

# MINUTES MARTHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held virtually on Wednesday 5 May 2021 at 6.30pm

**Attendance** – Cllr Paul Hooper (Chair), Cllrs Bradford and Smith

**Apologies** for absence were received from Cllrs Tony Gates and Emma Roberts, Rachel Wood (Rainbows), County Councillor Haydn Thirtle and Borough Councillor Leslie Mogford.

**Minutes** of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 8 May 2019  
PROPOSED Cllr Hooper, seconded Cllr Smith all in favor.

## **Parish Council Chairman Presentation and Report for 2020/21.**

The Chairman reported that although it had been a strange and very sad year with the onset of the pandemic and loss within the village it was clear that there is a strong presence of **strength** within our community. The Chair gave **thanks** to many, many villagers who have given so much to the village and although too many to list it was important to recognise the contributions made and seen.

**Meetings** continued virtually so the Parish Council was present in some form in order to support those who needed it. The use of the **Community Centre** had helped the **Foodbank** and now a weekly **Cancer Treatment Mobile Van** visit was helping local residents. **Village Gateway signs** have been installed and extensive damage to one of the trees on the green will see further improvements to village appearance.

**Back Lane Pond** improvements continue with the addition of a new bench made from recyclable materials.

The **Village Sign** and **benches** around the green will be improved in the year ahead.

The number of **houses** being built in the village is increasing despite concerns raised by the Parish Council, however the Chair added 47 affordable homes have been confirmed in response to parishioner need. The Chair thanked the Parish Clerk for her hard work and all Parish Councillors who give their time voluntary to make the village a wonderful place.

## **Presentations and Reports from Village organisations.**

### **Parish Church** – The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin Black St Martham

**A whole community organisation, part of Diocese of Norwich in the Church of England.**

Steven Sivyer reported that 2020 began with the church community meeting in Martham Academy's hall as the church building was still undergoing extensive repairs. This meant that many of our activities that relies on the church building such as the Parent and Toddler Group were not able to meet. One week prior to us returning to the church building, the first lockdown of the pandemic hit.

Although the church building continued to be closed, the church is actually the people and not the building, and that continued to serve the whole community of Martham. Our initial action was to, with thanks to Pixel Media in Rollesby, produce offers of help cards. Through social media we then

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asked for people to volunteer as helpers to their neighbours. We coordinated these people so that as much as the community was covered, and they collected and delivered the help cards, which enabled residents who were unable to leave their houses or perform certain tasks to know how to contact their nearest helper. Through this scheme we got shopping for people, helped them to pay their bills, collected their prescriptions, posted their letters and provided a friendly listening ear on the telephone for those who were isolated from social interaction.

The other main activity that started at this time was the Foodbank. Prior to the pandemic, conversations had taken place with both Martham schools identifying the need for a Foodbank in Martham. The main issue for those in need in Martham was that, although we were sending food to the Great Yarmouth Foodbank, they were unable to travel to it to receive that help. We had just started conversations with the other Christian leaders in Martham about this when the pandemic began. At this point we knew that we had to act! Thanks to 'Flegg High Ormiston Academy', we received our first set of food donations. Tracy, the minister at the Methodist Chapel, was highly involved. The Methodists had already been a collection point for the Foodbank in Great Yarmouth and they now diverted these donations to us. They also offered their School Room to be the base of the Foodbank and Tracy managed the base and many of the deliveries until she had to stand back for health reasons and we owe a huge debt of thanks to her.

Tracy developed a team of deliverers and Mary Porteous started to manage the base, all of whom I am also hugely thankful for. When the Methodists understandably wanted to reuse their School Room, we needed to find a permanent base, but this provided a challenge as no suitable building was identified. With thanks to you as the Parish Council and particularly to Paul Hooper, you have helped us by using the Community Centre as a temporary base until last week when we moved to our new home. This move was made possible by the help of Gareth from the New Wine Fellowship, who planned and oversaw the building works that needed to take place. I am very grateful to him, and to Ruth Maddison who took over from Mary as the manager of the base after Christmas.

The Foodbank really has brought out the best of the community, whose generosity has enabled families to be fed in their time of need. As the restrictions lessen, we are seeing that the demand for a Foodbank has also lessened, but we are still getting families who needs its support.

I am also very grateful to the Parish Council who helps support with the running of the Churchyard – a true community space. In addition to helping with the grass cutting, the Council has now taken on the provision of a bin. One main issue moving forward will be for us to work together to provide more Churchyard space as we reach full capacity within the next few years.

The other issue which I will bring before you is the car park. I have learnt during the pandemic that the Church and Churchyard is not accessible to disabled people, and we are already working to identify solutions which I will bring to you later this year.

During the COVID restrictions and as we come out from this stage of the pandemic, your Parish Church continues to serve our community in ways I've already described, and by providing services both in person and on-line which includes weddings and funerals. As we look towards fully re-opening, we hope to resume the activities such as the Parent and Toddler Group and start Guided Tours of the church building on Saturday mornings.

**Common Road SMEE** - Stephen Pinnington reported that they have a regular group of over 10 volunteers who have been giving their help over the last year. This group have continued to try and improve this small nature reserve for wildlife as set out in the management plan created by Norfolk Wildlife Trust. This has involved coppicing the Hazel trees in the spring of 2020 and 2021 and using the cuttings to create a wildlife habitat on the western boundary. New trees have been planted nearer to the oak trees and along the hedge on the southern edge. A path around and through the grassland was cut every month during the growing season. The nettles have been cut back regularly to try and reduce their dominance whilst allowing a patch to flourish as we know they are an important habitat for insects such as the Tortoiseshell butterfly. Other dominant plants such as Hemlock and Broad-leaved Dock have been removed from the grassland to try and reduce their effect on other wildflowers. In the autumn of 2020, the grassland was cut and the cuttings removed to reduce the nutrients as this will encourage a greater diversity of wildflowers to flourish. Thanks to the Parish Council, the new gate and signage have helped improve the entrance to the reserve. We continue to record all the species we are seeing, helped by some local experts - to date over 800 have been recorded including Norfolk Hawker dragonfly, Brown Hare, Red Deer and Buzzard. A bat survey recorded 10 species visiting the reserve.

**Martham Football Club** – David Bradford reported that “in short... we’ve had an extremely successful year! Whilst our “on-the-pitch” activities have been somewhat of a stop-start, our “off-the-pitch” activities have seen dramatic changes to the Coronation Ground. Such as:

- ✓ record spending on pitch maintenance (thanks to over £7k in grants),
- ✓ a new fence erected on 2 sides of the adult pitch,
- ✓ re-introduction of pitch-side advertising boards for local businesses,
- ✓ security of the car park & top field with new gate,
- ✓ security of dugouts with new steel doors (funded by GY Sport & Leisure), and
- ✓ paint refresh of the pavilion.

We’ve also moved forwards with our plans for a borehole and irrigation system (application in progress) and further funding towards a 6-year pitch programme (application in progress).

The village is growing and so are we. We want to be able to compete with the likes of Caister, Gt Yarmouth & Gorleston, and we’re doing all the right things to put us on the next platform.

Next season, we plan to run over 10 youth teams and 5 adult teams. This will include the introduction of an under 18’s team which will help bridge the gap between youth and adult football.

We thank Martham Parish Council for their support so far and hope that we will continue to work closely as the village and Football Club progress together”!

The Chair added that the reports received from groups who were unable to attend are included as an appendix at the end of the minutes.

The meeting finished at 7.03pm.

Signed the Chairman.....Date .....

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## Appendix One – Written Reports received from organisations unable to attend

**NCC Annual Report-** Once again, I am pleased to present my annual report to you as your County Councillor. This year has proven to be busy and challenging with the Covid pandemic dominating normal working practice and procedures.

### **Norfolk County Council Composition**

NCC is a Conservative led Council comprising of different political grouping and individuals.

The Current composition is: - Conservative- 53 members, Labour- 16 members, liberals- 9 members, Independent-3 members, Non-Aligned- 1 member, Vacancies-2, (Total membership 84).

The County Council operates a Cabinet System and some members have specific responsibilities as Cabinet Members, non-Cabinet Councillors sit on the many other committees and outside bodies.

I currently sit on the following committees and outside bodies; Norfolk County Council Audit Committee Norfolk County Council Scrutiny Committee, Norfolk County Council Environmental Policy Members Oversight Committee, James Paget University Hospital (Appointed Governor) and Great Yarmouth Museum Service. In my private capacity, I am Chairman of Rollesby Village Hall management committee, a member of Rollesby King George V Playing field Committee and a Rollesby Parish Councillor.

### **Norfolk County Council highlights for 2020/21:**

Statistic showing the scale of the issues.

6,200 miles of Highway, 3000 miles of footpaths, 5000 bridges and structures and 53,000 streetlights across Norfolk (40% of which are now environmentally friendly LED)

98% of highway inspections completed within timescale.

227,000 tonnes of rubbish dealt with

52,000 Adult Social Care Assessment for 20,000 people

Reduction in looked after children, just under 1000 in Norfolk.

95% of Norfolk Homes now have superfast broadband coverage.

**The 2021/22 Budget** - A £439 million net revenue budget, a £102 million boost for roads and infrastructure and a 3.99% Council Tax has been agreed to support communities, the economy and the environment across the County. There will be a further **investment of £45.7m to meet the cost and other pressures in service delivery, including £28.2m in adult social care, £7m in children services and £10.5m in community and environmental services.** Additionally, there will be an investment of £2m to respond to flooding following some of the issues identified locally in December 2020 and £1.5m for the creation of a new Flood reserve to fund urgent works and repairs.

**Every Child Online campaign** -A campaign which aimed to ensure every school aged child in Norfolk had a digital device and internet connection was launched together with the EDP and Norfolk Community Foundation, this was to make sure no child was left behind in their learning because of digital disadvantage. This resulted on 5.500 laptops and tablets being distributed to youngsters or to their schools.

**Covid Pandemic** -The Pandemic placed increasing demands on council funding which resulted in direct grants from central government. NCC played an active role in providing immediate funding for those in financial need and distress. (A fund that I accessed for local residents). NCC is currently overseeing all Covid Contact tracing in the county taking on the role from the national NHS Test and Trace taskforce.

**Major local highway improvement scheme** -The £120m Great Yarmouth 3<sup>rd</sup> River crossing scheme to build a twin leaf Bascule Bridge carrying four lanes of traffic in now underway with the aid o f a £98m Government grant. Additionally, a £1.2m mechanical and electrical upgrade for the 90-year-old Haven Bridge commenced in February 2021.

**Norfolk Flooding Alliance created** - In response to the winter flooding seen locally and across the county, the Norfolk Flooding Alliance has been created. Led by Lord Dannatt and including bodies such as District Councils, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency, internal drainage boards along with NCC bring together all those associated with the flooding issue in order that the challenges can be addressed and tackled.

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**Children in care gets below the 1000 barrier.**

The current number of children in care are down to 994, this is from a high of 1200 just over 12 months ago. This has been achieved by working better and closer with families, to keep children in their family unit. This has produced a far better outcome for children and resulted in significant cost savings, as a child in care costs on average £50,000 per annum.

**Personal Message.**

This will be my last report as your representative as I have decided not to stand in the forthcoming County Council Elections on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. May I take this opportunity to thank you and the community for your support and friendship in the past and I wish you and your residents the very best for the future.

Kind regards,  
Haydn Thirtle  
County Councillor  
West Flegg Division

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