

DALHAM AND DUNSTALL GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 19TH MAY 2022

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year commenced with the regrettable decision by our long-standing and hard working parish clerk, Joanne Kirk, to resign her position in order to reduce her personal commitments. The council advertised for a new clerk and three candidates were interviewed, with the successful applicant, Antonia King, taking up her new role in September 2021. Antonia is also parish clerk of Hargrave Parish Council and deputy parish clerk of Thurston Parish Council and we were delighted to welcome her to her new position.

Partly as a consequence of Antonia's appointment, council meetings were moved to Thursdays rather than Wednesdays, as this fitted in better with her other duties and also with the availability of the village hall for council meetings.

The year was also marked by a Community Governance Review undertaken by West Suffolk District Council which, amongst other matters, raised the issue of whether the parish boundary between Dalham and Dunstall Green and Ousden should be shifted northwards. A consultation undertaken by the parish council with all of the potentially affected residents of Dunstall Green indicated an overwhelming preference for remaining as part of Dalham and Dunstall Green rather than being transferred to Ousden. Following representations to West Suffolk, the District Council informed us that they would consult directly with residents on a reduced scope proposal affecting only the 6 properties closest to Ousden. As of now, no decision on a boundary change has been made.

Two substantial initiatives were successfully completed during the course of the year. The Quiet Lanes proposal for the Denham Road, led by Councillor Aylott, was approved and now awaits only the installation of signage. In addition, the parish council completed the preparation of its Emergency Plan for the parish, under the guidance of Councillor Fitch, and this was formally adopted in November 2021. Details regarding both matters are provided on the parish council website.

New footpath posts have been obtained to replace fallen or missing ones on paths within the parish and efforts to expand the footpath network were pursued, along with other voluntary projects including a clean up of the Malt Kiln organised by Councillor Petchey. A new initiative led by Councillor Ward was begun to consider ways in which the village could be made more wildlife friendly.

There was less activity in respect of planning applications than in previous years, other than in respect of tree pruning and removal activities. An application in respect of a new house in the car parking area of the Affleck Arms was rejected by West Suffolk District Council.

As in previous years, the council lobbied for additional measures to reduce speeding and parking issues in the village and discussions regarding new signs and an ANPR system remain ongoing. The financial position of the council remains healthy, with appropriate reserves. This should enable the council to carry through small scale initiatives within the village in the year ahead.