



FRISTON PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

February 2018

Annual Parish Meeting 12th March 2018 at 7.00 pm

Over the last months, Council has been busy sorting out the Village Hall and the Village green. The Village Green is now leased to the Parish Council for the next 7 years at a peppercorn rent which will enable events to continue and allow the Parish Council to improve/replace the play equipment and sports facilities. Additionally, Mr Wentworth has donated the Village Hall to the parish and the ownership is being transferred to the Parish Council. This means that the Village Hall can be refurbished and repaired with the aim to it being more used than currently.

The Council has also received money from the District Council as part of the CIL project and has significant funds in the S106 play and sports pots. There is also money in an earmarked account for the purchase of the Village Green which is no longer relevant.

As such, the Council would like to hear your views at the Annual Parish Meeting on the following topics.

1. The Parish Council would like to install a wooden bus shelter with a seat at the bus stop opposite the Jubilee shelter. This would be paid for by the CIL money that has been received.
2. The Parish Council has access to significant funds to upgrade the sport and play equipment. What do you suggest?
3. The Parish Council is thinking about setting aside a small area on the Village Green to provide parking for up to 10 cars. This would be a fenced, secure area and linked to the Village hall so as to
 - a. relieve the congestion on Church Road when events at the church or the village hall are taking place and
 - b. provide parking for people using the play and sports areas.
 - c. Provide overflow parking for people during the dayIt would not be an overnight car park. The area would be covered by the slats enabling the grass to grow through so that it would be part of the scenery. What do you think?
4. The Parish Council discussed fencing the Village Green in post and rail, so as to protect it from being driven over or unlawful overnight parking. What do you think?
5. The Council has £ 5,271.55 in an account which was raised 15 years ago to for the transfer of the Village Green. Since then the Village Green has been sold on and the PC now lease it for a peppercorn rent. It could be used to provide or supplement some of the above. What do you think Council should do with this money?
6. The Village Hall is currently underused and Council is interested in your views as to what more the Village Hall could provide. For instance, different clubs, Wi-fi, improved kitchen facilities etc. What are your thoughts?
7. The Parish Council has acquired the Telephone box and is looking to install a defibrillator in it along with books and DVD exchange. What do think about that?
8. There is more money which will be available to the Council in the future and has to be spent on amenities or infrastructure. Are there any other amenities that you think the village could do with?

We will try to ensure everyone gets an opportunity to speak but that will be time constrained so we may have to limit a speaker to 3 minutes. Because there is so much to talk about, we will not be having any speakers however we will provide written reports from the various organisations to take away with you.

The Parish Council looks forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Village Green

The lease for the Village Green has been signed with the Mr & Mrs Borrows. It has a term of 7 years and a peppercorn rent and will ensure that events such as Classic on the Green and will continue unencumbered.

Village Hall

Last November the Parish Council received and accepted the kind offer from Mr. Wentworth to gift the Village Hall. Legal proceedings have taken some time but are now complete and the Parish Council will become the new owners of the Village Hall.

In the meantime, a survey revealed that there were some issues with damp in the building, problems with roof tiles as well as a need for some refurbishment. A working party of members of the Village Hall committee and the Parish Council is organising repairs and developing a schedule for redecoration.

Village Hall Available for Hire

Want to start a new Village Club, hold an event or organise a meeting? The Village hall has a large hall and kitchen and is available for hire at competitive rates. Example rates are: local bookings for events are £20 per session, local meetings are £7 per session. Contact Roberta Simpson on 01728 688387 for more information.

Grow your Own!

There are still empty allotments available for anyone who wants one. Contact Cllr. Alan Simpson on 01728 688387

Data Protection Reform

As of 25th May 2018, new legislation will dramatically change the way that personal data is held by organisations and commercial companies.

No longer will a company automatically default the tick box on a website to allow them to send you information or pass on your details to other parties. Neither will anyone insist on keeping your information in order to provide a service.

There are some exceptions, such as legal requirements and medical information, however, it will reduce the amount of junk mail and unsolicited calls.

All organisations, including the Parish Council, will have to review the data that it keeps and set up processes to adhere to the new laws. If you would like further information, visit the ICO website <https://ico.org.uk/media/1624219/preparing-for-the-gdpr-12-steps.pdf>

Parish Council spends the Grants received.

Friston Parish Council received £200 from the District Councillor to be used as a commemoration of the Queens 90th Birthday. This money has been put to use, with the some of the CIL money to organise two benches with plaques to commemorate the Queen's birthday. These will be installed shortly.

Missing:

One Parish Councillor...

Friston Parish Council has a vacancy for a parish councillor. There is a meeting every 6 weeks for about 2 hours and is a chance to get involved with your village.

Please see the article on the next pages regarding what is a Parish Councillor and what do they do

Precept Increase

After a number of years, Friston Parish Council reluctantly raised the precept to cover the additional costs of administration.

In recent years, the Government has introduced the Transparency code, changed the rules on the external audit and is introducing the reform to the Data Protection laws, all of which have increased costs, required higher levels of expertise and training and administrative time.

Cllr. Alan Simpson continues to work with Highways and the Environment on issues on the roads and ditches. He successfully organised repairs to the bank at Chases Lane and Low Rd.

Have you ever thought about becoming a Parish Councillor?

In fact, have you ever wondered what a Parish Council is and what it is supposed to do? Hopefully, the next few paragraphs will help to explain the role of a Parish Council and your Councillors in Friston.

What is a Parish Council?

A Parish Council is the elected first layer of local government and, as such, is the group who work closest with the electorate. However, it is not a politically aligned organisation. The District council (East Suffolk) is the next level up in the hierarchy. Friston elects 9 councillors to the Parish Council.

A Parish Council can make decisions on a number of items such as allotments, playgrounds, local facilities such as bus shelters, funding local organisations through grants, and consulting with local people and organisations regarding improving services. Friston Parish Council maintains the village hall and organises the cutting of the grass on the village green and provides play and sport equipment and funding for the upkeep of the burial ground.

A Parish Council also has a statutory right for consultation on planning matters although District Council makes the decision. It can also own property – for instance, the local acquisition of the Village Hall – and spend money to improve the facilities that it provides.

Another, really vital role, is to bring to the attention of District and County Councillors items that are causing concern to the area such as the state of the roads, flooding, maintenance of public services as well as asking for grants for bigger projects to benefit the community. Friston Parish Council enjoys a positive working relationship with our District and County Councillors who have been very helpful in taking matters further.

A Parish Council is elected every 4 years but if a vacancy occurs between the elections, a new Councillor can be co-opted if no election is requested.

The Parish Council is funded by a share of the Council Tax (also known as the Precept). The amount of money required is decided by the Parish Council every year through looking at the budget at a meeting, usually in November.

Why become a Parish Councillor?

It may seem that a Parish Council just meets every so often in the Village Hall and issues the minutes. But, there is much more to it than that. As a Parish Councillor you will have the opportunity to influence decisions made at meetings, become actively involved in projects such as improving the Village Hall or helping lobby County Council regarding the Highways problems. You can often be the first port of call for local people when they have problems.

A Parish Councillor may also represent the council on local bodies and committees– for instance Sizewell C – and keep the Parish Council informed.

As a Parish Councillor, it may be necessary to visit proposed planning developments so as to prepare a response to the District Council.

The championing of local projects and problems in the community with the persistence to deal with local authorities and utilities is essential. An example was the success, after a lot of time and work, to change the route of the refuse lorries so as to stop the damage being done to the verges.

As a Parish Councillor, you have to have common sense, integrity and be pragmatic in the solutions. Sometimes, some of the projects or solutions will not suit everyone in the community however, a Parish Councillor has to take a balanced approach and accept that "you can't please all of the people, all of the time".

Of course, all this involves time. The Council meets every 6 weeks except for August and there can sometimes be extra-ordinary meetings to review planning applications or urgent issues. There will be emails to read and phone calls to receive and you could be involved with working parties or other outside bodies however, nothing is compulsory.....

All Councillors are offered training in being a Parish Councillor and also any seminars or briefings in specialist subjects that may be of interest. There is no remuneration for being a Parish Councillor although expenses such as travel costs will be reimbursed. The Parish Clerk (a paid position) is available to offer help and guidance for all councillors and at meetings.

Are you eligible to be a Parish Councillor?

To stand for election on a parish council you must:

- Be a UK or commonwealth citizen or the Republic of Ireland or a Member state of the EU.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Be an elector in the parish or for the whole of the previous 12 months have occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the parish or
- During the previous 12 months have worked in the parish (as your principle or only place of work) or
- For the whole of the previous 12 months lived in the parish or within three miles of the parish boundary.

Want to know more?

The best way to find out about becoming a parish councillor is to speak to one of the current councillors and/or come to one of the meetings. Alternatively, speak to the Clerk about it. Friston Parish Council is a friendly group who work as a team and would love to hear from you.

All contact details are below:

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL:

Cllr. Mike Caplin	Chairman	Tel: 01728 687625
Cllr. Sue Jackson	Vice Chairman	Tel: 01728 688032
Cllr. Ann Patterson		Tel: 01728 688379
Cllr. Alan Simpson		Tel: 01728 688387
Cllr. Christine Brooks		Tel: 01728 688972
Cllr. Dickie Brooks		Tel: 01728 687986
Cllr. Mary Schedrin		Tel: 01728 687948
Cllr. Jonathan Burch		Tel: 01728 688655

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL:

Karen Forster, Orchard House, Chediston Road, Wissett IP19 0NF Tel: 01986-785428

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Andrew Reid Tel: 07545-423799

EAST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

(1) Maureen Jones, (2) T.J. Haworth-Culf Tel: 01728 453915 & 07899 063702

LOCAL MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Theresa Coffey Tel: 02072-197164