

CORPUSTY & SAXTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Norfolk

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Chairs report

Annual report of the Parish Council of Corpusty and Saxthorpe. May 8th 2024

The elected Councillors are Guy Hodgson, Imogen Waterson, Tony Barnett, Stephen Fenny, Lesley Last, Caroline Randell, Marty Jacobs, Peter Jones and John Birchall

This is the first report for some years that has not been made by Imogen Waterson, who retired as chairman a year ago. Her time in the chair was characterised by her thoughtful and dedicated leadership and her good humour. Many thanks to her for the giving her time so generously in public service. This is not a eulogy as Imogen remains a parish councillor. Last year Imogen reported that after a period with an absent clerk, Amanda Yacoubian joined us as our clerk. We have since her arrival benefited from the stability that a diligent and efficient clerk provides.

The last year has been busy. I summarise some notable developments and initiatives:

- 1. Policies** – In a category that could be billed as ‘boring but important’, we have refreshed our:
 - Standing Orders and
 - Financial Regulations,and introduced the following:
 - Code of Conduct
 - Biodiversity Policy
 - Biodiversity Action Plan
 - Co-option Policy
 - Risk Management Policy
 - River Bure Management Policy
 - St Peter’s Church Cemetery Policy
 - Publication Policy
- 2. River Bure** - Last year Imogen reported, in positive terms, that the River Bure had been restored. Unfortunately, the dredging that effected that restoration was unwittingly carried out without the benefit of a Flood Risk Assessment Permit from the Environment Agency, a statutory requirement. The Environment Agency agreed that dredging was appropriate, but would have wished to oversee the process to ensure that it complied with its standards. Enforcement action resulted. The enforcement has been resolved, the Parish Council being admonished, with the introduction of the baffles to the river and riparian planting, which you have probably seen. The Environment Agency recommended

introducing baffles on both side of the river. The parish council controls only the southern bank, but the owners of the north bank, the Robinsons, installed additional baffles in accordance with the Environment Agency's specification. They also provided the timber for all baffles. Our thanks go to the Robinsons for their positive collaboration.

- 3. Speeding traffic** – This continues to be a concern. We have belatedly received the Highways Authority's feasibility report, which was intended to explore ways of calming traffic arriving at the north end of our villages. The report is disappointing, not making recommendations to achieve this end. We propose reengaging with Highways to see if progress can be made.
- 4. Village gates** – These were ordered and paid for some time ago. We are chasing Highways to arrange their installation.
- 5. Obstructed highway** – The parish council served notice on the Highway Authority requiring it to remove the obstruction to Adams Lane. Highways, in turn, have served notice on the property owner requiring that the obstruction be removed, failing which it would take steps to remove the obstruction. We await hearing from Highways when it will remove the obstruction.
- 6. Phone box** – Last year it was reported that the phone boxes in Little London and Corpusty had been purchased by the parish. As regards the Corpusty box, plans are afoot for its restoration. A recent development is that the defibrillator is to be relocated to the phone box as it can no longer be accommodated at the village shop. Our thanks go to Peter and Val for hosting it for so long. You will probably have seen that the box is no longer cluttered by the litter bin and bottle banks. The area around it has been made suitable for the bottle bank lorry to gain access from the public footpath side, and is now smartly finished with gravel. Thanks to Marty Jacobs for undertaking that work.
- 7. Defibrillator training** – This has recently been delivered at the village hall. Thanks to all involved.
- 8. Bench and picnic tables** – You may have seen that a new bench and tables have been sited on concrete slabs by the playground. Thanks go to John Bayley who did a great job and generously gave his time.
- 9. Village sign** – The old sign, under the plough, collapsed. A new sign has been commissioned and I hope will have been fitted by the time of this meeting.
- 10. Autumn hog roast and activities** – These were again organised by the Reverend David Longe, and funded by the parish. The day was very much enjoyed.
- 11. Trees by playground** – The parish council has had these inspected by two tree surgeons with a view to pruning them. We have been advised that the willow tree, whilst healthy, has become too heavy and is at risk of structural collapse. For this reason, the willow will be reduced by about 50%. We are advised that it will grow back vigorously. Other over-hanging trees will be pruned. The work is due to take place this month.

12. Litter pick – A spring litter pick was conducted during April. Thanks go to all villagers who volunteered their time and effort.

Guy Hodgson (Chairman)