

Little Bealings Parish Council: Chairman's Report 2018-2019

Since our last Annual Parish Meeting we have had a very busy year, with 13 Parish Council meetings, 7 of which were meetings specifically to consider planning proposals. There have been a variety of planning applications that the Parish Council has been consulted on, including extensions and alterations to private dwellings, and an application for a new house outside the village envelope – ie outside the limited area in the centre of the village where new housing may be permitted. This has been granted by SCDC on the basis that the design is outstanding and also the development itself will be ecologically outstanding.

An appeal against the refusal of SCDC to grant permission for another new house outside the envelope development was refused. In addition proposals for housing development at Grove Farm, which were displayed by the developers at the Annual Parish Meeting last year, were refused by SCDC.

During the year SCDC has been reviewing its Local Plan, which among other things, allocates where housing will be permitted. I attended a policy planning meeting with SCDC, with Ian Ransome and the Clerk, as a part of the Review. The Final Draft of the Plan has now been published. No new housing is proposed in the parish, and there is no change to the village envelope.

A major success for the Council in the last year was the relisting of the Admirals Head public house as a Community Asset for a further five years. This was opposed by the owners and decided at a hearing at SCDC. A great deal of work was undertaken in preparing for the hearing and we were represented by Brian Morron from Gotelee's solicitors on the day. The relisting allows for a bid to purchase to be made by the community, if it is placed for sale during this time. A new independent group of villagers has been formed to look into purchasing the pub. They are also involved in the bi-monthly Pop-up-pubs at the Village Hall, and will be giving their own report later.

Noise and activity at Sinks Pit still has to be resolved and we are continuing to press for a solution with SCC.

We continue to be a part of SCC's rota for 'Vehicular Activated Signs' in Martlesham and Playford Road, making motorists aware when they exceed the speed limit. We are currently pressing for a renewal of the white lines and hatched area along Martlesham Road, which were successful in decreasing speed when originally installed.

We have pressed Anglian Water for a start date regarding the sewer works in The Street which are to be included in their 2020-2025 programme, asking for the works to be included early in the programme. This would benefit local residents, the pub, should a purchase be possible, and the Angela Cobbold Hall.

The Clerk and I attended General Data Protection Regulation training, and the new Regulations have involved a lot of work, including an Information Audit of all the personal data that we hold. The Council has appointed the Local Council Public Advisory Service as its Data Protection Officer.

The Parish Council remains a member of the Suffolk Preservation Society, the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, Community Action Suffolk and SAVID (a Safer Village Driving Group), where we have been represented by Denise Head. Toni Cornish has attended local police 'anti-social behaviour' management meetings for the Council.

I would like to thank the Parish Clerk for her knowledge and support which has made my job as Chairman over the last 4 years so much easier, and also the Parish Councillors. Special thanks should go to Jenny Shaw for her work as the Webmaster for the Little Bealings Parish website for her unstinting commitment and enthusiasm.

Margaret Wilson
Chairman, Little Bealings Parish Council

4 March 2019

Item 5C - Angela Cobbold Hall Update

As many in this room are aware, the Angela Cobbold Hall is in the process of being sold. This process started 18 years ago when the PCC decided that it was not appropriate to try and maintain two beloved buildings in the village. As agreed at the PCC meeting in January of 2018, the Hall was prepared for sale, and in July, following PCC approval and at the request of the Bishop, the Hall was put up for sale and sealed bids were reviewed on September 18th. Since then, the Save the Angela Cobbold Hall team, now ROPETH, has come through with an offer that was accepted and I am delighted to report that exchange of contracts has been agreed and completion should occur by April 1st.

The PCC has agreed to donate the Vestry Cupboard to the ROPETH team and we hope that Peter Carr will use it to create our local community archive. We have also donated the chairs to the ROPETH team and will continue to share the tables as needed until both the Bealings Community Hub and the ACH have the resources they need. While we are concerned that the Village will now have the luxury of 3 community facilities, perhaps 4 with the Admirals Head saved!), it is our hope that we find a way for all to survive and thrive as we work together to serve you and the wider

Suffolk community. We are also having initial discussions about collaborating with other community leaders on the Good Neighbour Scheme that is supported by the Community Action Suffolk team and we wish the ROPETH group well in their future endeavours.

Report on the ACH.

After prolonged negotiations, exchange of contracts took place last week for the purchase of this major Community resource. In order to maximise the donations made by our Donors, we formed a Company, ROPETH, with Charitable Trust status, registered both at Companies House and the Charity Commission and approved by HMRC. This enables us to claim Gift Aid, an extra 25%, on all qualified donations. Completion will take place on April 1st.

A late requirement by the PCC for a new covenant restricting the use of the Angela Cobbold Hall as a “ Restaurant and Cafe “ was dismissed, the operating costs of such, being irrelevant to our business plan of maintaining the Hall on a sound financial basis

We are now in the process of applying for Grant Funding – (a) to attend to immediate outstanding necessary repairs, to be followed by (b) to introduce some new and unique opportunities for the local area to enjoy. The initial response to our enquiries has been very positive, thanks to the immediate support received from the Village, resulting in grant funders being very appreciative of the financial commitment given, enabling the purchase of the Hall to continue its role as a Community Resource, now, not linked to the church.

Once completion has taken place, we shall call a meeting to discuss the future of the Hall and seek the community’s views on what they wish to see.

Roger Roseboom

Chairman ROPETH.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT FOR BEALINGS VILLAGE HALL TRUST

The Village Hall continues to be well used with a number of regular hirers, plus one-off events.

The reinvigorated Admirals Head Pub Group are coordinating with the BVH fundraising committee to arrange regular "Pop Up Pub" events every other month.

The first one was the best ever with over 120 participants of all ages enjoying food, drinks and raffle.

This year we replaced the remaining single glazed windows in the hall, toilets, committee room and snooker room – all funded by grants from Tesco "Bags of Help" - £1k and M&S Energy - £4.25K

The snooker table has had new cushions and pockets.

An application for a grant to extend/resurface the car park for £43k was unsuccessful

Current projects include possible extension/re-roof/extra toilets/expanded car park/enhanced access for the hall. Resurface paths and sports court and improved access for the Playing Field.

An architect and QS services have been acquired free of charge through Suffolk ProHelp with different proposals with costings being delivered this spring. Both projects will require significant community response to assess need and extensive grant application work.

The new sports court bookings system went "live" in April last year with availability for the village hall or sports court via the Little Bealings Parish website or directly at bealingsvillagehall.org.uk.

Last year bookings for using the Sports Court were down on the previous year, and the committee is looking into different options so we hope that this will improve this year with the new booking system.

The Trustees of the Village Hall greatly appreciate the donations given each year by the two Parish Councils towards the upkeep of the hall and playing field.

Fynn-Lark News. Annual Report 2018.

Finance:

Income: We need about £2500 pa to break even.

Finance comes from three sources:

a/Parish Councils, for whose on-going support we are extremely grateful – about £550 total

b/About three dozen residents with standing orders, and occasional donations. More would be welcome. Probably around £450

c/ Advertising income, sought by the editor, so not far short of £2000 pa needed – many personal links. Again we need more!

Expenditure: almost all our expenditure goes on printing. One issue can cost anything between £200/£300, depending on size. One recent issue cost £292 – 40 pages. Probably unsustainable without an increase in income.

We have a team of some 40 people who offer their services free – it was for that reason that we had a small party in late summer to thank them -£50 to say thank you to 40 people -so good value for money.

Current situation: £2088 in YBS, with 8 issues to come, so we are marginally ahead – with PC income for the year – hopefully - still to come.

Personnel

Production: co-ordinating editor – Norman Porter -Gt B. designer Tim Llewellyn – Playford.

Distribution -Peter Carr – Lt B – two collating editors -Ferial Rogers and Jane Hartley -both Lt B.

I have real concerns for the future. Tim is moving to Chillesford. I'm getting on a bit, and don't have much more in the tank. We desperately need understudies – and help. Pleas for help fall on deaf ears. Without people to produce this Magazine, it will go under. It not only tries to convey and support the values of village life in these parts, but is also the prime vehicle for PCs to communicate with residents. It is a moot point as to whether this can eventually be effectively done exclusively by digital media, should this printed medium fade away or collapse for lack of volunteers.

We are an independent body – used by, but not controlled by the PCs. On balance that independence is good, but it raises the question of continuity – of the way in which this independent body can self-perpetuate – and if it can't, who steps in? The crunch could come sooner rather than later.

Editorial independence and neutrality.

Everyone will be aware that this was a thorny issue in 2018. A series of editorials explained our dilemma. While we would love to paint the picture of an eternally idyllic community, that would be, at various junctures, a distortion of the truth. Our Magazine must have a role to play in communicating controversy, and that necessarily means putting all points of view, not only to inform readers of what is happening, but also to allow them to make up their own minds. We have aspired to neutrality, which sounds a safe word, but it is far from it. Towards the end of 2018 there were pressures on us which nearly led to our throwing in the towel. I know that to edit is to choose, but

when we are doing our best to tread a delicate middle way, that is the sort of pressure to which volunteers should not be subjected. But – phew – happily we seem to have come through it all. But the principle of neutrality may at some time in the future come back to test us. It is not something which will encourage others to join the team.

Content

I can but ask whether it meets with general approval. The Magazine is contributor-led, and within the limits of good taste and space availability we try to publish what we are sent. We do apologise for the occasional failure of material to make it through the process, but we do our amateur best.

In this interregnum the religious side of things is even more squeezed as we have no priest to make official contributions, but again we do our best to work out the information that needs to be published and to keep people informed.

Conclusion

Finance – stable enough, but needs constant watching

Personnel -a real concern for the future

Editorial neutrality – despite our disclaimer on the back page of the Mag this is a sensitive issue, but we will keep trying to produce a balanced magazine, expressing all printable shades of opinion.

I am more than happy to take questions, or to respond to responses to what has been said.

Since last year's Parish Meeting, All Saints Church has continued to hold monthly 10am services and 4pm Messy Church services with the help of able sidespeople, and dedicated PCC members, even during challenging times. Highlights of the year include: the very successful Plant Sale in support of both Bealings Churches, the Doubles' wedding blessing, a lovely Remembrance service in the graveyard, a beautiful candlelit Carol service, and the very well attended Crib Service. Although we had to move to the Angela Cobbold Hall during November and December for services, we felt it was imperative to continue to serve the spiritual needs of our parishioners, even given the Interregnum period we now find ourselves in and we hope that the ROPETH team will work with us to accommodate services as we continue to improve the fabric of the Church.

We are grateful to Archdeacon Ian, Rev Canon Clare Sanders, Archdeacon Sally Gaze and the entire Diocese staff for their assistance and leadership in this challenging time and hope that by next year's Annual Parish meeting we will be able to welcome a new Priest-in-charge.

The Bealings Community Hub at All Saints Church began work at the end of October on the first project approved by the Lord Chancellor in February: creation of a flexible space. We are delighted that Stowe Builders--ably managed by local resident Elizabeth Sinha and Mullins Dowse Architects--were able to complete the project on time and on budget and we were able to hold Christmas services in the Church. The next project is to improve the fabric of the church and make much-needed repairs and improvements to the electrics, heating, walls, and drainage, followed by installation of the kitchen by another local resident, Tom Bullimore. It's hard to believe that we have managed for so long to host coffee and tea after services with no running water in the church, but in getting to know other Churches throughout the region, we have come to realise that we are quite lucky to at least have a wheelchair-accessible toilet!

We wish to extend our thanks to those who have already supported the Community Hub, including the members of

the Committee from throughout the Benefice, and our donors to date who include: AllChurches Trust, Awards for All Lottery Fund, Colin Hedgley and his Suffolk Cost District Council Enabling Communities budget, the Ganzoni Charitable Trust, the LD Rope Third Charitable Settlement, Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, Tesco Bags of Help and Viridor. They have helped us raise £141,200 towards the Hub so far and in the coming months, we will continue to seek grants, approach patrons, and also host local fundraising events, including music, art, films, educational talks, and wine tasting evenings and we hope that you will find time to join us.

We will also be placing a binder in the church to document the project, including the archaeologists' report, which I am happy to send to any resident electronically if you would like. I have also been discussing bringing a Good Neighbour Scheme to Little Bealings, which is an initiative supported by Community Action Suffolk and we will convene a meeting with the programme leader later this Spring. While we recognise that change is not always easy for some to see, we ask you to please keep in mind that if we don't do something to put the Church on a firmer financial footing, it may be lost to the community and we hope that no one wants to see that.

While the Church will host the Bealings Community Hub and Café, it really belongs to the village and we hope to host a range of activities and workshops to benefit Little Bealings residents and our friends and visitors from further afield.

We have been heartened that even those who are not churchgoers have offered to help the Bealings Community Hub come about and that regular parishioners have been made very positive comments on the changes that have been made so far, including the more comfortable chairs! While we recognise that there are challenges such as parking that still need to be addressed, we are happy to work with any and all who want to see improvements to the road and the parking facilities in our village, including local and county councillors, Bealings School, the Village Hall Trustees, and our friends and neighbours. While we may be a small village, we want to be open and welcoming to all and the PCC, which I am representing today, hope that a spirit of collaboration can be fostered in 2019 and beyond and that the Church will continue to serve all Little Bealings residents, the Benefice, its parishioners, and our visitors for many generations to come.

Annual Parish Meeting report from 'Save the Admiral's Head Group'

A newly formed 'Save the Admiral's Head Group' had its first meeting in November 2018 and the main objectives agreed were

1. As the community asset listing has less than four years to run we need to show a need for a pub by continuing to run well attended pop up pubs.
2. To contact the owners of the pub to arrange a meeting so we can understand their position and point of view.
3. To communicate with councillors for advice and guidance.

We have joined forces with the Village Hall pop-up pub organisers and helped with the January pop up pub. This was a huge success and dates have been planned for the rest of the year.

A letter was sent at the beginning of the year to the owners offering a meeting on neutral ground and if they so wished in the presence of a mediator. They were unable to meet in January and a further email was sent asking for a date in March which they have also declined to accept due to being too busy.

The group met with Colin Hedgley, Nicole Rickard (head of Communities) and Chloe Winslow (community support) all from the District Council to ask for advice and options available to us.