

2018/2019 ANNUAL REPORT OF LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity for the Parish Council to let parishioners know of all the good work they carry out. It is also an opportunity for residents to have their say.

PLANNING

Development of the village has been an ongoing issue now for a number of years. Cllr Hermione Brown and the Planning Sub-Committee have worked tirelessly for both the Parish Council and parishioners alike. The views of residents was taken seriously and a case taken to Judicial Review regarding the proposed new school on Station Road. Unfortunately the Parish Council were unsuccessful in their fight to protect children against the excessive noise at this site and building of the new school is due to begin shortly.

Permission has also been granted on a number of large residential planning applications. The Parish Council will continue in their endeavours to ensure development is sustainable and benefits are seen to the village. The Parish Council continue to make representation as a consultee on all planning matters in the village. However, final decisions are made by West Suffolk Council or Suffolk County Council as in the case of the proposed new school.

Work on the intensification of RAF Lakenheath has begun with the site clearance phase now in progress, prior to the construction work due to commence in early July. This will involve 700 extra workers reaching the area via gate 8 on the Brandon Road. Lakenheath Parish Council are assured that there will be a traffic management plan in place to reduce the traffic running through our village. All work will be completed by November 2021 when the F-35's and their squadrons are due to arrive.

RAF COMMANDER LAKENHEATH

After twelve years, the Parish Council said their goodbyes to Squadron Leader Jerry Neild who regularly attended monthly Parish Council meetings, fostering good relations between USAF Lakenheath and the village. They wish him and his wife Ruth every happiness in their retirement and look forward to building a good relationship with his successor.

SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

There are a number of issues that continue to cause issues in the village including ASB and parking. The Parish Council are in regular contact with Suffolk Constabulary highlighting the problems and challenging the lack of police presence seen in the village. The Constabulary encourage reporting dangerous parking and persistent offenders to our Safer Neighbourhood Team
Brandon.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk.

WEST SUFFOLK COUNCIL

Following the elections, the village has two new representatives on West Suffolk Council. The Parish Council look forward to working with Cllrs Stephen Frost and David Gathercole.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Councillor Colin Noble continues to represent the Parish on Suffolk County Council.

BATTLE'S OVER

2018 marked 100 years since the end of WWI. The Parish Council worked with the school, groups and organisations in the village to organise a day of commemoration on Sunday 11th November. It was great to see so many in the village involved and great thanks goes to all those involved. The final touches were the lighting of the Beacon and a new commemorative bench on the Village Green.

CEMETERY / KEEPER

The Parish Council are pleased to welcome their new Village Keeper, Scott Evans. He is doing a fabulous job maintaining the cemetery, churchyard and parish open spaces.

DOG FOULING

Dog Fouling is an ongoing battle in the Village. The Parish Council continues to support the fight by replacing posters and publishing articles in the Lakenheath Times.

EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER GROUP

Supported by volunteers, Cllr Jenny Hastings continues to operate a working Emergency Volunteer Group. The team are on hand to support vulnerable residents.

ERISWELL ROAD PLAY AREA

This continues to be a very popular area for children of the village. The Parish Council continue to make improvement and are currently looking to replace the rubbish bins.

LAKENHEATH PLAYING FIELDS

The Parish Council continues to support Lakenheath Playing Fields Association in a number of ways; an annual grant, funding both insurance and inspections costs, maintenance of the toilet block and general tidying. The Play Area and Playingfields are protected by Public Space Protection Orders.

LAKENHEATH HERITAGE GROUP

The Heritage Group continue to deliver historical information to the village. They have joined with the Parish Council and delivered lots of information via the website. This includes local information which can be found along with an increasing number of memories and photographs on the parish website.

Sadly it has to be reported that the recently restored Celtic Cross monument located at the top of Maidscross Hill was vandalised. The metal plates were stolen. The Heritage group are in discussion with West Suffolk Council, the owners of the site with the aim of replacement in the future. They have many other ongoing projects and huge thanks go to the Heritage Group for bringing this invaluable information to life and accessible to all.

LAKENHEATH TIMES

Every household continues to receive a monthly copy of the Lakenheath Times. This can only be achieved with help and support from an army of deliverers. A huge thank you again to all the dedicated volunteers that make it happen. Some articles of interest and relating to the village would also be appreciated.

NEW COUNCILLORS

With elections held at the beginning of this month, fond farewells are given to Hermione Brown and Carole Lucas. The Parish Council welcomes new Councillors, Alan Gyte, Peta Gyte, Stephen Palmer and David Gathercole.

PARISH CLERK / PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office is an integral way of bringing the work of the Parish Council closer to the residents of the village. The office hours continue to be 9:00 am to 12 Noon, Monday to Friday.

PRECEPT

The precept for the year 2018/19 was set at £145,220 and has been set at £ for the year 2019/20. Ongoing costs include the public toilets at both Wings Road and Eriswell Road, refuse collection, power, fuel, St Mary's closed churchyard, the cemetery and responsibility for replacing deteriorating concrete lighting columns, MBFU lanterns and G39 issues (where electricity wires pass very close to lanterns).

The Parish Council works hard to keep expenditure to a minimum and has ensured again a 0% increase to Council Tax bills.

ST MARYS CHURCHYARD

Rebuilding of the wall alongside the Old Dairy has been completed. This is very specialist work and the Parish Council are pleased with the superb work that has been done.

S. 137 GRANTS

This money is granted by the Parish Council to organisations which are considered to directly benefit at least some of the inhabitants of the Parish. Generally to Community and Voluntary organisations, for which the Council has no specific authority. The beneficiaries this year were:

EACH - £250
Community Action Suffolk - £25
Lakenheath Good Neighbours - £150
Lakenheath Monday Club - £250
Lakenheath PCC - £200
Lakenheath Football Club - £250
Citizens Advice - £100
Lakenheath Silver Band - £250
Sharing Parenting - £50
Lakenheath Whist Club - £250
Lakenheath Indoor Bowls Club - £250
Lakenheath Heritage Group - £250

If your organisation or charity would like to apply for a grant, please put your request in writing, giving full details of your activities and the amount requested to Clare, Clerk of the Council. You can also support your written request, face to face with the Council, by participating in monthly meetings, where a section is given to representations from the public.

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

The SpeedWatch volunteers continue to try and educate drivers who feel the need to speed through the village. It can be both rewarding but unfortunately sometimes thankless task, with them often receiving abuse from those that are caught travelling over the legal limit of 30mph. Accidents have been seen in the village due to speeding, it is dangerous and any work that is done to improve driving though the village is very welcome. New volunteers are welcomed and please continue to give your support with a big thumbs up when passing by the dedicated volunteers.

SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE

To support SpeedWatch and the fight against speeding, the Parish Council with the support of Cllr Noble have purchased a second SID. Both SIDs are moved regularly around the village with positions on Station Road, Eriswell Road and Undley Road.

TELEPHONE BOXES

Both of the historic red telephone boxes have been adopted by the Parish Council, protecting important landmarks in the village. The Scout Group made a wonderful job of helping to commemorate the end of WWI and opening up the book and game swap. This will soon move down to the box near Mutford Green with new and exciting projects planned for the box outside the library.

WINGS ROAD CAR PARK TOILETS

These continue to be open and maintained.

Lakenheath continues to be a lively and vibrant village with a huge community spirit. This is only achieved with the support and dedication of so many volunteers. There is something available for all and everyone is welcomed to the various groups. Huge thanks to all those that make this happen.