

DALHAM AND DUNSTALL GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 14TH MAY 2025

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The council focussed considerable effort during the year on traffic related issues. The measures agreed in the previous year were fully implemented, including the addition of further 30mph roundels in the village. Volunteers were sought and obtained for a Community Speed Watch group for Dalham, although more names would be helpful. Councillor Corby explored the possibility of implementing a 20mph speed limit for roads in the village, which remains under consideration other than for the B1085. Unfortunately, efforts to either move the 30mph signs further up Stores Hill or install physical traffic calming measures on Stores Hill or the Lidgate Road were unacceptable to Suffolk Highways, whilst creating a 40mph buffer zone required evidence of speeding by 85% of vehicles at the entry to the village which has not as yet been obtained.

A well-attended public meeting on April 9th 2025 enabled residents to express their concerns directly, and the council intends to consider what additional measures to address these concerns, which are both affordable and acceptable to Suffolk Highways, can be implemented in the year ahead. The council continues to utilise data on speeding from the vehicle activated sign in the village to support these efforts, and is grateful to Councillor Ward for her work to secure this and maintain the sign.

A further issue was drainage on the Denham road, and after requests from the council Suffolk Highways carried out a programme of pipe and ditch clearing and excavation in an attempt to reduce water run-off problems. The direction sign at the junction of Dunstall Green Road and Denham Road, which had been destroyed in an accident, was replaced with the help of funding provided by our county councillor, Andy Drummond.

Two village projects were successfully completed during the year. The first was the planting of daffodil bulbs along the verge of The Street along the stretch from the junction with the B1085 and the Malt Kiln, which was organised and led by Councillor Wilkins-Smith. The second was the installation of a new bench adjacent to the footbridge over the River Kennett carrying the path to Moulton, which was organised and led by Councillor Petchey. We are very grateful to both of them, and to the volunteers from the village who assisted in implementing the projects. Our district councillor, Mike Chester, provided the funds for the purchase of the bench from his locality budget, which was greatly appreciated.

The council considered and commented on a number of planning issues, including several proposals for extensions of properties, during the year as part of its consultative role. There were no changes to the membership of the council, with one vacancy for a councillor remaining unfilled. Proposals for the implementation of a unitary local authority for Norfolk and Suffolk with an elected mayor progressed. The parish council registered its opposition to these, on the basis that it felt a larger unitary body would be less likely to pay attention to local issues than the current authorities.

Although the council faced increased costs in respect of verge cutting under the new scheme introduced in early 2024, and additional IT costs, it was able to restrict the increase in its precept for the forthcoming year to 1.27%, below the rate of inflation and equivalent to only 80p per year for a Band D household in the parish. Reserves remain healthy and we are grateful to our parish clerk, Antonia King for her work in managing the parish finances and our District and County Councillors, Mike Chester and Andy Drummond, for their financial support during the year as noted above.