

Drinkstone Parish Council

Chairman's Report 2024

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting Dated 3 June 2024.

Here is a summary of the Parish Council's activities over the past 12 months, focusing on notable events as opposed to day to day business.

The Parish Council has organised a number of events this year either in our own right or in partnership with other organisations. Notable successes are the Children's Christmas Party and Easter Egg Trail and Percussion Concert.

Highways have been high on the agenda this year. In the autumn we hosted some 20's Plenty discussion forums following an approach by the Suffolk campaign group. Many opinions were aired, but support for the campaign was in the minority. The consensus was that enforcement of existing speed limits was a greater need than introducing new ones, and that a possible outcome of a successful 20's Plenty campaign might result in a 20mph limit from, for example, close to Blacksmith's Corner all the way to Garden House Lane was impractical. As a result the Parish Council decide not to support the Suffolk Campaign.

The Parish Council arranged a meeting with National Highways, Suffolk County Council and Jo Churchill MP, to discuss the impact the A14 road works are having on local roads and quality of life. Although there was a slight resignation along the lines of there's little we can do, this did result in some additional signage and a mobile enforcement van. More importantly we successfully communicated the scale of damage done and we received reassurance from National Highways that a budget for remedial repairs will be allocated.

As recently as this week we were notified that Suffolk County Council are to commence ditch drainage works on The Street, this is a stretch that the PC has regularly highlighted to Suffolk as a potential danger, particularly in winter.

The Parish Council invited suggestions for spending CIL income. (Community Infrastructure Levy, which is a tax paid by developers to contribute to the capital cost of additional facilities). We were grateful to receive so many suggestions and sorry we could not reply to all, but we did debate them at public meetings. Unfortunately some suggestions did not fall into the category of capital projects, and some related to matters beyond the PC's remit. But some are moving forward this year and the remainder carried forward to the next.

Footpaths have benefitted from additional dog litter bins, it was amazing how quickly these filled up! And the "Vicar of Dibley Puddle" (Footpath 14) seems to have been resolved, just one of the highlights from the footpath volunteers.

The PC is looking to re-instate the electricity supply at the redundant telephone kiosk so that a defibrillator can be installed, then we shall have one at each end of the village. This won't preclude the use of the kiosk for other purposes such as The Seed Exchange or indeed anything else residents propose.

Cllr Paul Selvey, Chair, Drinkstone PC.