

GELDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes

10th May 2023, 7.00 PM

At Geldeston Village Hall

Parish Councillors present: I. Ansell (chairman), J. Ashfield, P. Cracknell, J. Crowfoot, R. Fogerty, J. Hayward,

There were 12 members of the public in attendance.

- 1. Welcome.
- 2. To receive an update from chairperson on what we have achieved last year. See Appendix 1
- **To approve the minutes from last meeting May 2022.** These were approved (Prop: JA; Sec: JH).
- 4. To receive an update from Geldeston Village Park and the Lottery Bid: See Appendix 2
- 5. To receive reports from District and County Councillors: See Appendix 3

Catherine Bickmore was in attendance and gave a report on the PCC. See Appendix 4.

Q: Can you go up the tower yet, the views from the tower are impressive.

A: There are no railings round the tower. The ladder is fine.

6. Questions and answers:

Cllr Crowfoot stated that the Annual Parish Meeting should be separated from the Parish Council meetings. People should be informed ahead of time.

The Clerk reported that LGA 1972 stated that the Annual Parish Meeting should have

7 clear days from the date of the agenda being published to the meeting date. It is a legal requirement to hold this meeting separately.

The Clerk has been in post since 2016, she has always had the meetings separately, although on the same day.

Q: What is happening regarding the Neighbourhood Plan?

A: The Clerk and the Clerk to Ellingham and Kirby Cane were at the same neighbouring training session. It could be a good idea to do the whole three parishes together, Ellingham and Kirby Cane, Geldeston and Gillingham.

Meeting closed at 19.25

Appendix 1

Geldeston Parish Council Annual Meeting Chairpersons Report

This last year has been a busy one for the PC.

More equipment has been installed at the playpark and it is looking fantastic.

I would like to say a thank you to all the people who gave up their time to help with this, without their help and enthusiasm this would not have been so far forward.

Members of the Parish Council assisted by volunteers from the village are regularly inspecting the equipment and reporting their findings back to our Clerk

I would like to thank the Chapmans for continuing to cut the Green project for the PC.

And Margaret and Joe Langren for their hard work with the Green project and allotments which are an ongoing success.

The PC have been asked for more litter bins and dog bins these have been obtained and will be installed shortly.

There will also be another grit bin installed at the top of Geldeston hill following a request for one.

I hope that the residents of our village have been happy with the work carried out on their behalf by the PC, And will be in the future.

I would like to thank Tina our Clerk for all the help, support and wise guidance given to me and the rest of the PC, Without Tina's expertise things would have been much more difficult.

lan Ansell Geldeston Parish Council Chair

Appendix 2

GELDESTON VILLAGE PARK REPORT

(May 2023)

Background

Geldeston Village Park (GVP) began life as Let's Play when it was recognised that the children of Geldeston had no local play facilities after the original playground had fallen into disrepair. Play facilities are expensive and whilst the Parish Council (GPC) had some CIL monies this was insufficient for its needs. A small subgroup of local volunteers set about fund raising and creating an awareness amongst local businesses and residents. They responded and made generous cash donations and the contributions of materials. Slowly but surely the coffers began to grow.

Then unfortunately Covid hit. Not to be deterred the subgroup diligently kept going and continued with Covid friendly fund raisers which not only raised funds but also morale. At about the same time SNDC transferred the surrounding recreational area into GPC ownership. This provided the opportunity to transform a neglected public area into a universal space for people of all ages and abilities. The project could incorporate not only a fully equipped playground for children but also a cross generational wheelchair accessible sensory garden and boule court. It offered a place where people can come together, unwind, and exercise. This however needed additional money. The subcommittee set about making a bid for national lottery funding which was more difficult than envisaged due to extenuating circumstances.

The committee had never put together such a bid before and requests for help fell on deaf ears. The after math of Covid 19 combined with Brexit and to some extent the Ever-Green container ship blocking the Suez Canal caused great difficulties in obtaining quotes for necessary work. There is/was a national shortage in acquiring materials and labour is/was in high demand causing prices to rise. Quotes obtained prior to the pandemic could no longer be relied upon and it was difficult to use quotes gained by others for comparison as these would also have become out of date. It was not easy to gain quotes from landscape gardeners and contractors who either couldn't come out for some time to come or failed to send their quotes. Thus, the subgroup was to a large extent working in the dark when putting together the figures which they considered would give an idea of the costs involved.

The hard work of the subcommittee paid dividends however and they won the bid for funding. The National Lottery commenting on how much they liked the "community element" of the bid. Let's Play subsequently became GVP.

Sub Committee

The subcommittee are not from business backgrounds and represent the wider community at large. The group consist of people with "life experience" including working mothers and experienced health professionals. This ensured community involvement and minimised the risk of a subliminal hidden agenda.

The Project

The project identified and addressed several gaps in provision of services for the Geldeston community. By creating a positive environment GVP concentrates on inclusivity and provides a common ground where people across the demographic spectrum can interact therefore promoting their mental and physical health.

Local volunteers from the community pulled together and cleared the site. A local reputable landscape gardener prepared the site in preparation for the installation of playground equipment. The work involved filling in the large potholes and craters left by the old playground equipment with topsoil donated from British sugar. Grass seed was purchased from a local supermarket and planted by local children.

Progress made.

With the combination of CIL money, fund raising, donations and lottery funding GVP now encompasses children's play equipment including sensory equipment, adult gym equipment, a basketball hoop and hard surface area and a boule court. Thanks to local builder James Bromley and volunteer Snowy Rolt the beginnings of the sensory garden have been dug and are awaiting planting out. Saffron Housing have promised two volunteers for the day once the necessary shrubs and plants have been ordered. The benches and friendship bench have been purchased from donations made by the wider community. A group of volunteers have been trained to regularly survey the site and report any damage or defects found,

Social Media

The subcommittee have established a successful social media group that promotes a synergy between the businesses in the village and puts GVP on the map. https://www.facebook.com/geldestonvillagepark A new email account has been created where people can keep up to date or organise Boule tournaments, establish teams or set up outdoor exercise classes.

Future Events Planned

After the resounding success of the Easter egg hunt an Elf trail has been planned for this year on the 16th of December at the village hall.

Current challenges

- Part of the land has been used over the years by residents gaining prohibited access to their properties which over time has become difficult to challenge. A safety barrier has been erected which needs to be planted out to offer greater security.
- Damage has been caused by the grass cutters whilst strimming around the equipment and this needs to be addressed.
- There is some confusion surrounding the outstanding balance of lottery monies available as reclaimed VAT monies seem to be in the wrong account

- and an error looks to have been made regarding over payment of VAT monies by the national lottery. Clarification is needed regarding the current balance Before further purchases can be made.
- As GPC has responsibility for the management of local facilities such as parks and playgrounds all potential expenditure must be ratified by them which can delay progress by up to 2 months.

The subgroup has had to work amid tensions between certain factions of GPC. This in combination with undeserved criticism has had the adverse effect of demoralising the team and potentially triggering disharmony between the subgroup and GPC. Examples of (but not limited to) are listed below.

- Due to the difficulties mentioned above when applying for lottery monies certain financial aspects of the project may have been understated or not claimed for.
- At certain busy times of year, it is difficult to find meeting times convenient for all.
- Claims have been made for the provision of items / services not quoted for in the original bid.

Conclusion

The main core of the work has been completed and the emphasis is now on completion of the sensory garden. Once we are aware of the available budget necessary plants shrubs and equipment can be purchased for stage one of its completion. The subgroup plan to meet again on Wednesday to finalise events.

Appendix 3

Barry Stone – County Councillor for the Clavering Division

Annual Parish Report – Spring 2023



Norfolk County Council highlights for 2022/23

It has, as alway, been a busy and demanding year at County Council and this report covers some of the main highlights of the issues that have dealt with during the year.

Norfolk County Council Budget for 2023/24 approved by councillors

Norfolk County Council has set its latest budget, which tackles spending pressures and protects key services.

The budget approved today includes:

- A net spending increase of £29.6m to meet rising costs
- A Council Tax increase in line with the Government's cap of 4.99 per cent 2.99 per cent for general Council Tax and two per cent for the adult social care precept. This would increase the County Council's share of band D bills from £1,516.95 to £1,592.64.
- A "significant proportion" of the £59.7m savings coming from "doing things better for less", including £17m from the first phase of a strategic review of the council

The proposed spending for each department is:

- Adult social services, £249.5m
- Children's services, £232.6m
- Community and environmental services, £177.1m
- Strategy and transformation, £12.8m
- Finance and commercial services, £35.8m

The same meeting will consider its £956.9m capital investment in buildings and equipment, funded by grants and property sales. In addition to a range of existing

schemes, like the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing and investment in special education needs (SEND) schools, there are new investments totalling £35m:

- County Farms refurbishment and carbon reduction schemes (£9.4m)
- The rolling Technology Improvement programme (£8.2m)
- Scottow Enterprise Park refurbishment (£8.6m)
- Estate Buildings Decarbonisation initiatives (£4m)
- Highways improvements (£2.5m)
- Fire and Rescue services equipment and site improvements (£1.2m)
- Expansion of waste recycling sites and services (£0.51m)
- One Million Trees for Norfolk (£0.5m)

Have your say on the county deal

A series of events have and are continuing to taking place so you can have your say on a £600 million-plus deal to unlock opportunities to deliver more jobs, housing and investment.

Consultation takes place until 20th March at www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcountydeal on the in-principle county deal devolution agreement that Norfolk County Council signed with the Government last December.

£133m for highways and transport in Norfolk over the next year

Carbon-cutting transport schemes are set for a £29 million boost in Norfolk, despite the tough financial climate.

Norfolk County Council's Cabinet will be considering a forward looking and carbon-cutting transport budget for the new financial year at a meeting on Monday 6 March.

At £133m the 2023/24 highways and transport budget represents a £29m increase on the previous year's budget. Despite inflation being expected to dent the authority's spending power the highway and transport team have been focusing on maintaining and improving the network and continuing strong investment in carbon cutting transport strategies as the council moves towards net zero carbon by 2030.

Details of the location and cost of 120 walking, cycling, and road improvements across the county, and how £45.6m will be spent on maintenance of bridges, roads, drains and paths, are available in the papers for the meeting.

Cabinet will consider the report when it meets at 10am on Monday, 6 March.

£50m Bus Service Improvement Plan Funding for Norfolk

Norfolk County Council was only one of around 30 authorities who successfully received an allocation from the Bus Service Improvement Plan from government, receivign one of the largest allocations at £50m. The first £10m phase of this funding was received in November 2022. Through our Enhanced Partnership, we are now working closely with the Bus operators to implement enhanced routes and services as well as reviewing infrastructure and fares to encourage passenger growth and improved bus journey reliability. This should enable bus routes to be more sustainable in the long term. Following the receipt of the first payment, measures have already been implemented. which includes an increased frequency on the Coastliner 36 service, more frequent buses from North Walsham to Norwich and new late night bus services serving Thorpe St Andrew, Thorpe End, Rackheath, Salhouse, Wroxham and Watton.

Thousands more trees and hedgerows to be planted in Norfolk this winter

As part of the <u>1 Million Trees for Norfolk project</u> Norfolk County Council is preparing to plant more than 75,000 young trees and hedges across the county in the months ahead.

In 2019, Norfolk County Council agreed an ambitious scheme to plant a million trees over five-years. The pandemic brought many challenges and caused delays which meant at the end of last year the total planted trees stood at just over 68,000.

Now the project is picking up pace rapidly, and early in 2023 the Council's Hedge Restoration Fund will planted 55,000 hedge and tree plants on six County Farms owned by Norfolk County Council.

The hedges will see improvements in nature connectivity across the farms by filling in gaps in hedgerows. This is particularly good for our wildlife as it helps join up habitats and provides corridors for wildlife to safely travel along. The project is funded by a grant from The Tree Council.

£1.5m boost for 12 pioneering jobs and skills projects

From commercial use of seaweed to improving home insulation – 12 projects to boost Norfolk's economy are set to receive £1.5 million from the county council.

Cabinet will consider funding 12 pilot projects to shape Norfolk's economic future, using £1.5 million from the local business rates fund.

The proposed projects are the first phase of the Norfolk Investment Framework (NIF), which will identify long-term investment priorities for the county, to boost the economy and improve public services.

The county council's cabinet will consider 12 pilot projects, which include:

- Exploring development of a seaweed industry to support food, fertilisers, animal feed, biofuels and bioplastics
- Investigating water storage and desalination and the efficient movement of water supplies around Norfolk
- A digital and creative media centre in Watton, to improve skills and encourage start-up businesses
- Working with colleges to support recruitment and retention of skills tutors, including the development of a bursary to support graduates in taking up tutoring jobs
- Investigating the development of a rooftop solar panel network across greater Norwich
- Carrying out a feasibility study on retrofitting homes to maximise energy efficiency

Norfolk's Social Infrastructure Fund gives 10 organisations money to improve community impact

Norfolk County Council has awarded £770,000 to organisations who will be able to make a large positive impact in the communities in which they operate.

This is the third round of Social Infrastructure Funding, which has provided capital grants to organisations who can use the money to improve facilities for communities and boost the level of local community services. This year's funding pot totalled £1 million, with £225,000 to continue the successful partnership with Norfolk Community Foundation in expanding their Nourishing Norfolk food hubs across the county, and £775,000 available for individual projects to improve communities across Norfolk.

Examples of successful projects this year are:

- Whitlingham Charitable Trust who will get £100,000 to resurface and restore the wheelchair accessible path at Whitlingham Country Park
- North Lynn Methodist Church will get £50,000 to renovate and create new space to become an accessible community asset to host a variety of social events
- Banningham and Colby Community Hall will receive £39,790 to complete refurbishments of the hall to offer a welcoming space to bring the community together
- The Charlotte Harvey Trust in Watton will get £38,000 to refurbish and improve their toilets to make the community centre more accessible and fit for the future
- Castle Acre Village Hall in West Norfolk will receive £37,604 to make improvements such as refitting the kitchen and installing solar panels and batteries to invest in the future of the village
- Aylsham Community Church will receive £28,000 to refurbish the Jubilee Family Centre so it can once again offer a warm, welcoming, and safe space for the community
- Silver Road Community Centre in Norwich will get £18,500 to build accessible toilets and make the well-used community space more welcoming
- Sutton Parochial Church Council will receive £12,000 to add a kitchen and toilet to the church to enable it to be used as a community space

Five projects had their applications fast-tracked during the winter of 2022 to enable them to make the maximum impact as soon as possible.

Care farm among six new tenancies for Norfolk's County Farms

Norfolk County Council has welcomed six new tenants to its county farms estate later this year.

Among the new tenants are two couples who are set to join forces to create a new care farm in west Norfolk. NHS workers Alex and Ed Webster will be working with Ben & Gemma Human to set up Ingleborough Care Farm after they discovered both parties were interested in applying for the same tenancy.

In total the six new tenants have taken on just under 750 acres of county farms land from October last year. This follows a thorough application process that began at the end of last year and recently concluded with an interview with a panel of experts.

Norfolk Museum Service secures further funding

In November 2022, Norfolk Museums Service secured £4.126 million of Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation funding for the period 2023-2026. The funding will enable Norfolk Museums Service to deliver new Early Years' programmes across the County, expand our formal learning offer, deliver new targeted programmes to young people 11-25, along with a range of new health & wellbeing activities for residents of all ages. The funding will also support the delivery of new community learning programmes through the NCC Environment Hub at Gressenhall.

New Adult Learning Construction Training Facilities open in Norwich and King's Lynn

In 2022, Adult Learning's vision to support the construction industry and Norfolk's economy by establishing a construction and environmental sustainability curriculum offer for adults in Norfolk, became a reality. A successful tender to the Community Renewal Fund (CRF), which secured £568,000 of central government funding, has enabled Adult Learning to establish two new construction skills training centres in Norwich and King's Lynn. These two hubs are now, in early 2023, receiving the first adult learners on site.

To gather momentum, whilst the two new sites were under development, in January 2022 Adult Learning opened a temporary construction training room at Wensum Lodge, Norwich and delivered a variety of trades, including plumbing, tiling, brick laying, plastering and carpentry, with 400 adult registrations (January to October 2022). The participation rate of female learners was over 30% which compares to a construction industry participation figure of less than 15% in the UK.

No Cold Calling Zones introduced

308 individual No-Cold-Calling Zones (NCCZ) have been set up in the county with 11 new zones being launched in 2022. The 308 NCCZs protect 14,474 individual households across the county.

NCCZs are designated areas where residents have declared that they will not accept traders calling at their homes without an appointment, and act as a deterrent to traders and bogus callers who don't want to be recognised as working in a particular area. The zones are particularly useful and effective in areas where residents might be at a higher risk from cold calling, such as neighbourhoods with a large number of vulnerable or elderly residents. Creating an NCCZ is an effective way of helping to

protect them and send a clear signal that residents do not wish to be approached in their homes.

NCCZs are effective as demonstrated by the feedback we receive. Households in NCCZs feel safer, cold calling is reduced or eliminated and residents feel better equipped to manage should traders call:

- "Since becoming a no cold calling zone area myself and my neighbours feel safer"
- "On behalf of myself and residents I wish for you to know our inclusion in this scheme has made our lives more comfortable. The cold calling factor has been very minimal since (shortly after) we joined"
- "It is a very good idea. We feel much safer"

Trading Standards follows up all reports of cold calling in an NCCZ, which may simply involve finding out why a trader has ignored the zone but may include more formal action. While there is no law preventing cold calling, consumers have 14 days to cancel contracts which have a value of more than £42 when signed at their home or place of work. Traders who do not issue a cancellation notice allowing the 14-day cooling off period are breaking the law and Trading Standards may be able to take enforcement action in these case

£1m funding for out of school activity facilities

Active Norfolk, who are hosted and supported by Norfolk County Council, have secured £1m to support schools to open their facilities outside of school hours to enable local communities to be more active.

Working with the Integrated Care System through 2022, Norfolk County Council will be launching an ongoing programme to enable people to access physical activity opportunities as part of the treatment pathway for long-term conditions such as diabetes, stroke, and cancer. The programme will also build community capacity to support greater equity of access to opportunities for people all across the county.

Working closely with Children's Services, we provided holiday activities and food at Easter, during the summer holidays and over Christmas, for around 10,000 children in 2022. Around 1 in 5 of those children were those with a disability or SEN. This was delivered by c.100 local community providers and invested c.£2m into local organisations.

Adult Learning leads the delivery of numeracy skills of adult residents in Norfolk

The need nationally to improve the numeracy skills of both children and adults has been highlighted recently both through central government and the media.

Norfolk has received £4.7 million to improve the numeracy skills of adult residents through a government initiative called Multiply. This funding will last until the end of March 2025, and by then our target is to secure 11,000 adult registrations onto Multiply programmes in Norfolk.

Adult Learning is leading the delivery of this major new programme, delivering both in-house and through grant funding arrangements with the colleges and other, smaller organisations and grassroots providers. The funding enables us to work with small groups and even individuals on a one-to-one basis.

The funding targets adults who need support with and lack confidence in their numeracy skills and a wide range of interventions are already taking place across the county. These include:

- Introductory courses which help increase people's confidence with numbers
- Courses designed to help people understand and manage their money, particularly during the cost-of-living crisis
- Specific workplace courses, delivered with employers to provide skills relevant to the workplace
- Numeracy courses aimed at parents who want to increase their own skills to be able to better help their children
- Additional maths modules built into existing vocational courses
- Intensive and flexible courses which lead to a Functional Skills Qualification.

While we are in the early stages of the programme, this funding has already made a difference to some of the first learners to complete a course.

Norfolk to benefit from new Family Hubs and Start for Life funding

Children and parents in Norfolk are to benefit from a new cradle to career approach to family support.

The government has just announced that Norfolk County Council will be one of 75 local authorities receiving some of the £302m new Family Hubs and Start for Life funding.

It means the county will receive approximately £6m to further develop its prevention and early help services for families with children and young people up to the age of 19 (25 if they have special educational needs and disabilities).

This is not about introducing a new service or opening new buildings but to allow the county to further develop support for families. Using a whole family approach, the Family Hubs network will give families a single access point to support services that are integrated across health (physical and mental health) and social care as well as voluntary and community organisations and education.

Whilst there will be at least seven physical Family Hub sites in existing community buildings, which families will be able to walk into, services will be delivered largely on an outreach basis. The Family Hub approach will bring together a wide range of services so that families can access support in the spaces and places that they live and visit, such as libraries and community buildings.

The Family Hubs network will provide simple access to 'Start for Life' services, providing the best support for babies in the first 1,001 critical days from conception to the age of two, setting them up to maximise their potential for lifelong emotional and physical wellbeing including:

- Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships support for families who are expecting a baby or have a baby under the age of two
- Infant feeding support services
- Parenting support for parents of children aged 0-2
- Home learning environment support for parents of children aged 3-4

Annual Parish Meeting 2023 minutes

District Councillor's report received late

Subject: Annual District Councillors Report - b. Bernard and C.Brown
ADCR
Main headlines:
- Collaboration between South Norfolk District Council and Broadlands has continued to reap benefits for the District, culminating in the two Councils under one roof. Long Stratton offices are under offer and Broadlands offices will also be sold in the near future. The new offices at Broadlands Business Park will provide an annual saving of £700,000 pa and help reduce the likely rates increases in the future.
- The District Council has finally accepted that we have to be more proactive on Environmental issues and has set objectives which have to be achieved by 2035.
- The District council has encouraged the increase in EV changing points in the District, doubling the number of EV charges in the Council run car parks.
- Leisure facilities has continued to make progress to improve utilisation and membership, with the hope that we can get back to levels seen before 2019.
- A balanced budget was agreed for 2023/24 and to help with the cost of living crisis, District rates have not been increased for this year.
District Councillors for
Ditchingham and Earsham Ward
Brendon Bernard and Chris Brown 01986893240

Report from Catherine Bickmore PCC

Report to Geldeston PC: Restoration works at St Michael and All Angels Church, Geldeston 1. Background

'As well as being places of worship and buildings of beauty, churches sit at the heart of the community. In many ways they stand between the past and present' (Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation).

Our village church is an attractive grade 2* listed round tower building of flint construction dating from the 14th to 15th centuries with additions 1860s. It was built by the local community, and remains an important part of our cultural heritage and for use by the community.

The church has some high-quality internal and external wood and stone carvings from medieval and Victorian periods includin, an East Anglian octagonal font with smiling lions round the stem, a15th century porch decorated with scenes of the Passion, fine carvings by John Philip of London and 20C stained glass window by Leonard Walker RA. In the churchyard there is a rare World War I Memorial decorated with the crests of various regiments. The high quality additions in the 1860's are well documented in contemporary church terriers.

2. Restoration works

The Quinquennial survey of the church identified that the condition of the roof, rainwater goods and windows had deteriorated with a pressing need for their repair, together with re pointing, rendering, and internally lime works. The works needed to be undertaken as soon as possible to keep the church wind and watertight thereby preventing further deterioration so that the heritage of church fabric could be restored, fit for use by the local community and visitors alike such that its heritage can be more easily interpreted and appreciated. With the works costing over £70,000 a Restoration Appeal was launched.

3. Restoration Appeal

We are most grateful to have the support of a number of charities, private donors and help in kind from a large number of volunteers as part of the Appeal.

Grant aid was provided by the following charities:

Benefact Trust

Geoffrey Watling Charity

National Churches Trust

Norfolk Churches Trust

Paul Bassham Trust

Round Tower Churches Society

Wolfson Foundation

A series of fund raising events (all reported in Tidings Mag) included garden open day and plant sale, a garden party, a promenade concert, tours of the church, and the restoration works. These were made possible by a large number of volunteers including from Geldeston, the Village Hall who provided loan of plant, with volunteers helping set up, catering and attendance. Also, volunteers have assisted with some of the works in the church.

The events were well attended by local residents as well as those from further afield.

4. Progress of the works

The majority of the works have been completed using a specialist contractor William Tyrrell such that the church can be opened again for regular use and visitors. However, still £10,000 is required to complete the restoration of some further windows.

In celebration of the completed works a Geldeston church festival is being organized for the weekend 30 Sept /1 October 2023. The Bishop of Norwich will take a service on 1 October to which all are welcome.

We thank all those involved.

Catherine Bickmore, Church Warden 9/05/23