Planning white paper and also to the consultation document on changes to the current planning system.

It has been suggested that the white paper removes local control and favours large developers, although there are explicit statements to the contrary in the white paper. As is often the case, people read into these things what they want to see. The current planning system is too complex and inefficient, but some of the criticism from government aimed at local authorities is ill-informed. It remains to be seen what legislation is proposed but, through the District Councils' Network and the Local Government Association, we will seek to influence and monitor whatever is laid before parliament.

Local Economy

Our businesses have had a tough time, but many have been able to keep going and others have had much-needed support. 28 businesses from across Babergh and Mid Suffolk were shortlisted in our first ever business Innovation Awards in November. These were held virtually and were a great success. Of the 11 winners, two were from Hadleigh: Challs International won the Most Innovative SME category and Ferguson's Deli won the High Street Innovation award.

Another success has been the Sudbury Virtual High Street that allows shoppers to enjoy the very best of Sudbury from the comfort of their front room. More than 100 businesses have now signed up to this and we will now be rolling it out to the other towns in the districts.

We are excited by the success of the Freeport East bid, which will encompass Felixstowe and Harwich ports and the new Gateway14 business park outside Stowmarket. We expect a boost with businesses wanting to locate in Babergh as well as neighbouring districts.

A new £300,000 funding programme for small businesses across Babergh and Mid Suffolk has been agreed - with funds to be allocated over the next three years. This will provide a much needed boost to businesses after the coronavirus crisis to help sustain and create jobs, provide opportunities to grow and innovate as well as react to the changing business landscape.

We have agreed to an £180,000 upgrade in CCTV provision for Hadleigh and Sudbury.

Babergh 2021/22 Budget

At the February council meeting, Babergh's budget for 2021/22 was approved and included an increase in council tax of £5 (2.96%) a year for a Band D property. The annual council tax for a Band D property will now be £173.86. There will also be a small increase of 1.5% in council house rents.

Our investments continue to be an increasing and necessary part of our income to replace lost government support and are forecast to provide 14% of our income this year. We have a balanced budget this year, with some spare funds to top up our reserves, but the medium term outlook still presents a challenge and we await a long-term funding settlement from the government.

We have, of course, suffered significant increased costs and income reduction due to Covid, but the government has provided extensive support, which covers much, but not all, of these losses.

Parking

We reviewed our parking provision across the district and whilst we recognised the need and desire to retain an element of subsidised parking, we have made changes

to ensure the Council's finances are secure and also to encourage more sustainable transport options for the future.

We have also introduced the MiPermit app in our car parks so that users do not need to get a paper ticket.

Samford Division – Annual Parish Meetings

Well it's 2 years since we had an annual parish meeting, and 23rd March 2021 marked 12 months to the day that the Prime Minister called upon us all to Stay Home, Protect the NHS and Save Lives as we all entered the first COVID national lockdown.

Well what an extraordinary year it has been, we still can't meet in person where we would normally hold our meetings and have a drink and a chat afterwards, although my mileage has reduced substantially!

In the last year we have all been touched by the impact of the pandemic in some way. Many have had the virus and recovered, others have known somebody close who has caught the virus and tragically some of us have seen the loss of family and friends to this terrible pandemic.

At Suffolk County Council like many businesses and organisations we have reacted with speed and professionalism in finding ways to adapt services to continue supporting residents. Many of our employees have stepped forward to work in new multi-agency teams, helping to source and supply over 5 million items of PPE to care homes and the voluntary sector and helping set up and support the delivery of support services such as Home But Not Alone.

At this point I want to thank all the volunteers across Suffolk for the role you have all played and especially those in in all the villages in the Samford Division for the outstanding contribution you have all made. A heartfelt thanks from all of us.

Our Public Health team continue to be at the forefront of local testing and the vaccination programme with partners across local government, health and wider Public Sector, not forgetting the significant role volunteers have played in the delivery of the vaccine. The whole vaccine programme has been the outstanding success of the response to the pandemic.

When the time is right, we need to reflect on what worked well and what did not and let us be honest many things did not and we need to learn from them. The

debate still continues today on whether to have vaccines passports or not and the whole testing programme going forward to name just two.

Reflecting on some of the highlights at SCC during the last year: -

March 2020. Winning £830k of funding to develop an outline business case to improve the A12 East of Ipswich, and consultations have recently been taking place on the proposals.

April A drive through COVID-19 testing facility opened at Copdock

May For those interested in local history, a new Suffolk Heritage Explorer website was launched.

June Better Broadband for Suffolk reached its 100,000th customer. This work is continuing and has recently received fresh impetus with recent announcements from central Government, as we all recognise the importance of good, fast reliable connectivity in the times of “new ways of working”.

July The successful booking system for our Household Waste recycling centres extended to people with vans and trailers and trade waste. We’ve recently announced further automation of the booking system.

Further details of policy changes to support our ambition to be a net zero authority by 2030.

August on 5th August Suffolk Highways announced they had completed its 1000th resurfaced mile of road since May 2017.

September First of Suffolk 2020 Fund bids approved; £300k to provide 100 fast charging points for Electric Vehicles in rural parts of the county.

The Hold; the new records office in Ipswich welcomes its first visitors

October Another Suffolk 2020 Fund bid approved £228k for tree planting, protecting hedgerows & verges.

November. Final approval of the Government’s part of the funding of the Gull Wing bridge in Lowestoft approved, contracts will now be signed.

Work started in March. The designs show that Lowestoft will get an iconic bridge

December New cycle parking installed in Bury St Edmunds & Haverhill financed by the Government’s emergency Active Travel Fund

January Two new Suffolk 2020 Fund projects announced. Discovering Suffolk and a Dementia therapy initiative using virtual reality experiences.

February Council's 2021/22 Budget agreed, and I've already covered that many times in my monthly reports. Further 16 rapid testing centres for COVID-19 opened, bringing total to 23. Highways increase drainage budget for 2021/22

March. SCC secures £3.1m for building decarbonisation initiative. Freeport East approved as a new freeport. Further Suffolk 2020 Fund projects launched including £400k for the ANPR speed camera 2-year trial. Total funding agreed £2.8m for the 2020 Fund

Having been a Councillor for the last 8 years with 7 as a member of the Cabinet , 5½ years with responsibility for Children's Services, Education & Skills and with the last 18 months for Finance & Resources, I have decided to "retire" and not to seek re-election in May. I just want to say what a pleasure and a privilege it has been to work with you and the Parish Councils over these last 8 years and wish you all the best for the future

Happy to answer any questions, but before I do a couple of items you may wish to take particular notice of in the coming months and years.

Pylons – National Grid, whether that be the upgrade of the Bramford to Twinstead line in the north of the division or the recently proposed ATNC line from Bramford in the south of the division through the parishes of Bentley & East Bergholt and onto Essex both need watching. Parliament needs to change the legislation to ensure that National Grid are not limited to supplying the least (financial) cost option but are made to consider the social value and environmental impact so the maximum amount of cabling is underground or underwater. Local MPs need to ensure that the legislation is enacted to enable this to happen.

The upgrade of the Copdock interchange, is due in the next phase of RIS programme from 2025. Try and make sure you are fully included in the prior consultation, and that upgrading of the junctions on the A12 between the Essex border and the Copdock interchange are finally included in the programme.

I've joined many of you to address speeding through your villages since becoming your councillor in 2013, and we finally have a 2-year trial of ANPR cameras starting shortly. For those that want to be included, do make sure your new councillor takes up the baton on your behalf. I will also write to the road safety team before I depart to ensure your involvement.

Gordon Jones 5th April 2021

Gordon.jones@suffolk.gov.uk

Constable Country Medical Practice Patient Participation Group Annual Report April 2021

The past year has been dominated by the demands of the Covid 19 pandemic which has required changes and adaptations to the way in which the practice provided a service. Three members of staff had to 'shield' causing staffing pressures.

During this time, the PPG has continued to meet monthly by Zoom.

To protect everyone, it became essential to minimise the number of people attending the surgery in person. Telephone triage had already been introduced to ease pressure on doctor's time and the 'e-consult' system was introduced as an alternative way of accessing the service. The latter has proved popular with patients, particularly those of working age.

Face masks became essential attire but were not easily available commercially at the start of the first lockdown. Members of the PPG made and donated many washable masks for clinicians to give to patients who didn't have a face covering when they needed to attend the surgery in person.

Flu vaccination clinics were organised differently to previous years in October 2020. Previously years clinics were organised on a 'drop in' basis meaning long queues at times. The PPG volunteered to phone individual eligible patients to make individual appointments for patients and this system proved popular with patients and staff. It also provided valuable experience to prepare for the Covid 19 vaccination clinics.

CCMP were also successful in their bid to become a Covid vaccination centre meaning that our older residents did not have to go to one of the big town-based centres. The PPG worked closely with the practice to organise the volunteers needed to run the clinics which started in January. People from this village were amongst those volunteers who braved the cold and wet and snow to help clinic sessions. Their efforts have been greatly appreciated by everyone. To date CCMP have given over 6000 vaccinations.

It has been decided that the under 50's should be vaccinated at the large centres when their turn comes. This allows CCMP to focus their efforts on giving older people their second dose. Appointments which were previously booked 12 weeks after the first dose for the 80+ and 70+ year olds are being rescheduled at 11 weeks, i.e., bringing the appointment forward a week. These people are being phoned directly.

The planned first aid awareness sessions for parents and carers of 0–11-year-olds was cancelled in March 2020 due to the first pandemic lockdown.

Sadly Dr Ayache, retired senior partner GP at CCMP passed away from Covid 19 virus in April 2020. We also lost Dr. Frank Wells in July 2020, a well-respected member of the PPG. We remember them fondly for their selfless contribution to primary healthcare in our area and elsewhere.

J. Cheng 30.03.21

Holton St Mary Facebook Group report April 2021

Our Village group has 126 members currently, and is a friendly, pleasant group. It is used by groups in the Village to nudge residents when things are happening, to alert them to information (such as Covid 19 rule changes) and to share HSM related things of interest. There are regularly some lovely photographs of the Village and surrounding walks, the flora and fauna. We don't allow companies to advertise themselves more than once a month, but we are happy for people to ask for recommendations and receive them.

Oh yes, bin collection days over holidays, traffic or roadworks disruption and missing or found animals are also regular posts, along with "does anyone want..." posts.

It is a closed group (which means only members can see the content) and although a lot of residents have been very cautious because social media is not really their thing, it has become increasingly a useful conduit for cascading information quickly, with a number of our older residents joining and lurking quietly, to see what is happening.

To join there are a few questions to be answered to show a connection with the Village and simply saying “I live here” or “I drive through on my way to work” does not do it - “I live at x house and moved here 3 months ago” is more what we are looking for as there are sadly people who seem to lurk in village groups and chip in unnecessary comments that undermine the nice, friendly and straightforward content we aspire to. There are also several non-resident members whose parents live or lived here, along with neighbouring village residents and former residents - so looking through the members won’t necessarily tell you who people are.

If you search Facebook, it is called **Holton St Mary Group**.
Sally Thurlow (I’m one of the Admins)

First Friday of the Month Lunch Club

The FFOTMLC holds a monthly simple lunch in the Village Hall - normally on the first Friday of the Month. We run it with a group of volunteers with three or four people coordinating and delivering a lunch to the people who confirm they are coming. Sometimes it is a hot meal that (for me) is the main meal of the day, other times it is a soup and sandwich-type lunch - always guaranteed to be good company, the food is not the main thing! We run as a not-for profit lunch club, with any surplus shared between a bit of a blow out in December and donating money to other things in the Village (e.g., a few bits for the kitchen).

It is at 12.30pm-2pm, costs £3.50 and is a chance to make or catch up with others in or with a village connection (three of our former residents who live in Hadleigh have been regular participants). With the restrictions of the last year, we have not been able to meet more than 2-3 times and our numbers and table layouts have been restricted, in line with the rules relating to the pandemic.

We are now formally registered as a Food Business with Babergh Council and received a five-star rating when they visited to review our measures and how it works.

We hope to resume the lunches (potentially with a limit on numbers) as soon as practical and look forward to welcoming familiar and new faces. If you would like to come, or volunteer, please contact Sally or Frances (our details are always in Quartet) who coordinate it.

Slow Stitch Group Report 2020-2021

Only a few meetings of the Slow stitch group were possible during the last twelve months. We have met a few times in the village hall when it reopened and once on the millennium green, when the village hall was closed but meetings of up to six people outside were allowed. We have kept in contact by phone and have been grateful for donations of fabric and wool. During lockdown stitching, of every description, was very popular whether people were making face masks, laundry bags, drain bags or knitted hearts. We look forward to meeting again, whether this is on the green or in the village hall as soon as it is allowed.

Jeanette Appleton

Holton St Mary 'Green Gym Group': our third year

The Green Gym Group (GGG) continues to flourish since its inception in December 2018. It meets in Church Square on the first Saturday of each month, starting at 10.30 and working until 12.00 or 12.30, assuming there is no truly horrendous weather.

2020 forecast and brought a number of potential challenges and not just climate-related, but also many opportunities. Our core team was suddenly and appreciatively almost doubled from April onwards with four people from two households who had recently moved into our village. Others have also worked with the Group before and after the two national lockdowns. Consequently, we have been able to achieve much more. Given the group's outdoor job specification and the available space, our work was able to continue for most of the year with preserved safe social distancing at all times, including during the first and 'complete' national lockdown. Only one month (October) was lost due to torrential rain. This year we have planted an additional 200 daffodil bulbs throughout the entire length of the village and by the village sign, sanded and re-stained the noticeboard, railings and benches in Church Square, refreshed the willow tunnel on the Millennium Green and tried to maintain clear pavements and neat verges. We have also included some litter-picking activities... as there is always litter and rubbish in and around the village.

We are very grateful to all those who have thanked us for our efforts and work; this both encourages us and reinforces the community spirit of Holton St Mary. Thank you.

If you would like more information or would like to express a blossoming desire to join the Green Gym team (we have places available), please do call me...
Richard Appleton

Holton Women's Book Club report

As plans to establish Holton Women's Book Club, began to take shape in February 2020, little did we know that a pandemic was brewing that would affect not only our small village of Holton St Mary but the lives of the entire world.

The first meeting date was set for April 2020, the first book selected for discussion and with half a dozen ladies eagerly waiting to meet up, plans were suddenly thrown up in the air as the first national lockdown was implemented. Not to be thwarted, we tackled the wonders of technology and held our meeting via Zoom, not realising that this form of communication was to become the mainstay of keeping in touch with friends, family and all social activity throughout 2020. We did, however, manage to have a socially distanced meeting on the Millennium Green one sunny August evening, bringing deckchairs, wine and nibbles to give a sense of social occasion!

Although a new and small club, we connected through our love of books and enjoyed discussing the merits of each novel, that we took turns to select each month.

As the pandemic progressed and lockdowns, self-isolation, social distancing and the closure of many local amenities became common place, the benefits of the book club became even more relevant. Being able to meet virtually with a common purpose was a positive experience and also enabled us to informally chat about the wider issues affecting everyone such as shopping locally or using home delivery services, missing contact with family and friends, the pros and cons of working from home, the impact of isolation on mental health and then in more recent times the rollout of the vaccination programme.

Over the course of 2020 – 2021 we have explored a wide range of topics within the books including murder, the supernatural, religion, feminism, mental health, cultural practices and homelessness. We have enjoyed both contemporary and historical novels, ‘easy reads’ as well as complex stories, and embraced local authors too. Through discussion we share our individual responses to the book of the month: whether we like the plot, the writing style, the characters, the ending. We have learnt that each of us has a different reaction to storylines due not only to individual preferences but also to life experiences.

In 2020-2021 Holton Women’s Book Club provided an opportunity for connection through shared interest and friendship and provided a sense of community, stability and comfort, in a time when the world felt like it had been turned upside down.

As we move into the second year of the book club with hope and positivity, we look forward to another year of gripping stories, cheerful conversation and community camaraderie. So, if anyone would like to join our friendly, informal meetings please contact Liz Norton.

Liz Norton