

Hacheston Parish Council

Chair's Report 2023-2024

It has been a largely positive year for the Parish Council. Having co-opted Leslie Judd at our last meeting, we are now in the strong position of having a full cohort of Councillors and have seen increased levels of interest in the Parish Council in general over recent months.

I joined as a Councillor with Lucy Lavender and Andy Markham in July and in November I became Chair, following the resignation of Nikki Markham due to increased work pressures. We were sorry to say goodbye to Nikki and thank her for her hard work, enthusiasm, and positivity.

The Parish Council helped to disseminate information to residents after flooding experienced from Storm Babet and we were pleased to see how the village pulled together during this troubling time. As over 5 houses in Hacheston were flooded internally, Suffolk County Council are required to carry out a Section 19 Flooding Report on this flooding. We hope this will be completed soon and we will share this with residents as soon as we are able.

The Parish Council participated in the East Suffolk in Bloom initiative, with daffodil bulbs being planted on verges across the main road in the village in autumn. We were lucky to have a good number of residents help plant the bulbs which was really encouraging and shows residents are happy to help with community projects. We enjoyed the fruits of their work in spring when the village was a blaze of yellow which was very welcome after a long, wet winter.

Over the year we have written two newsletters which have been hand-delivered to every house in the village. These help to improve the Council's interaction with residents and are important way of ensuring people know what we are doing. We also encourage residents to sign up to our digital mailing list to receive occasional extra bulletins from us.

We have received additional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding over the year and have asked residents for their thoughts on how this should be spent for the benefit of the village. Measures to help calm traffic in the village have been identified as a clear priority from the survey results and we are in discussions with Suffolk County Council to see what can be done. We are looking into extending the 30mph limit on either side of B1116, or creating a 40mph buffer zone near Rookery Farm to help vehicles slow down before they enter the village.

We can confirm that a works order for all 30mph painted roundels and SLOW markings in the village to be remarked- plus also some additional ones- has now been placed. We are grateful to our County Councillor Stephen Burroughes for paying for half of this from his Locality Budget and hope this will help remind motorists that they are in a 30mph area.

I have been moving the Speed Indicator Devices around the various locations in the village and also collating the speeding data from the machines which shows speeding is a clear problem across the village. We are also starting to see the effects of Sizewell C building works in the village and Cllr. Lavender has attended the last two Transport Forums. We are waiting for more information on the restrictions and likely implications of the planned Park & Ride in Hacheston.

We are pleased to have just received a clean audit from the internal auditor and thank him for his hard work and expediting his report so that it can be considered at our annual meeting. We will need a limited assurance review next year as the Council has received payments of over £25,000 in this financial year.

I would like to end by thanking all Councillors for giving up their time for the good of the village, also, to our clerk Lydia, for her support, knowledge and commitment without whom this council could not function.

I am looking forward to seeing what we can all achieve over the next 12 months.