

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT APRIL 2024

The last twelve months have seen a continuation to the return to life and activities as normal in and around the village. We celebrated the coronation of His Majesty The King with a gathering at Bullock Park, not letting the weather dampen the event. It was lovely to hear the bell ringers, old and new, heralded the coronation too. The Remembrance service on the 12th of November was well attended with many groups and organisations presenting wreaths in memory of the village's fallen. It is truly heart-warming to see the community coming together for these events.

We have also seen the further growth of the football teams and Beavers/Wolfcubs and Scouts groups at Bullock Park. Being able to provide sporting and recreational opportunities like this for the children in the village helps to foster an environment of respect, teamwork, and community mindedness. Both groups helped with the recent tree and shrub planting at Bullock Park where around 400 were planted. The planned expansion of the facilities at Bullock Park will provide great opportunities for indoor and outdoor sports and activities, much improved changing facilities and even, possibly, publicly accessible toilets for the first time.

Reverend Laura Purnell and her team at All Saints Church, along with the members of the Parochial Parish Council, have continued their support for the village, providing pastoral care and a warm space for a cupper and a chat at the church every Wednesday. This coincided with the weekly visit of the Mobile Food Store, providing convenient access low-cost fresh food to parishioners. This service has now ended, but a new food service is soon to be launched by Breckland District Council under the new Inspiring Communities programme.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the efforts of our Parish Councillors for their support and engagement with the parishioners throughout the year. We achieved Mindful Village status last year, as a result of volunteers being trained in recognising signs that people may be struggling and ways in which to approach and offer support and signposting to sources of help. We strive to continually improve our service to the community through maintaining our training and skills and look forward to serving the community for the next twelve months.

None of our meetings or events would run as smoothly as they do without the support and hard work of our Clerk, June Smith. She is instrumental in ensuring that all Parish Council communications and finances are managed most effectively.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of our two Breckland District Councillors, Paul Hewett, and Lynda Turner, and not forgetting our Norfolk County Councillor, Ed Connelly. Our engagement as a Parish Council, with both Breckland District Council and Norfolk County Council is made so much more effective through their support and advice.

I said it last year and it remains as true as ever. "Time stands still for no man" and this is equally true of village life. As our village population continues to expand, through the growth and expansion of families who have lived here for generations, as well as newcomers to our community, we will see new challenges and opportunities to grow as a village to support them, and I have every confidence in our ability, as your Parish Council, to do so for the benefit of the whole community.

Finally, I would like to thank our parishioners for supporting and attending our Parish Council meetings, engaging with our Councillors, and providing input and suggestions as to how we may improve village life.