

Preston St Mary
ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 26th April 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

Light Refreshments were served before the meeting.

MINUTES:

1. The Chairman Kerrie McGrory welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chairman's Report:

The work and commitment of Joy Lloyd Hughes, the Parish Council Chairman since May 2012 and a parish council member since 2004, was fondly remembered. Joy not only worked tirelessly for the parish council, but also for the village where she had lived for thirty years.

Grateful thanks were given to Maggie Bardzinski, who was the Parish Clerk for the past 9 years. Sylvia Watson took over this role in October 2015.

There are two vacancies on the Parish Council at the present time and it is hoped these can be filled at the AGM on the 31 May 2016. At this meeting a Chairman and Vice Chairman will be elected.

The aim of the Parish Council is to build upon its achievements, but with a focus on the new Transparency Code. We have implemented several new policies and procedures, including a Complaints Procedure, Financial Standing Orders and we plan to introduce a Parish website with funding from grant aid.

prestonstmary.onesuffolk.net

2. **Parish Clerk /RFO Report:**

Financial Report for year ended 31 March 2016.

The Parish Council Income for the year:

Precept	£4023
Advertisements	158
VAT Return	<u>263</u>
	<u>£4443</u>

Parish Expenditure for the year:

Grants	P.C.C.	£ 800
	Village Hall	500
	Newsletter Costs	413
	Clerk's salary	1300
	Office costs	177
	Subscription	<u>122</u>
		<u>£3893</u>

We are looking to develop during the year an Emergency Community Plan for the Village. This will not only focus on a major emergency such as fire, flood, etc., but also to look at vulnerable people within the village.

3. County Councillor Jenny Antill's Report:

The Budget

The budget for 2016/17 was voted through in Full Council in February. Although general council tax will not be increased, the county's share of the bill will be increased by 2% to reflect the Government's Social Care Levy which is ring fenced for spending on Adult Social Care. 90% of councils in England will be raising this Levy and many will also be increasing council tax to the maximum allowed without a referendum of 3.9%.

Devolution

In September Suffolk Leaders submitted a formal 'expression of interest' to Government supporting Suffolk's aspirations to participate in a Devolution bid at an early stage.

It rapidly became clear that Suffolk's ideas did not coincide with those of Whitehall. Initially it seemed that the Government wanted us to include Norfolk in our plans, and more recently has insisted that Cambridgeshire join in too. In his budget statement George Osborne confirmed that he was keen to conclude a deal with what has been called the Eastern Powerhouse headed by an elected Mayor. At present it is uncertain whether all of Cambridgeshire councils are willing to sign up. Large sums have been mentioned which are likely to be spent on infrastructure and other measures to stimulate economic growth in the region. It is uncertain as to whether this actually constitutes money that would otherwise not have been spent. In fact the whole process has been shrouded in mystery and has been described by a cross party Parliamentary Group as 'piecemeal and incoherent'

It would be a pity in my view if this results in four, or even five, layers of Government!

Children and Young People

This has been a bright spot this year.

Suffolk County Council's Services for looked after children have been rated 'good' by OFSTED following a recent inspection. 78 Councils have been inspected under this framework, and only 17 have received 'good' ratings, so this is an achievement

Educational standards in the county have continued to improve, albeit at a slow rate.

A level, GCSE and SATs results for Suffolk schools have all shown improvements and we are slowly moving off the bottom of the league tables.

The proportion of Suffolk schools rated as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted hit a new high of 80% in April 2016. This represents an improvement of 6 percentage points compared to just ten months ago when 74% of Suffolk schools were Good or Outstanding.

Schools in Suffolk are also improving twice as fast as schools across the country as a whole. Over the last ten months the percentage of Good or Outstanding schools nationally has increased by 3% compared to Suffolk's 6% increase.

The future of the Fire Service

A consultation on reorganisation of the Fire Service concluded in February and a decision with regard to this will be made by the cabinet in May once the results of the consultation have been evaluated. The proposals which do involve closure of some fire stations and reduction in equipment should be seen against a background of reduced demand and a smaller number of emergency call outs over the past 10 years.

Preston St Mary

Broadband

I am afraid there is not much news about when Preston will receive high speed broadband. There is a meeting tomorrow when more news may be available.

Funding

I have been able to access Locality Funding to contribute towards new windows for the Village Hall.

I look forward to representing Preston St Mary over the coming year.

Jenny Antill, April 2016.

4. District Councillor Clive Arthey's Report

District elections were held in May of last year and I was returned for a 7th 4 year term, my 4th representing you here in Preston St. Mary. Thank you for your support. Babergh

returned a political majority for the first time in its history and we now have a Conservative administration. It has brought changes to the way the Council operates including a greater importance attached to the roles of Council Leader and Deputy Leader.

Working with Mid Suffolk.

Integration of staff and services with Mid Suffolk District Council has continued, but the issue of accommodation and headquarters has yet to be resolved. As I have said before, we are aligning our planning policies, building council houses again, and have installed solar (pv) panels on 2000 existing council houses across the two districts. Solar generation is around 10MWh per day and together with the electricity generated from the waste we collect, the two Councils are now generating over 100MWh per day.

Waste and recycling.

The Energy from Waste plant at Great Blakenham has reduced our household waste landfill rate to around 1%. The planned tomato growing enterprise using some of the heat from the plant is now looking unlikely, but we will continue to seek the most efficient use of the heat generated. There have been changes to charges for garden waste collections elsewhere in Suffolk and we are close to a completely consistent waste and recycling service across the whole county. HWRCs will no longer limit the amount of rubble and plasterboard they accept, but there will be a small charge. A new re-use shop has opened at Foxhall (Ipswich) where re-usable items received at Suffolk's HWRCs are taken for sale and re-use.

Planning, CIL and Community-led Plans.

We have planning policies which seek to meet local needs and sustain balanced communities. Census data indicates an ageing population and highlights imbalances in housing types. Recent Council Tax figures for dwellings in Preston St. Mary show no change since 2001 census with 85 dwellings, although a small increase is likely this year. Community-led Planning offers an opportunity to tailor growth and influence the future development of the village. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) has recently been introduced with a higher percentage back to villages with a full Neighbourhood Plan. However, unless significant growth is planned, the costs are likely to outweigh the financial benefits of additional CIL.

Devolution.

The last year has seen various devolution proposals ranging from a devolved Suffolk to an 'Eastern Powerhouse' including Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. On 16th March the Government confirmed its support for an East Anglian Combined Authority (Eastern

Powerhouse) with a directly elected Mayor. Whilst the details are yet to be agreed, we are assured all County and District Councils would be represented on a Combined Authority Board chaired by the Mayor. It would have a devolved budget including provision for local transport, a new Key Route Network, strategic planning and housing and a Single Investment Fund to boost growth. However, to date Cambridge City Council has not agreed to support the proposals.

Council Tax.

For 2016-17 Babergh's element of Council Tax is increasing by 3.5%. Band D (average) figures for Preston St. Mary are, Suffolk County Council £1149.03, Police £173.43, Babergh £148.86 and Preston St. Mary PC £45.26.

Preston St. Mary.

Two planning applications have been of particular concern. Firstly, the recently approved application at Swifts Manor Riding Centre for change of use, holiday lets and additional accommodation, including a dwelling. I attended the committee meeting and spoke to highlight local concerns regarding intensification of use, provision of a new dwelling, site access and the road network serving the site. Secondly, applications at Applebough and issues regarding revisions, compliance and enforcement are ongoing.

Finally, I have to mention what was for me the saddest day of the year in Preston St. Mary - the funeral of your chairman Joy Lloyd Hughes. A lovely lady who I am sure will be hugely missed by the community she served so well. Unfortunately she can't be here, but I'll say it anyway, Thank you Joy.

Clive Arthey, April 2016

5. Speaker's Report – Cally Boardman, Local Area Coordinator
Supporting people living in villages in and around Sudbury

6. Police Report:

The last 12 months have seen Suffolk Constabulary face some significant challenges. It has been well publicised in the press, and through communications direct to Parishes, that the financial climate had resulted in the need to refocus how we deliver our service across the

County. Whilst the economy gave us the push required to redefine the Constabulary, it also allowed every department to examine the work we do day to day and establish our core roles, taking into account the areas of work that cause us and our communities the most threat, risk and harm.

The Suffolk Local Policing Review *has now been completed and introduced some fundamental changes that will impact our local communities. The nature of work handled by us, the Safer Neighbourhood Team, is becoming more focussed upon reducing demand to us and other agencies. In order to do this, PCSOs will now have additional specific responsibilities in key areas that will allow them to liaise directly with agencies that are best equipped in the problem area. For example, there will be an officer who concentrates on licensing issues and retail; another will work closely with vulnerable communities and mental health.* However, to get the most benefit from these roles, the PCSOs will now only **work office based hours**, albeit still spread across 7 days. This will of course mean that the **monthly Parish meetings will no longer** be attended by Police. PCSO Laura Mansell has been allocated as our Parish Council liaison officer, so in addition to her other tasks she will be building relationships with all Parishes within the Sudbury SNT boundary. Whilst we have seen a reduction in the number of PCSOs working on our SNT (10 down to 6), the remaining officers are all part of the former team, versed with great experience, knowledge and expertise on the geography. The 4 Constables that were previously allocated have been reduced, and replaced by 3 new officers, although all three have extensive local knowledge having policed the area at some point in their careers.

The other headlines from the review are that all front desks in the County, bar Ipswich, Bury and Lowestoft, have closed. As a consequence of this, we will no longer deal with lost and found property as there is no legal obligation on the Police to take on this task.

The review has encompassed every area of front line Policing. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure full public awareness, we do appreciate that some of you may not have received the full message. Therefore, if you would like further information, please contact me, Sgt. Matt Paisley by email matthew.paisley@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

Aside from the review, in the last quarter of 2015 we saw the introduction of a new crime recording computer system. This follows several years of planning and consultation with other Forces in order for a wider take up across the Country. There have been many positives coming out of this new system, not least cross border investigations and arrests. **There is, however, one negative for Parishes, and that is the inability for the system to provide us with accurate crime figures for specific Parishes at specific times.** It is due to this reason that we are unable to provide yearly crime statistics at this time. A new crime report for Parishes will soon be available (this has been sent to Parish clerks) and this will be populated with accurate, up to date data by our analytical department.

PS 1455 Matt Paisley

7. **Reports from Representatives of Village Organisations:**

Parochial Church Council – no report

Friends of the Church of St Mary

Events over the Previous 12 Months

June:

Street Fayre. A great success. The weather was kind until 4.00 pm when it became rather unkind. The event involved many people from the village in one capacity or another. It was a very inclusive event. People enjoyed themselves. In terms of organisation, it was very resource, time and helper heavy. But we raised approximately £2000.

September:

Choral concert in the Church where the singing group Serendipity performed. Once again, a great success. Refreshments were served afterwards and with small input relative to the other events in terms of time and resources, the event raised approximately £700.

November:

Christkindl Market t. Our flagship event. We trialed a new venue this year, Preston Manor. This was very kindly made available to us by Tim and Ann Coxon. The event and the new venue proved to be a great success. We had a good footfall of visitors and the majority of stallholders went away happy. Once again many, many people from the village were involved and we raised in excess of £2000.

Donations:

We contributed £1000 to enhance the security of the Church following publicised lead thefts and vandalism of churches, most notably in Lavenham. A more substantial donation for roof repairs and upkeep is imminent.

Tim Bridges

Vice-Chairman

Village Hall Committee

Another successful year in the life of our Village Hall has gone by, and I must thank all our regular users of the building for their ongoing support. The Art Group, Preston Ladies, Table Tennis Club and for a while the Keep Fit Class, along with help from the Church and the Parish Council, have all enabled us to keep our finances in order and not only pay the bills, but also to save some money towards the cost of our new front windows.

We are delighted to have welcomed Caroline Gove into our team and I have no doubt that she will prove to be a very valuable member of our Committee. We also have a new cleaner, who along with our recent acquisition, Henry the Vac, is proving to be the scourge of all things undesirable in the hall.

Security lights have been installed outside the Hall in order to enhance the safety of those using the facility on dark and dismal evenings. In addition, Martin Robertson very kindly gave us eight wooden tables and an appropriate number of chairs for use at functions in the garden. We are also grateful to Tim and Anne Coxon for providing some storage space for these items.

It is important to thank villagers of Preston and their friends who have done so much to support our fund raising events. We held a quiz night, a Barbeque, which developed into a late night dancing session, the Harvest Supper, a Tombola Stall at the Street Fayre and of course our recent Duck Race Evening, which was a great success and a triumph of teamwork, when many Villagers worked with the Committee to ensure a first class evening.

As an adjunct to our Duck Racing, I am hopeful that I may be able to sell the services of our commentator to Channel Four as Suffolk's answer to Peter O'Sullivan!

As a result of efficient fund raising, allied to prudent expenditure, we can now start to look further forward and put plans in motion for the longer term future of our Hall.

Chris Dyson has very kindly produced plans for the improvement of the building by extending it to the rear, thus forming a bigger kitchen, a serving area and new toilets. The plans have been sent to the Local Authority and are currently awaiting approval. Then the fundraising will begin in earnest! Several good plans are currently under consideration and we are hoping to approach the National Lottery for a considerable donation.

The Committee has worked tirelessly to maintain and improve the Village Hall and my heartfelt thanks go to all of you for the help and support which you have given. It has been my privilege to serve another year as Chairman and I feel the solidarity of our group was epitomised by the really good atmosphere which prevailed at our Christmas Dinner, which, owing to a crowded calendar was held in March. I hope that this will become a regular event and I feel at this juncture that it will be funded by members not by the Hall.

Annie Mason

Chairman

Neighbourhood Watch – no report

Tree Warden

The trees on the Village Green appear to be reasonably healthy. The older ones have lost some – but are all coming into bud and leaf. There is no leaking of large amounts of treacly sap. The younger ones are thriving, including the replaced, small upright oak, which has come into leaf.

The Ashes in the village gardens, as far as I can see, do not have Chakara Traxinea and the beautiful specimen Weeping Ash at Hill House Farm has started to improve when I last heard. Those that are on Public Footpaths are healthy so far. Perhaps because they are scattered and not in woodlands they may resist the disease, as I have heard that there is a likelihood of between sixty and ninety percent hope of immunity.

Margaret Bisson

Art Group – no report

Preston & District Ladies Club/Social Club

The Preston & District Ladies Club meets regularly on the 2nd Monday of every month. At these meetings we endeavour to arrange a full and very varied programme of interesting and informative talks, demonstrations and sometimes, lighthearted games. We registered 22 Members for 2015, mostly from Preston but some from Kettlebaston and some from further afield who have links with Preston. Membership costs £10 per annum and at the monthly meeting Members enjoy a raffle, tea and coffee and biscuits for just £2 per person.

Members gathered for the Club's first meeting of 2015 on 9th February for a very successful cheese, wine and music evening. The remainder of the meetings for 2015 ranged from a Beetle Drive, a Body Shop Party, a talk about Jewellery and gemstones, a talk about Thames Watermen and Lightermen – this meeting was open to visitors. We also managed to include the old favourites of Garden Party, Film Night and finally, our Christmas Meal which was booked at the Six Bells.

Our Programme for 2016 has been finalised, and we have again, a mixture of talks, demonstrations and games for Members to enjoy. We would love to attract some younger members to our Club, but sadly, young working Mums have so many commitments they do not seem to have the time.

THE PRESTON SOCIAL CLUB is an offshoot of the Ladies Club, with the aim of making visits to interesting places to which Members can bring guests. 2015 saw a visit to the Jim Lawrence Showroom and Factory, where members were made very welcome and were able to watch the many manufacturing processes of their wrought iron works, including a demonstration of blacksmithing and the manufacture of lampshades. On 2nd July 2016, we have a tour of King's Seeds sweat pea fields booked.

Anne Springall

01787 247156 annespringall@gmail.com

Table Tennis Club

Now in our fourth year, the table tennis club has continued to flourish.

We meet every Thursday evening at 1930 hrs in the village hall. The cost is only £3.00 a session, making it a bargain night out. Mervyn Cochrane has been promoted to refreshment monitor and consequently the quality of biscuits has

improved. We could still do with more players, especially ladies, as the membership is still male dominated.

On November 5th, last year, unable to use the hall as it was being used for an election, we ventured out to Sudbury to try our hand at ten pin bowling. It was such an enjoyable evening we intend to make it a regular event.

Our Christmas meal at The Six Bells turned out to be a great success. Fifteen of us, partners included enjoyed a festive meal, followed by the newly introduced **ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY** during which an emotional presentation of 'virtual reality cups' brought some members to tears, as they had never won anything before.

The awards were as follows:

AGILITY - most spectacular tumble - Geoff Poole

BODY BEAUTIFUL - Shiniest knees - Keith Springall

ENTERTAINMENT - For making us laugh - Mervyn Cochran

MOST IMPROVED NEWCOMER - Mark Whitehouse

BEST PLAYER - Dave Wright.

I mentioned in last year's report that 'Independent Chinese Research' proved how beneficial playing table tennis is to one's overall health. This has been backed up now, in this country, by genuine experimental research that proved table tennis to be one of the best exercises to slow the ageing process, according to Angela Rippon on BBC TV and we wouldn't want to argue with her!

Dave Williams

23 April 2016

Book Club

2015 saw our numbers swell to 15 members. We continue to meet at each other's houses with the exception of our Christmas meal (held in January) which was held in The Six Bells. When we are more than about 10 at any one meeting, in order for everyone to have their say on the chosen book, hat wearing was introduced: only the hat wearer is allowed to speak about the book. So far this seems to work but it's probably only a matter of time before the more rebellious in our ranks break this rule. Books we have read this past year have included feminist science fiction, historical fiction, a gay thriller, an Italian translation, South African thrills & spills, an Irish memoir which took 16 years to write and other interesting & varied books.

Our choices are made in a very egalitarian way: whoever volunteers to host the next meeting gets to choose the book, although several titles are put up for a 'vote'. We are not a very high brow Book Club but try and spend most of our evenings together talking about the ones we've read and others we want to read & more times than not, we stray off topic. But it makes for very convivial regular meetings of women in the village.

Caroline Gove

DRAFT