

Annual Parish Meeting 2016

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

You'll all be relieved to hear that this will be a brief summary!

My aim is to give you an overview of the Parish Council's activities over the last 12 months. What have we been up to?

I'll mention just a few things that we've positively moved forward.

PC Meetings

Attendance at our parish council meetings continues to improve. We are always keen to see as many villagers as possible. If you can't attend you'll definitely be aware after tonight that most of our PC meetings are video'd and then they are posted onto the village website. The idea is that we are totally transparent about what's discussed. Thank you to Andy Taplin for giving up your time for us.

Our Finances

I'm pleased to report that the parish council's finances are on a strong footing (as we've just heard from Catherine). We have a balance in the bank of well in excess of £20,000 at present. We've been very careful indeed about spending your money! And we always remember it is your money that we're responsible for!

We've successfully maintained our precept at the same level for the last 5 years. The precept is the funding we receive from St Eds every year.

Bye laws

I'm pleased to report that the onerous and time-consuming job of reviewing, updating and registering our village by-laws has finally now been completed. Thank you Cristabel and also David Carter for all your help.

Village Greens

As you know, the parish council is responsible for the care and maintenance of our four village greens and also the trees around the village. We now have an on-going programme of maintenance in place. Thanks to Christabel, James and Ros for overseeing this work.

Village assets

What village assets are we responsible for looking after?

You may be interested to learn that the Parish Council has almost £20,000 of various assets spread around the village.

For instance – the numerous benches, our village sign at Pound Green (which has just had a spring clean – thanks to Bruce Monk), children's swings, three notice boards, various dog bins, numerous grit bins, bat boxes, our emergency generator and the bus shelter etc. etc.

It's surprising how it all adds up and it's all insured!

So is the

Defibrillator.

As a continuation of our defibrillator project, we have recently held a first aid course in the hall. The names and telephone numbers of volunteers, who are happy to be contacted in the event of an emergency, will be added to the village emergency plan and available shortly.

One of the parish council's key objectives has been to promote good communications within the village.

Website

We now have an excellent village website very well managed by Andy Parrett. It is updated regularly with village news, photographs and other items of interest. It's well worth a look! In fact it's the best Parish Council website in Suffolk!

Email distribution list

We have combined the various email distribution lists. This list will be used to send Parish Council and Community Council and Hawstead Journal information and for occasional notices, such as Hawstead road closures. We have taken steps to ensure that villagers do not receive too many emails.

Hawstead Journal

Our unique Hawstead Journal continues to drop onto our doormats – thank you Judy and David and your team of distributors and also those who sponsor each edition.

It's definitely the best village newsletter in Suffolk!

I also want to **thank** –

Terry Clements, our county councillor (soon to be Deputy Mayor),

Angela Rushen, our borough councillor who does a huge amount to support the village.

All the Parish Councillors, for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

I'm pleased to say we have welcomed a new Parish Councillor this year.

Penny Barham. Thank you Penny for stepping forward to join us.

To **James Carr** our tree warden and **Doc and Florence Lacey**, Pinford End footpath wardens.

I must especially thank **Catherine**, our clerk, for her commitment and professionalism as always. We are extremely fortunate to have her as Hawstead's parish clerk!

Finally I'd like to thank those all those **villagers** who come along to our PC meetings.

As you know the meetings are not very exciting although sometimes they can be entertaining!

Thank you for your support and please continue to come along.

In conclusion – I simply want to say that this Parish Council has continued to quietly work away to manage the affairs of Hawstead to the best of its ability.

We always have and always will have a very full agenda of matters to be dealt with.

We've managed the village's affairs in a professional and business like way..... and without too much fuss!

There is still a great deal more work to be done in this coming year.

So, we will continue to do our very best to get the job done.

Thank you.

John West