**DALHAM AND DUNSTALL GREEN PARISH COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 10TH MAY 2023**

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Issues relating to traffic management were much to the fore in the course of the year, as in previous years. On the positive side, the council was able to secure an ice warning sign for the top of the hill on the Denham Road, and the agreement of Suffolk Highways to install additional warning signage on Stores Hill to slow down traffic approaching the village. We were also able to obtain the use of a mobile ANPR camera (shared with other parishes) which should enable the police to identify speeding drivers on the B1085 entering Dalham from the south.

Less positively, a proposed scheme to prevent problematic parking in the centre of the village adjacent to the Affleck Arms, and the nearby bridge and road junctions, proved to be very unpopular with villagers, with strong opposition expressed via a consultation exercise by Suffolk Highways and in a parish council meeting in January. The scheme was consequently withdrawn. The parish council continues to seek means of addressing the parking and traffic issues in the centre of the village using less intrusive means, in consultation with Highways.

Led by Councillor Petchey, the council followed the clean up work of the previous year by designing and ordering a plaque to describe the Dalham Malt Kiln and its history, with the agreement of its owners. QR codes have also been installed on footpath posts in the parish to help walkers link their phones to the Discover Suffolk website descriptions of local waymarked paths. Damaged footpath posts in the parish are due for upcoming replacement and the council also began efforts to gather evidence to support the addition of a previously used footpath between Dunstall Green and the old Dalham school to the definitive map of public rights of way.

Planning issues during the year were relatively few in number. The council supported plans to repair and extend a listed property in Dunstall Green, but opposed plans to remove and replace an outbuilding in Dalham, due to the replacement proposed not being seen as being in keeping with its surroundings.

The debate over the boundary between Dalham and Dunstall Green and Ousden referred to in last year’s annual report was resolved during the year with a decision by West Suffolk to move only the handful of properties at the southern end of the Dunstall Green road, which were already within the Ousden village limits, into Ousden parish. This maintains Dunstall Green as a distinct and separate settlement within Dalham and Dunstall Green parish, in accordance with the views of the overwhelming majority of its residents and the representations of the parish council.

Two of our longest standing councillors, Jackie Bolton and Rachael Padman, decided not to seek re-election in May 2023, for differing personal reasons. They will both be sorely missed, having contributed much over the years to our deliberations. We were, however, grateful to be able to retain the services of our parish clerk, Antonia King after she was able to reduce clerking commitments elsewhere, rather than in Dalham as had appeared likely in late 2022.

The council’s finances continue to be healthy, with support provided to its expenditure through locality funding provided by our District Councillor Mike Chester and County Councillor Andy Drummond, who also assisted in lobbying the District and County councils on our behalf. We are very grateful to them for their ongoing help and advice.