

2017/2018 ANNUAL REPORT OF LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity for the Parish Council to let parishioners know of all the good work they carry out. It is also an opportunity for residents to have their say.

PLANNING

Development of the village has been an ongoing issue now for a number of years. Cllr Hermione Brown and the Planning Sub-Committee work tirelessly for both the Parish Council and parishioners alike. The views of residents are taken seriously and representation made to reflect the desire for non-large-scale and sustainable development.

This said, there still remains a number of large residential planning applications outstanding, as well as the provision of a second primary school to serve the village. The Parish Council will continue in their endeavours to prevent unnecessary growth, particularly as a result of new aircraft noise information. The Parish Council continue to make representation as a consultee on all planning matters in the village. However, final decisions are made by Forest Heath District Council or Suffolk County Council as in the case of the proposed new school. This has included, with the support of planning enforcement, the removal of inappropriate signage in the conservation area. Should the proposed growth occur, there will be a condition imposed by the District and County Councils of permanent Traffic Lights on the Junction of Eriswell Road at Sparkes Farm Barn.

RAF COMMANDER LAKENHEATH

Squadron Leader Jerry Neild continues to be a regular attendee at monthly Parish Council meetings, fostering good relations between USAF Lakenheath and the village.

SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

Crime, ASB and illegal/inconsiderate parking are also hot topics of discussion and Inspector Mark Shipton, Local Policing Commander - Forest Heath District is happy for any questions to be sent to him at mark.shipton@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Councillors Louise Marston and Colin Noble continue to represent the Parishioners on Forest Heath District Council.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Councillor Colin Noble continues to represent the Parish on Suffolk County Council.

BATTLE'S OVER

2018 marks 100 years since the end of WWI. The Parish Council is working with the school, groups and organisations in the village to organise a day of commemoration on Sunday 11th November.

CEMETERY

This continues to be maintained by the Parish Keeper who performs stirring work keeping it neat and tidy.

DEFIBRILLATOR

To support Lakenheath AED, the Parish Council purchased and donated the final defibrillator which is now up and running in Quayside Court.

DOG FOULING

Dog Fouling is an increasing problem in the Village. The Parish Council supported by Forest Heath District Council will be running a poster campaign during the spring/summer of 2018 to try and tackle the issue.

EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER GROUP

Supported by volunteers, Cllr Jenny Hastings has established a working Emergency Volunteer Group. Recent power cuts have seen the team mobilised and supporting vulnerable residents.

ERISWELL ROAD PLAY AREA

This is a very popular area for children of the village.

Vandalism continues to be a problem and has resulted in the sad decision to close the public toilets at weekends. The Parish Council asks residents to be vigil.

LAKENHEATH PLAYING FIELDS

The Parish Council continues to support Lakenheath Playing Fields Association in a number of ways; an annual grant, funding both insurance and inspections costs, maintenance of the toilet block and general tidying. Both the Play Area and Playingfields are now protected by Public Space Protection Orders.

LAKENHEATH HERITAGE GROUP

After the successful return of the Celtic Cross to Maids Cross Hill, the Heritage Group have continued in their endeavours to deliver historical information to the village. They have joined with the Parish Council and delivered this via the website. Lots of local information can be found along with memories and photographs. It is an evolving project and huge thanks go to the Heritage Group for bringing this invaluable information to life.

LAKENHEATH TIMES

Every household continues to receive a monthly copy of the Lakenheath Times. This can only be achieved with help and support from an army of deliverers. A big thank you again to all the dedicated volunteers that make it happen. Some articles of interest and relating to the village would also be appreciated.

NEW COUNCILLORS

The Parish Council welcomes three new Councillors, Jenny Hastings, William Newman and Gerald Kelly.

PARISH CLERK / PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office is an integral way of bringing the work of the Parish Council closer to the residents of the village. The office hours continue to be 9:00 am to 12 Noon, Monday to Friday.

PARISH KEEPER

Steven Aldous after 12 years of outstanding service retires at the end of May. He will be replaced by Scott Evans, the new Cemetery and Village Keeper. Steven is wished all the best for a well-deserved, long and happy retirement.

PRECEPT

The precept for the year 2017/18 was set at £142,390 and it has been set at £145,220 for the year 2018/19. Ongoing costs include the public toilets at both Wings Road and Eriswell Road, refuse collection, power, fuel, St Mary's closed churchyard, the cemetery and responsibility for replacing deteriorating concrete lighting columns, MBFU lanterns and G39 issues (where electricity wires pass very close to lanterns).

The Parish Council works hard to keep expenditure to a minimum and has ensured again a 0% increase to Council Tax bills.

ST MARYS CHURCHYARD

Rebuilding of the wall alongside the Old Dairy continues. This is very specialist work and the Parish Council are pleased with the superb work that is being done.

S. 137 GRANTS

This money is granted by the Parish Council to organisations which are considered to directly benefit at least some of the inhabitants of the Parish. Generally to Community and Voluntary organisations, for which the Council has no specific authority. The beneficiaries this year were:

£250 - Suffolk Accident Rescue Service

£250 – Lakenheath Monday Club

£250 – Lakenheath Indoor Bowls Clun

£250 – The Voluntary Network

£250 - Lakenheath Good Neighbours

£200 - Lakenheath PCC

If your organisation or charity would like to apply for a grant, please put your request in writing, giving full details of your activities and the amount requested to Clare, Clerk of the Council. You can also support your written request, face to face with the Council, by participating in monthly meetings, where a section is given to representations from the public.

SPEEDWATCH

Clr Gyte and the SpeedWatch volunteers continue to try and educate drivers who feel the need to speed through the village. It is a thankless task and sadly they often receive abuse from those that are caught travelling over the legal limit of 30mph.

Speeding is dangerous and any work that is done to improve driving though the village is very welcome. Please continue to give your support with a big thumbs up when passing by the dedicated volunteers.

SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE

To support SpeedWatch, the Parish Council with the support of Councillor Noble are continuing with the fight against speeding by purchasing a second Mobile Speed Indicator device (otherwise known as SID). Both signs will continue to move around the village with positions on Station Road, Eriswell Road and Undley Road.

TELEPHONE BOXES

Both of the historic red telephone boxes have now been adopted by the Parish Council, protecting important landmarks in the village. Refurbishment is nearly complete. The Beavers have great plans and have agreed to 'adopt' the box outside the library.

VILLAGE CENTENARIANS

2018 is a very special year, celebrating and commemorating 100 years since the end of WWI. In conjunction with this, the Parish Council have initiated a scheme to celebrate the lives of village centenarians. If you have any friends or family reaching the age of 100, please let us know.

VILLAGE SIGN

Renovation and refurbishment of the Village Sign are complete. Additional plants have been added and help to create a lovely welcome to village.

WINGS ROAD CAR PARK TOILETS

These continue to be open and maintained.

Lakenheath continues to be a lively and vibrant village with a huge community spirit. This is only achieved with the support and dedication of so many volunteers. There is something available for all and everyone is welcomed to the various groups. Huge thanks to all those that make this happen.