

GREAT BEALINGS PARISH COUNCIL

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2022/23

Community Governance Review

As part of the CGR, the number of parish councillors has been reduced to seven, which is what we are currently have. All were reappointed in May. My thanks go to all the councillors for their commitment during the past year.

The suggestion by Martlesham Parish Council that the North West boundary of Martlesham is moved to follow the A12 was not proceeded with.

Planning Matters

During financial year 2022/23 there have been 10 Planning Applications affecting the Parish. Five were supported by the Parish Council and permitted. We opposed three: one (Cherry Tree Cottage) was subsequently withdrawn; a further two (Stone Cottage treatment plant and Regency House shed) were permitted, and decisions are awaited regarding the remaining two (Seckford Hall which we supported).

Enforcement

ESC are aware of the inappropriate use of the water meadows in Lower Street and have served an enforcement notice.

Neighbourhood Plan

We sent the Revised Plan to ESC last September. They responded in February with further suggestions which we have now taken on board. Some final tweaking of the Revised Plan is in process before it is sent back to ESC for the Council to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment which will take about 8 weeks.

We shall then carry out a public consultation on draft revisions to the plan (the Regulation 14 consultation), and consider any comments before the revised Plan is formally submitted to ESC at which point there will be a further public consultation, following which the revised Plan will go through an Examination by an independent Examiner. ESC have advised that they think it unlikely that the examiner will stipulate that we should have a referendum because we are not making any fundamental changes to the Plan.

The main changes we have made have been to terminology. Landscape Protection Areas and Areas Protected from Development have been replaced with Locally Important Landscape areas, where the emphasis is on 'protection and enhancement'. Also, we can no longer refer to the 'Special Landscape Area' of the Fynn/Lark Valley but we can focus on the special landscape qualities of the area. The rolling valley landscape within the village closely correlates with the area

previously designated as the SLA and we have a map which showing the extent of the rolling valley landscape.

N P Statistics

ESC has produced a set of statistics which purport to show how often the Neighbourhood Plan has been referred to when planning applications are considered. The outcome of the applications is recorded but the statistics do not show whether the parish council supported or opposed an application. The Chairman has written to ESC suggesting that the statistics would be more honest and helpful, if there was an additional column showing the parish council's response. We could then have a meaningful debate regarding the true value of Neighbourhood Plans and whether they are really worth the time, effort and not inconsiderable expense to produce and update them.

East Suffolk Planning Alliance

We have affiliated to the (ESPA) which was set up after the decision to approve a second large housing estate in Grundisburgh to which a vast majority of the community are strongly opposed. Having lost their fight at the final hurdle (public enquiry) the Grundisburgh Action Group and Parish Council were forced to accept that resisting in isolation had not worked and came to the conclusion that the time had arrived for more collective action. ESPA is simply a group of like minded individuals, who are willing to coordinate and act as an advocacy group to challenge *East Suffolk Council. Their aim is to:*

See Development of Locally Led Planning Policy driven by Neighbourhood Planning Partnerships

To Help Deliver the Right Homes in the Right Places with the Right Infrastructure

To assist local communities to protect the important landscapes they cherish, direct homes to the places they want, and adopt design codes to secure more beautiful and sustainable developments with the houses they want to see.

Environmental Issues

Trees The very dry summer last year had an adverse impact on the trees that we planted. We are in discussion with local landowners as to the feasibility of planting more trees in the Parish. As yet, these are inconclusive

Water Quality in the River Lark.

Our thanks go to Farran and Dominic Douse who continue to monitor the water quality in the Lark in conjunction with Grundisburgh Parish Council. The e-coli and phosphate readings are sent to Woodbridge Town Council as part of their programme aimed at improving the water quality of the River Deben and making it safe for swimming. There is a small area of the River at Waldringfield which has been awarded designated bathing status. It will be monitored by Anglian Water on a

regular basis so wild swimmers can be reassured that the water is safe. At the moment we are continuing with monitoring to provide information as to the rest of the Deben and the feeder rivers.

Traffic issues

Our thanks go to Cllr Colin Hedgely, Martin Cripps, Anthony Shepherd and Trevor Harris for their continuing commitment to the speed watch campaign in the Village. There has been a lull for a few weeks because of ill health but the campaign is about to re-start. Observers have commented that the speed of traffic through the village appears to increase when the team are not actively engaged with their speed gun.

Footpaths

There have been some issues arising from the barbed wire along some of the footpaths which have been reported to SCC.

Our thanks go to Nigel Rolfe, SCC and Little Bealings Parish Council for the re confirmation of the permissive path to the south of Lodge Road and the reinstatement of the footbridge. The path is widely used by people in the Parish.

Quiet Lanes

We have now erected all the signs for which we have a suitable location for a pole.

Celebration of the Kings Coronation on Sunday May 7th 2023

A very successful Bealings Coronation party was held at the Village Hall and John Belstead Playing Field on Sunday 7th May. The two Parish Councils provided the seed funding for the event which raised in the region of £350 for the Village Hall. Thanks go to all the volunteers and, especially, Helen Clarkson-Fieldsen who stepped in to replace Councillors Sally Johnson (GtB) and Helen Saagi (LtB) who were not able to attend the event.

Precept

The parish Council decided not to increase the Precept for 2023/24 because of the current financial restraints. This has contributed to the decision not to increase any of the grant funding that we pay to the Village Hall Trust and the FLN. Although the Coronation Party was not primarily intended as a fund raising event, it has made a contribution to the Village Hall funds. We will give consideration to holding further community events at the Hall, such as an annual fete, with profits going to the Village Hall Trust.