

Parish Council Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Pettistree Village. 25th May 2010

The last Annual Parish Meeting was on 19th May 2009.

Meetings

14 th July 2009	Parish Council Meeting
17 th September 2009	Parish Council Meeting
10 th November 2009	Parish Council Meeting
9th February 2010	Parish Council Meeting
11 th May 2010	Annual Parish Council Meeting
11 th May 2010	Parish Council Meeting
25 th May 2010-05-25	Annual Parish Meeting.

Parish Council as at 25.5.10

Membership

Mr Jeff Hallett	(Chairman)
Mrs Maureen Stollery	(Vice Chairman)
Mrs Elaine Boardley	
Mrs Mary Chilvers	
Dr Peter Hayward	
Mr Mike Watts	
Vacancy	

(Nick Beagley has resigned today (25.05.10)

Parish Council Clerk

Mike Flanagan.

01394 421628

c.e.mann@talk21.com

Acorns, 3 Church Farm Bungalows, The Street,
Eyke, Woodbridge, IP12 2QH

County & District Councillors

County Councillor	Michael Bond
District Councillors	Michael Bond Jim Bidwell

Changes in membership of the Parish Council.

Soon after the Annual Parish Meeting Claire Aitcheson stood down as County Councillor and Mr Michael Bond was elected. He now serves as both District and County Councillor and has continued his predecessor's keen interest in

Parish Council matters. Kitchen improvements in the Village Hall have been largely paid for by a grant from his locality budget.

At the date of the 2009 Annual Parish Meeting we had one councillor vacancy. The vacancy was filled by the co-option of Mike Watts in February 2010 following his expert help with one of the planning applications that enabled us to put a much stronger, albeit unsuccessful, case to the District Council.

Today I have received the resignation of Nick Beagley. He describes increased pressure of work and the need to reduce commitments. He sends good wishes and hopes to be able to help again in the future. Nick's resignation means that we again start the new session with a vacancy for parish councillor.

Mike Flanagan's increasing expertise as Parish Clerk has led to smoother running of the Council and we hope that he will be able to continue to help us despite increasing work and family commitments.

I was re-elected as Parish Council Chairman at the Parish Council AGM on 11th May and I am delighted to report that Mrs Stollery agreed to be Vice Chairman once again. We have both been in post for many years and are probably due for a rest.

Roads and Pathways

After many requests the highways department of Suffolk CC has carried out quite a lot of work in the parish despite the national financial stringency. We had already decided to get some grit bins for the most dangerous corners but the bins did not arrive and get filled until part way through the very bad snow period this winter. Bins are now sited at the corner by Pettistree Grange, the corner at Presmere Pond and there will be one at the junction leading to Hungarian Hall. The Highways Department will fill the bins but we rely on village volunteers to get out and spread the salt and grit when icy weather comes.

The bad winter did quite a lot of damage to the roads but since then Rogues lane has been scraped, potholes have been filled and now The Street has been cleaned, tarred and gritted. Work has also been done on the B1438 (the old main road) to repair cracks and holes.

Vegetation has been cut back on the footpath beside the B1438 between North lodge and Pettistree House but the general state of the path into Wickham Market is still poor with holes and crumbling edges. The Highways Department has been asked to clean and repair all the above but there has been no action yet.

We are lucky to have the continued co-operation of Woods Nurseries in keeping the verges tidy near and opposite to their main gate. They are keen to maintain a good appearance and use their machinery to cut verges on both sides of the road.

There is continued concern about the speed of vehicles near the Three Tuns crossroads with its bus stops, schoolchildren and Woods Nursery workers. There is also a risk at the Rogues Lane junction. The police did measure speeds but found that none was illegal. We have raised the possibility of a speed limit with the highways authority (SCC).

Village Amenities.

The village continues to look well cared for. Many people work to maintain the appearance and road safety of the village. The churchyard and its meadow are tended by Andy Curtis and Dave Cauldwell and Dick Smith with regular visits from the community service personnel. John Barker mows the village green and Woods Nurseries are cutting the verges on the main road. Roadside and field hedges were neatly cut for householders by Simon Blowers and we expect to see him back again this year.

The two dog poo bins are in regular use at the village hall footpath, and the oak tree planted on the Green still looks poorly but has sprouted low down. Please can anyone passing by give it some water.

Our annual litter pick went ahead as usual on Sunday 14th March with 14 people helping collect six large bags of rubbish. Next year we shall try to miss Mothering Sunday! The amount of litter is kept fairly small by several people picking up litter whenever they see it on their regular walks.

The BT telephone box on the green has become an eyesore. Its cash box was removed leaving an ugly gap and the smashed window has never been replaced despite repeated requests. The parish council decided it was probably no-longer needed and a request in Pettistree people for any other opinions led to no response at all. We have asked BT to remove it and re-instate the lay-by to grass but they say the matter has to be ruled on by Suffolk County Council and will do nothing until they hear from them.

Police services.

The re-organisation of our police cover with a Safer Neighbourhood Team has improved our liaison with the police and there is better two-way transfer of information both verbally and via Pettistree People. Our crime rate remains very low.

Our allocated officers are PC Victoria Gilmore and a PCSO Sallyanna Chatten-berry. However urgent matters or need for assistance still requires use of the 999 call to summon the 24hr Response Unit.

Parish Plan.

The outcome of the Parish Plan survey was described in last years report. One of its recommendations was to look into the possibility of affordable housing for the village.

With the encouragement of Sunila Osborne from Suffolk ACRE (Consultation & Community Support Officer for Rural, Affordable Housing), we decided to use some of the Parish Plan under-spend on a further and more detailed

survey. Heather Heelis wrote an article for PP to explain the potential benefits if suitable land can be found available for purchase at agricultural prices.

A very simple anonymous survey sent out with Pettistree People was criticized by a few villagers so the Parish Council decided to circulate the full 25 page Suffolk Acre survey This has proved quite difficult to set up and Suffolk ACRE is now asking for return of the unspent money. However the Parish Council have sufficient reserves to complete the survey that will be returned direct to Suffolk Acre for absolute confidentiality.

Greyhound Pub

The Greyhound Pub has continued to be a great success and asset to the village. Landlord Paul Whayman and his wife Margi still return to run the pub at weekends but in order to give themselves reasonable time off they now employ a weekday manager. The same chefs continue to prepare excellent food.

Three Tuns Pub.

This pub continues to provide food, drink and some accommodation but it is generally less involved in village activities.

Business

Business in the village continues and the total list is surprisingly long for a small village. I will give the list below as I know it, and will be grateful for any corrections or additions.

Pettistree Businesses

Anglia Sporting Activities (Hungarian Hall)
Anglia Coastal Marquees
Chilvers (Master Thatcher)
Elysium Beauty Spa
Green Farm Clinic
Greyhound Public House
Harambee Training Ltd
Heelis and Lodge (Local Council Services)
Hungarian Hall Sporting Activities
Kind Water
Lambert Wood Stanley Consultancy
Loudham Computer training
John Woods Nurseries
Pettistree House Boutique Hotel
Presmere Day Nursery
Suffolk Sportscars
The Paella and Tapas Company
Three Tuns Public House.
Touch of Colour (Scotts Hall)
White House Kennels
Local farms (Hayward's and Carter's)

Community Groups

We have reports from or shall be hearing from most of the community groups. These include the Church, the Village Hall, Pettistree Heritage, Neighbourhood Watch and Age Concern.

Pettistree People and the Pettistree Website

Our newsletter, Pettistree People continues to be a great asset to the community and is widely appreciated. It is funded by the Parish Council and we have increased our funding this year to match its increased size and colour pages.. The website <http://www.pettistree.suffolk.gov.uk/> is our biggest “shop window” and is a great source of information to those with access to the internet. Our webmaster, Chris Garner, deserves all our thanks for the unpaid work he does to keep the website absolutely up-to-date (so long as people remember to send him the information!)

Planning

Planning applications are notified in the local press, directly to neighbours, and publicised by notices attached to the relevant building or site. Comments can be sent by anyone direct to the district council.

The applications are also reviewed by the Parish Council. We have changed from using a small sub-committee to using the collation of comments by the vice-chairman after the applications are circulated to all parish councillors. Applications and decisions are listed in the minutes of parish council meetings on the Pettistree website.

As a council we have been frustrated by the apparent lack of interest by the District planning officers in the views and representations of our councillors when we respond to planning applications. We feel that the views of local residents are not given enough weight when decisions are made, and applicants are sometimes exposed to additional unnecessary costs. Our District and County Councillor, Michael Bond is leading a scrutiny exercise on the planning department and process.

Finance

The Audit Commission Annual Returns for the year ending 31st March 2009 were submitted and approved with some helpful recommendations. One of Mrs Boardley’s accountant colleagues kindly acted as internal auditor. This years return will be completed shortly. The accounts for the year ending 31.3.2010 have been approved by the Council and submitted to an internal auditor.

As a result of its budget review held in November the Council agreed to continue to hold the precept for 2009/10 at the 2005/06/07/08/09 figure of £2200 (about £30 per household). At the time our bank balance appeared large due to the under-spent money from the Parish Plan. We expect to have to return about £880

Expenditure during 2009/10 was £2146.60. This was well below the budget of £3925 because our clerk has not charged for his services and has claimed only minimal expenses. Lack of spending on the Parish Plan also contributed

to the difference as did provision for elections etc. Work still has to be done on the Fisons village sign.

We need to reduce our apparent surplus cash balance but we also need to ensure that sufficient is kept for unexpected expenses such as repairs and planned maintenance that has not yet been completed.

Conclusion

Pettistree and Loudham form a very attractive and effective community. There is a good mix of residential and business property with little absentee accommodation. Community activities are varied and well supported and there is little crime or antisocial behaviour. The website and the Pettistree People newsletter rank second to none of their kind. The Parish Council can probably take some credit for all this and it deserves more interest and support from villagers.

Jeffrey Hallett
Chairman of Pettistree Parish Council