

## Palgrave Parish Council - ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2017

**All Registered Electors of the Parish of Palgrave are invited to attend this meeting**, to be held in the Main Hall of Palgrave Community Centre from 7.30 p.m. - light refreshments will be available. The Annual Meeting informs Electors of the work of County, District and Parish Councils, Police, Parish Church, School, Community Council and others. It provides an opportunity to discuss current issues.

### AGENDA

1. Welcome by Chairman of Palgrave Parish Council
2. To receive Apologies
3. To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016
4. To receive and discuss Reports from:
  - 4.1 Suffolk Police - Mid Suffolk North Safer Neighbourhood Team
  - 4.2 Suffolk County Council - Cllr Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division
  - 4.3 Mid Suffolk District Council - Cllr David Burn, Palgrave Ward
  - 4.4 St Peter's Parish Church - Hugh Bunbury, Secretary, Parochial Church Council
  - 4.5 St Peter's CEVC School - Patrick Harrington, Governor and Chair of Governance Committee
  - 4.6 Palgrave & District Community Council - Martin Dyer, Chairman
  - 4.7 Palgrave Parish Council - Cllr Mike Bootman, Chairman
  - 4.8 'Play in Palgrave' Project - A brief update from the Joint Working Party
5. To acknowledge the work carried out by Palgrave Welfare Trust, St John's Liaison Group, Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and other Village Organisations and Individuals

*Break for Refreshments and to View Displays*

6. Community-led Plan and the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan - Introduction and Open Forum
7. Any other relevant matters notified to the Chairman
8. Annual Parish Council Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and Annual Parish Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018.
9. Closing Remarks.

[Signed] M.J. Bootman (Chairman) 19<sup>th</sup> March 2017

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Note to Palgrave Electors: if you would like a relevant matter to be discussed that is not covered by the Agenda please submit it to Mike Bootman no later than 1 week before the meeting. Inclusion is at the Chairman's discretion.

Note to Palgrave Groups and Organisations: if you would like to put on a table display to promote your work or activities please contact Mike Bootman no later than 1 week before the meeting.

Minutes and Reports: To save time at the meeting the Minutes of last year's meeting and Reports for this are reproduced in the April issue of the 'Palgrave Star'. Please remember to bring your copy to the meeting.

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### 3. Minutes - Palgrave Annual Parish Meeting held in Community Centre, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016, 7.30 p.m.

#### Present

**Councillors:** M Bootman (Chairman), Mrs E Bootman, Mrs E Collins, Mrs W Cooper, J Gibbons & Ms M Sneddon.

**Also present:** County Cllr J Fleming, District Cllr D Burn and R Twigge, Ms B Dewhurst, and C & Ms J Lewis from the River Waveney Trust.

**Electors:** Mrs H Cooke, Mrs B Dyer, M Dyer, V Dyer, P Dyer, Ms G Heriz, Mrs D Gibbons, P Harrington, D Kemble, M Lockett, Mrs J Lockett, Ms J Lockwood, L Lockwood, I McClintock, Mrs J McClintock, J Sparks.

#### 4.16.1 APM Welcome

Cllr M Bootman welcomed Electors and Representatives and explained the purpose and structure of the Meeting, which would take a slightly different format from previous years.

#### 4.16.2 APM Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr M Brown, Cllr K Charman, Cllr N Weston, H Bunbury, Mrs S Bunbury, Mrs D Dyer, Mrs S Dyer, H Westerveld and Mrs K Westerveld.

#### 4.16.3 APM To confirm the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 24th April 2015

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24th April 2015, having been published in the on the Parish website and in the April 2016 'Palgrave Star', were approved and signed as a true record.

Copies of the Reports were appended to the Minutes.

#### 4.16.4 APM Reports

The following reports, having been published on the Parish website and in the April 2016 'Palgrave Star', were referred to and supplemented by additional information, with the main points of discussion on each noted as follows:

##### 4.16.4.1 APM Police: submitted by PCSO David Faulkner

In the absence of a representative from the Police, the Chairman summarised the report and informed those present of the recent changes to policing following the force-wide review:

Reduction in PCSOs across the force together with a reduction in Safer Neighbourhood Teams, locally down from 4 PCSOs to just 1 and 1 PC, under a Sergeant who also covers Debenham, with operational command and support based in Halesworth;

Locality Inspector at Halesworth had e-mailed the Chairman about methods of keeping in touch. The Chairman had replied but no further contact has been made since;

Eye Police Station remains in use but now closed to the public;

Attendance at Parish Council meetings only for specific crime or crime prevention matters;

New style of crime report for Parish Councils introduced but to date has not been circulated;

Crime statistics for Palgrave exclude St John's but these are included on internet crime maps.

Those present agreed that the Chairman should write to express their thanks to PCSO Faulkner for his work as the local policing presence over the past 3 years.

##### 4.16.4.2 APM County Council: County Cllr Jessica Fleming

Community Transport Provision - recommended attendance at one of the briefing meetings;

Infrastructure - very aware of the pressures on local roads and schools;

Highways - 15 year investment plan (for Highways England) only includes major routes;

HGVs/Lorry Routes - meeting to be held with SCC Cabinet Member next week. Agreed that Crossing and Priory Roads are both unsuitable for this traffic;

Flooding by the pond - apologised for the unacceptable level of service from SCC Highways.

#### **4.16.4.3 APM District Council:** District Cllr David Burn

Brome Recycling Centre - nearest site serving 94 Parishes in S Norfolk/N Suffolk. New operator found and was due to open 25th April but delayed by legal issues. Re-opening will be widely publicised with full details and information re opening times and charges on MSDC website;

Real Nappy Week - Suffolk sends 8,000 tonnes of disposable nappies to Energy-from-Waste (EfW) site a year, costing over £1 million to deal with. Modern real nappies are much improved over original terrycloth squares and can save up to £1,000 per baby, see [www.goreal.org.uk](http://www.goreal.org.uk)

Home Composting - Suffolk deals with 50,000 tonnes of organic waste a year, costing over £3.5 million. Special deals on home composting bins and wormeries, see [www.getcomposting.com](http://www.getcomposting.com) or call 0844 571 4444 quoting SUF16L;

Comments - different operating practices for recycling and green waste across District Councils. MSDC uses 'open windrow' composting, not organic digestion, so cannot accept food waste.

#### **4.16.4.4 APM St Peter's Parochial Church Council:** Mrs Beryl Dyer (PCC)

Rector for the Benefice - Rev. Adrian Watkins, agreed to introduction of a rationalised pattern of services across the churches in the Benefice that has resulted in a joint feeling of 'belonging';

Friends of Palgrave Church - revived at recent meeting, is developing a programme of events to support St Peter's, including a talk on the history of the two Palgrave churches on 3rd June;

Repairs - more roof replacement work is needed above the Chancel but the churchyard is in good condition, with renovations to the front and rear gates to be done this summer.

#### **4.14.4.5 APM Palgrave CEVC Primary School:** Patrick Harrington (Governor)

Road Safety - still awaiting proposals following meeting last September;

Playground/Classrooms - with the school being sited within the Village Green and Conservation Area doing anything presents challenges. Need for more classroom space is now considered more pressing and the Governors are considering options for providing temporary accommodation;

Academy Status - would that bring the opportunity of building a new school on a new site?

Uncertain, but it offers more scope for funding directly from the department for Education;

Catchment Area - where does it extend? At present 19 pupils are from Norfolk.

#### **4.14.4.6 APM Palgrave & District Community Council:** Martin Dyer (Chairman)

Refurbishment programme - further redecoration and replacement ovens in the kitchen;

Events programme - continues with an expanded programme and new themes, film nights very successful and the audio-visual projection equipment had been further enhanced;

Working with Parish Council - in providing joint Parish notice board and new play equipment;

30th Anniversary - of the opening of the Community Centre on 12th April 1986, to be celebrated by a 'Discover Palgrave' programme events from late May and during June;

Constitution - updated version to be put to Special General Meeting on 17th May;

'Palgrave Star' - under a new editor it continues to be published monthly and delivered free;

Alan Spoons - stood down after 3 years as chairman and editor of the 'Star', having achieved much in both roles. His efforts were much appreciated and contributions invaluable.

#### **4.14.4.7 APM Parish Council:** Cllr M Bootman (Chairman)

Vacancy - there is 1 vacancy to be filled;

Budget - last year the duties and responsibilities that direct the work of the Parish Council were summarised. This year a brief explanation of the budget process was given. Having frozen the budget last year an increase was necessary this year, half of which was due to increased charges by Mid Suffolk District Council for grass-cutting and emptying dog waste and litter bins;

Planning Applications - have taken up more of the Council's time and efforts in the past year, a consequence of Mid Suffolk not having a 5-year land supply that permits central government to consider land beyond settlement boundaries as appropriate for development. Arguments that development is not sustainable due to constraints on the school and services and infrastructure in Diss are consistently dismissed by MSDC despite evidence to the contrary;

Keeping You Informed - through regular reports in the 'Palgrave Star', information on the Parish website [www.palgrave.onesuffolk.net](http://www.palgrave.onesuffolk.net) and by e-mailshots.

#### **4.15.1. APM                    Other Village Organisations**

Due acknowledgement and thanks were given to the other organisations in the Parish which include the Palgrave Welfare Trust, St John's Liaison Group, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and, individually and collectively, members of the Gardening and Social Group.

Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator John Sparks spoke briefly concerning reductions in support and funding.

*Break for Refreshments*

#### **4.16.6 APM        River Waveney Trust**

The River Waveney forms the northern boundary of the Parish, District and County. Robin Twigge, chairman of the River Waveney Trust, gave an amusing and informative talk about its aims and how it can support and work with those organisations having shared interests.

#### **4.16.7 APM        Joint Working Party (JWP) for 'Play in Palgrave'**

The Parish Council and PDCC are working together to revitalise the Play Area on the Community Playing Field. Hannah Cooke provided an update on the work and progress made by the JWP, supported by plans and illustrations on a display.

Regular updates will be found on the PDCC website [www.pdcc.co.uk](http://www.pdcc.co.uk) and in the 'Palgrave Star'.

#### **4.16.8 APM        Discussion - Community-led Planning - Cllr M Bootman with Cllr D Burn**

The Chairman referred to his earlier remarks and to recent planning approvals. Communities can have a say in the way they develop, but not prevent development. Community-led Plans must be considered in making planning decisions but do not have the same legal status as Neighbourhood Plans. These Plans let Communities examine issues - e.g. housing, schooling, traffic, local services - gather evidence about them and then make proposals to address them. Require commitment and expertise to develop, support by District Council, public consultation, examination by planning inspector and local referendum to agree them.

Palgrave is invited to join Diss and its neighbouring Parishes to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **4.16.9 APM        Discussion - Other Business**

None was previously notified nor requested by those present.

#### **4.16.10 APM       Annual Parish Council Meeting 12th May 2016**

This is the Parish Council's 'Annual General Meeting' when the chairman and vice-chairman are elected and members of committees and representatives to other bodies appointed.

#### **4.16.11 APM       Meeting ended - Closing Remarks with thanks to all those present.**

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#### 4.1 POLICE REPORT FOR 2016-17 - PC 1554 Lee Andrews-Pearce, Mid Suffolk North Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

##### **Crimes and Incidents** [All figures exclude crimes occurring at St John's House]

There have been 13 reported Crimes between 01/04/2016 – 15/03/2017, categorised as follows:

Theft from motor vehicle x3; Theft - other x1; Burglary – other building x3; Interference with motor vehicle x1; Wasting Police time x1

During the same period there have been 71 Police incident reports, covering the following:

Initial reporting of crime; Road traffic collisions; Domestic non crime incidents; Requests to assist other agencies; Non-crime police related activity.

##### **Speeding**

There have been 43 offences recorded of excessive speed between 35 and 44 mph on two 30mph roads. Data obtained from Central Ticket Office, covering the period 01/03/2016 – 28/02/2017.

##### **Force Objectives from Police and Crime Plan for Suffolk 2013-2017**

1. Responding to emergencies
2. Solving Crime
3. Preventing and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
4. Caring for victims and vulnerable people

##### **Neighbourhood Priorities**

1. The SNT works with partner agencies to address mental health and vulnerable people, including individuals excluded from mainstream society
2. Anti-social behaviour and crime reduction, including working with other licensing agencies and local businesses
3. Dealing with perpetrators of domestic violence

##### **Raising Community Concerns**

In an emergency - dial 999 if facing an incident or crime right now and need police help immediately.

Non-emergencies - dial 101 (service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

##### **Crime Stats, Crime Reduction Information and Press Releases**

Please visit [www.suffolk.police.uk](http://www.suffolk.police.uk) where you can see who your local officers are, report a crime on-line, view crime mapping, sign up for Police Connect alerts and get the latest crime reduction advice.

##### **Your Local Safer Neighbourhood Team**

Team information and monthly reports can be accessed at: [www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/eye](http://www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/eye)

Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns by e-mail [eye.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:eye.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk)

Eye Police Station - The Lodge, Castleton Way Eye IP23 7BH (please note - not open to the public)

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#### 4.2 County Council Report for 2016-17: County Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division

It is difficult to report on the last year on local issues without mention of the wider changes afoot. As I write HM The Queen has given Royal Assent to the Bill to trigger Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty a/k/a Brexit. A year ago we were looking at the prospect of devolution, combined authorities and the Referendum. Now we are back to square one, for a while, as councils in Suffolk and in England are merging and reinventing themselves along with changes in the government's approach to funding local services.

Moving on to topics more of local interest I will mention highways, growth & planning, infrastructure and neighbourhood planning.

Considerable time has been spent on highways in Palgrave and progress made. We now have functioning signage to reduce HGV ingress and an active Lorrywatch programme, nevertheless the scourge of large vehicles on unsuitable routes remains. I do wish to thank those on the Lorrywatch team who monitor activity and ask them to be patient as their work is valuable and progress slow.

The village entry gateways are approved and progressing, although not quite finished yet.

We have looked hard at ways to improve safety outside the Primary School and prevent unauthorised use of the local access road. A design based on build-out has been carefully considered but reduces car parking; we are now assessing options that would be more acceptable to local residents while meeting the other objectives, and I am aware that the safety of children around the school is a pressing priority. More will I hope be done on this project in the near future.

Palgrave has seen several proposals for new houses and more are likely to come. Managing growth and its inherent conflicts is one of the most challenging areas of council work involving both District and County Councils. The main challenge for the County is to find and coordinate funding for the services and support that growth brings, and to engage early with development plans. In the case of Palgrave, road safety and shortage of school places have challenged the system most, a creative and joined up approach will be needed and this is starting to emerge with neighbourhood planning.

I am delighted to see the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan starting to take shape with Palgrave and nearby parishes involved with cross boundary working, ably led by Diss Town Council. This is exactly what I believe is needed to have a chance to ensure that new development proceeds in a way that contributes rather than detracts from the quality of life that residents so clearly value. Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils as well as Districts and the Town Council are all involved in this process and it offers an opportunity to work together in a very practical manner as many services are shared, such as school places, transport, recreation and health.

I have not mentioned transport in the larger area context, or environment or the Upper Waveney Valley, or many other things; these are for another day.

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#### 4.3 District Council Report for 2016-17: District Councillor David Burn, Palgrave Ward

**Introduction** - Another very busy year for Mid Suffolk District Council (the Council). Much behind-the-scenes work has been aimed at gaining efficiencies in order to lower costs, without reducing the quality of service to our residents. Making savings is not enough to compensate for the reduction in Government funding and much work has been done on how more income can be generated.

**The Councils' location and access to the public** - For some time, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have been assessing cost and efficiency concerns about maintaining two separate headquarters. They also want to make it easier for the public to access the various council services. It has become clear that trying to operate the combined workforce from separate buildings is both inefficient and costly. Both councils have therefore resolved to move headquarters to Endeavour House in Ipswich, which is also the home of Suffolk County Council. That will be the hub for each council but there will be outreach locations in the districts that will serve for public access, the main ones being in Stowmarket for Mid Suffolk and Sudbury for Babergh.

**Building a sustainable future** - Our District, like many others, is facing major pressures to build more houses. A growing population, combined with factors such as increased life expectancy and smaller households, is driving demand for more homes. To ensure all residents understand what these pressures are, as well as what challenges and what opportunities they bring, the Council has been opening up the conversation on growth to the public. To help start this conversation, council officers hosted dozens of *Building a Sustainable Future* events throughout the District. All the events were open to all residents to drop in and talk with officers about the pressures we are facing and how we propose to respond to these without endangering the unique character and identity of Mid Suffolk.

**New council houses, the first for many years** - The first new council tenants to move into a council-built property in more than two decades cut the ribbon at a special opening ceremony in April 2016, where they were given the keys to their new home. Work began on site at Oakey Fields, Thurston, in September 2015 and has delivered a three-bedroomed, wheelchair-accessible bungalow for a local family. The new home is part of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils' project to deliver 65 new council homes across both districts, 38 in Mid Suffolk, across 6 sites (in Bramford, Barking, Great Blakenham, Thurston and Laxfield) and 27 in Babergh, across two sites. New government initiatives made it easier for local authorities to build their own social housing and both councils seized the opportunity.

**Joint Local Plan Review** - Our present Local Plan, the District's collection of development policies against which all planning applications are judged, is presently undergoing a complete review. In the interests of efficiency for the single workforce, both Mid Suffolk and Babergh will produce a new Joint Local Plan which will replace the existing adopted plans of both Councils. The new Joint Local Plan will include the allocation of sites for residential, employment and other uses in order to meet the development needs of the districts up to 2036. A public consultation exercise will be conducted later this year and the hope is to adopt the plan some time in 2018.

**Electoral review is underway** - Levels of population inequality in some wards are triggers for the Local Government Boundary Commission to review the ward boundaries. Over 20% of wards in the District are 10% larger or smaller than the average, and so the Council decided that it should voluntarily request a review of its boundaries now, to ensure any changes can be incorporated in time for the next district council elections in 2019. The review will consider how many councillors Mid Suffolk District Council needs; it will also consider where the ward boundaries fall throughout our districts. Parish boundaries will be unaffected.

**Devolution deal withdrawn** - Despite four Norfolk councils voting against the Norfolk and Suffolk deal, it still remained on offer for the others and it went to public consultation last summer. However, at the final vote of the remaining councils in November two more Norfolk councils rejected it and it was subsequently withdrawn by the government. All the Suffolk councils are now in discussions with the government to see if a deal for Suffolk can be salvaged. If such an idea were to move forward it would probably involve bringing in councils from north Essex and south Norfolk in order to build an economic area large enough to be considered viable.

**Investing in housing in Eye and Needham Market** - In March this year the Council completed the purchase of two redundant sites from the County Council, which it will now develop to provide much needed new housing. One of the sites, Paddock House and former Day Care Centre in Wellington Road, Eye, includes a 30-bed redundant care home and a detached three-bedroom bungalow in the grounds. The other is located in Walnut Tree Walk, Stowmarket and includes the former Middle School and Community Education Centre located on Childer Road. These two latest acquisitions, together with the former Middle School site in School Lane, Needham Market, which was bought last year, demonstrate the Council's determination to invest in its market towns and provide new homes to meet the needs of local people.

**... and in Palgrave** – Despite concerns of the parish council over the lack of capacity in the school and objections of several residents on grounds of road safety, the Council approved two developments in the village during the year – one for 5 houses on the Pat Lewis garage site and the other for 21 houses on the south side of Lion Road. A further application for five houses on Priory Road is yet to be determined. Support from the Council for the new play area came in the form of a substantial grant, facilitated by the Communities team, and a more modest contribution from the ward member's award budget. Administrative and technical support will be forthcoming from the Council when the parish council embarks on a proposed Community-led plan. This will be a precursor to the parish's inclusion in a proposed Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan, which, subject to residents' approval, will direct future development in the village.

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#### **4.4 St Peter's Church and the North Hartismere Benefice:** Hugh Bunbury, Parochial Church Council

Visitors to St Peter's Church at any time will perceive that it is a place of progress where traditions are respected and new approaches develop. In that sense it has been a year of small but carefully considered changes as we think about how a village Church best serves its community. Practical details of Sunday service times and worship patterns, which we discuss at length, may seem of little consequence but are that important first experience for the occasional Church attendee as well as having to suit the regular congregation. Recognising the value of consistency, 'Benefice Sunday' – when the six parishes join for worship at one or other of the seven church buildings – now occurs every month, not just when there is a 'fifth Sunday'. To accommodate this, the service of Morning Prayer, from the 1662 Prayer Book, is not now given every month. The Benefice services are enjoyed and made special when the occasion suggests. Lunch in the Rectory garden on a fine Sunday last summer was particularly appreciated. St Peter's hosts some special Benefice services such as the All Souls day service for the memory of departed loved ones, and interactive celebrations at Palm Sunday and Good Friday. The church was packed for the Peacock Montessori Nursery carol service in December. Weddings, baptisms and funerals are, of course, a Church focus for many and there have been several of each this year. As ever, we worry about what we can offer for young people after primary school age, but the number attending the carol service this Christmas was evidence of interest in that respect. Several youngsters play instruments in the Palgrave Praise Band, for our least formal service each month. It is possible that next year we will be able to report the emergence of a children's choir. Unfortunately we have not been able to replace our regular organist, from last February, and recorded hymn tunes have to be the best substitute for now.

Finance is, of course, a constant concern. It has been calculated that it costs £61 per day to support a Church in our village. The payment that we must make to the Diocese this year amounts to £16,714. In past years, donations from our annual Gift Day – which is so generously supported – have been set aside for building repairs and improvements, but future Gift Day collections may have to be 'unrestricted'. But we are fortunate in having, since last March, our 'Friends' organisation which has already been active in organising some marvellous fund-raising events; most notably a fascinating talk on church history by Clive Paine and a winter concert by the Waveney Choir. A Barbershop musical evening is the Friends' next event. We hope to implement some item of minor repair or 'stitch in time' maintenance to the church building this year, if successful with funding, and the interior improvements continue to be our aim. It has been difficult to fulfil a role of mission through charitable giving, lately, but the Benefice Churches supported last year's Harvest appeal for marginalised communities in the tea-growing areas of Sri Lanka. For the first time, a collection on Remembrance Sunday was sent to Christian International Peace Service.

The Church continues its close connection to Palgrave Voluntary Controlled C of E Primary School, being involved in school assemblies and represented on the board of Governors. We are always pleased to host the school's own festival services and the end of year leavers' service. New generations of children continue to enjoy participating in Open the Book. An 'Easter Experience' is currently being planned, with a series of temporary tableaux in and around the church portraying the Good Friday and Easter story.

We appreciate the maintenance of the closed churchyard by the Parish Council; this year including repair of a crack in the boundary wall and, most importantly, the excellent refurbishment of the teak gates to south and north of the church as a shared undertaking. Some more significant work to the yew avenue has recently been discussed.

We aim to remain a constant presence in the village and extend a welcome to all.

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#### **4.5 Palgrave CEVC School** - Patrick Harrington, Governor, chair of School Governance Committee

I am pleased to be with you again this year, and Kit Wells, our chair of governors, is also here and will be able to answer any appropriate questions you may have. Last year I told you about the increasing size of our federation of schools, now to include Bardwell and Old Newton in addition to Palgrave



and Gislingham. We have made further progress since, and on 1 August 2016 formed a multi academy trust, the Tilian Partnership, currently with 325 pupils. While the government is urging the growth of academies, we have gone down this route in order to strengthen cohesion between the four schools, increase efficiency, give us greater flexibility on spending our funding, and improve the education of our children, while preserving the individuality and character of each school. There is a governing body of 10 directors under a group of 5 members, and each school has its own School Governance Committee consisting of one or two from the main governing body plus representatives of staff, parents, the church and the community. I chair this committee for Palgrave Primary School, which includes the Head of School and our rector Rev. Adrian Watkins. Andrew Berry is the Principal of the Partnership and Julia Waters is the Head of School in Palgrave.

Every year pupils in year 6 (age 11) take Key Stage 2 SATs tests in reading, writing and maths. The 2016 results were very good, both for attainment and, most important, for the progress made. Results were consistently higher than the national average and higher than all neighbouring schools in Suffolk and Norfolk. These results demonstrate the ongoing improved teaching and learning in the school, which is proved by class inspections and confirmed by the high level of parent satisfaction demonstrated by the results of parental questionnaires that we carry out every year. In all, a very successful year. Looking beyond the academic results, we have links with the community in a variety of areas. In sport, pupils attend the Diss Heywood tennis club and the Diss golf club. They also participate in art, with work displayed at the Norfolk & Norwich Show, and in music, where a pupil won a local young composer competition. They are also involved with the Forest school movement, currently at Bardwell primary school, to develop outdoor learning. All these activities help to provide a broad based curriculum, essential in giving them a rounded education and aiding their future development. We also consider it important to broaden pupils' understanding of national and local politics, so last year we had visits to the school from Dr Daniel Poulter, our MP, and also from Cllr Jessica Fleming. The older pupils also visited and had a tour of the House of Commons in London. We are proud of the behaviour of our pupils whenever they appear in public, whether going to an exhibition or travelling as a group on public transport, and we regularly receive compliments from members of the general public on how well the children behave.

Palgrave continues to benefit greatly from the support from St Peter's Church and its parishioners. The use of the church for various activities, particularly the weekly 'Open the Book' assembly, is of great value to us and we are most grateful for the support provided for the school by the rector and many other local residents.

As you know, road safety is a major issue for us. Following a meeting with the county councillor, the parish council chairman, Highways and school representatives in late 2015, a proposal for a crossing for pupils on the no through road and plans to reduce traffic usage of that road was produced in September 2016, but its implementation has been delayed by objections from local residents who felt they had not been adequately consulted. Their suggested revised proposals have been put to the county council for consideration, and we hope for action on this soon. The Parish Council is concerned about the lack of progress in a number of areas involving road safety, which appears to be a pretty insoluble problem, including apparent police inability, because of lack of resources, to prevent or penalise drivers using the 'access only' road past the school.

The lack of space in our school and our siting in what is both a village green and a conservation area continue to give us problems. I told you last year about our inability to get council agreement to lay artificial grass on the present very unsatisfactory grass area, and the plans for a temporary classroom on the grass also being unacceptable because of the village green status. The fourth class that we introduced last year because of increasing pupil numbers (now 74) used the school hall for a while, but that was only a short term solution. We have now arranged with the Community Centre for class 4 to be based at the Community Centre for the morning sessions, and we use this facility as appropriate. This is working well and we are grateful to the Community centre for the cooperation and help we have had from them in easing our space problems in the school. We have also enhanced the school environment with improved fencing, early years play area and toilet facilities.

Looking to the future, we look for the significant advances of recent years to be maintained and indeed improved further with our energetic and enthusiastic staff. We expect teaching and learning to continue to get even better, despite the somewhat restricted circumstances, both physical and financial, in which we operate.

Kit Wells or I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

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#### **4.6 Palgrave and District Community Council: Martin Dyer (Chairman)**

Another busy year has passed for the PDCC. Our events program has included established favourites such as the fireworks, fete, flower shows and film nights as well as the wonderful series of events held under the umbrella of Discover Palgrave ranging from art exhibitions around the village to guided walks and talks. We have also put on our ever-present coffee mornings, craft fayres, quizzes and the children's Christmas party. All of these events are totally dependent on volunteers who give up their time freely for the benefit of others.

Regular users of the Community Centre include the Cribbage Club, African Drumming Group, Friendship Club, Carpet Bowls, Line Dancing, Lynne Bailey's drama group, Fit to Drop, Fit Steps, Extend, Martial arts, Quilters, Table Tennis, Pilates, Parkinson's Disease Support Group, Aerobics, Bollyfit, the Parish Council and Palgrave Primary School. Thanks to all of these users the Community Centre is in near constant use demonstrating its vital role in the community.

The bar continues to provide an additional attraction both for our own events and private hirers as well as being well supported on a Friday evening.

The PDCC has representatives on the Joint Working Party coordinating the revitalisation of the play equipment and the sourcing of funding for this project. Progress on this has been astounding thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of all involved and it is hoped that progress on the ground will soon be evident. It has also been a great example of what can be achieved when the community work together towards a common goal.

Future work will continue to focus on our events program and we hope to progress plans to refurbish the toilet facilities in the near future.

The Palgrave Star continues to be delivered for free to every house in Palgrave (and some additional locations) providing a vital outlet for community information. Yet again this is edited and delivered by volunteers.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Executive Committee and all those who help organise and support any of our events. Without their efforts Palgrave would be much the poorer.

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#### **4.7 Palgrave Parish Council Report for 2016-17: Councillor Mike Bootman (Chairman)**

**Vacancy** - For a brief period the Parish Council was at full strength, the long-standing vacancy having been filled by the co-option of Jethro Shirley-Smith. However the recent resignation of Mr K Charman once again created a vacancy. This has been advertised which, if not filled before the end of the due time, will be open for co-option. Councillors regularly attend meetings where they contribute to and make the best decisions for you and Palgrave and help put those decisions into effect. If you are interested please contact the Clerk first and please do come along to our meetings to see us at work.

**Governance and Administration** - We were fortunate to secure the services of Ms Sarah Foote at the beginning of the Council year in a temporary capacity as Clerk and Financial Officer. This helped us tremendously in the preparation of the Accounts and Annual Return and during the Internal and External Audits. We were even more fortunate when Sarah agreed to take up a permanent position; for her depth of knowledge and experience have moved us rapidly forward by ensuring the Council acts properly and in putting a number of policies in place to facilitate that. Late 2015 saw the new Transparency Code put into operation, this requires local councils to make available a wide range of information on a website rather than in printed form on a notice board or by application to the Clerk.

The Council fully complies with this Code but has also continued to post draft minutes and Agendas of meetings on the new Parish Notice Board. The rules relating to the business that can be discussed have also been more tightly drawn; if it is not on the Agenda then it cannot be discussed, save in an emergency, and certainly no decisions can be made. This is particularly frustrating when, as often happens, notice of a planning consultation or significant update to an existing application is received just after the Agenda has been issued. During 2017-18 the Council will meet 11 times, excepting August, one more meeting than at present which is in itself an increase over the previous year, due to the volume of business. At the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May we will consider the need for additional Committees to aid the progress of business but these will rely on a room being available.

**Budget and Precept** - the Budget is set by the Council following discussions about the activities we carry out year-on-year - such as grass-cutting, hedge-cutting, footway lighting, dog waste and litter bin emptying - and the fixed amounts (overheads) that we have to pay - such as insurance, room hire, audit fees and so on as well as the Clerk's salary. The small increase that we applied last year was absorbed by increased costs over the year but we were able to draw on reserves to complete some essential additional maintenance activities.

**Cemetery** - The extensively updated Cemetery Regulations, Fees and Charges came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April. Unremarked by many, the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016 was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its consecration. Thanks to a small band of volunteers, encroaching undergrowth was cleared and the car park tidied and re-gravelled. The ageing fruit trees lining the west boundary of the consecrated ground were removed; one was dying and the roots of all had spread extensively. A programme for hedge cutting has now been put in place. Finally the gates were taken away and rubbed down, repaired, oiled and rehung.

**Churchyard** - Once again May saw the annual clean-up which by dint of the efforts of a few dedicated volunteers saw most of the lower branches on various Yews and much of the creeping Ivy removed as well as a general turning over and weeding of borders. Efforts to reduce the spread of the two columns of Yews lining the path to the porch were less successful and further action awaits approval by the Diocese. In conjunction with the Parochial Church Council, the gates to the south and north were similarly removed, renovated, oiled and rehung and look all the better for that.

**The Green** - Last May the new joint Parish Notice Board replaced the two boards used by the PDCC and Parish Council. The Green is owned by the 'Lords of the Manor' but is also a registered Common and subject to the laws protecting such land. Causing damage to the turf including by regular parking on it and so on are offences. Tracks across it are for access to properties adjoining The Green and so should not be obstructed by parked vehicles. The lords of the Manor have recently applied to undertake various works to the trees and so do appear to be taking their responsibilities seriously.

**Flooding** - As well as the week-long flood by the Pond last year two bungalows at Goolds Close were also flooded; your Parish Council pressed both County and District Councils to act on this. District housing worked with the tenants and County highways devised a drainage scheme for Lows Lane, the work for which was completed before Christmas. More recently the roadside ditch by Denmark Court has been culverted, but do not ask why a short stretch of about 5 metres was left still open!

**Footpaths** - A Footpaths Working Party was set up, comprising several Councillors and residents. They walked all the various footpaths in Palgrave, compiled reports of work needed and were able to persuade landowners to get that work done; a great team effort and thanks are due to all involved.

**Footway Lighting** - Six of the old lights, in various parts of the village, were replaced by LED lanterns during 2015. The annual energy and maintenance charges have reduced by over £200 (20%) as a result. More replacements could be made but your feedback on these LED lanterns would be much appreciated, as would your views as to whether they might be switched off during the small hours.

**Roads and Traffic** - Speeding continues to be the top concern, with a recent police exercise recording speeds of up to 67 miles/hr within the 30 mile/hr limit along Lion Road. In consequence the police are targeting the area in various ways. The 'gates' for the gateways at the speed limit entries on Lion Road and Upper Rose Lane are in hand and should be installed in the coming months.

The Parish Council continues to press County highways for action on various matters. Cllr Fleming has noted the position with the 'Access Only' road, although the long-standing preference is for closure at the north end, and she has agreed following a site meeting to seek improvements to pedestrian safety at the Lion Road/Priory Road crossroads and to support the residents of Denmark Court and Denmark Hill in identifying potential improvements to safety on that well-used stretch of road. Other means of reducing the use of village roads by HGVs and 'rat-runners' are being considered. However the highways 'transformation' programme shifts all advice and design work to the contractor, all of which is chargeable to the Parish Councils that need it, thereby substantially increasing the cost of working up and delivering solutions, should highways be so minded to consider them.

**Development** - Cllrs Fleming and Burn have both referred to the housing developments granted planning approval in the last year. In fact there was also approval for a single dwelling on Lion Road bringing the total up to 27 plus the 5 yet to be determined, and all granted since it was established that the village school is at capacity. The Housing White Paper and Neighbourhood Planning Bill propose changes in emphasis in development management with communities having more input and infrastructure accompanying development, but there is no clear sign yet of the communities getting their say or of the appearance of the infrastructure that successive governments have promised. The Housing White Paper proposes construction of more low cost and rental housing to satisfy demand, yet developers across the country already hold planning permissions for many thousands more homes than are already being built.

The Housing White Paper can be found here:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market)

The consultation closes on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017. Details of how to respond are on the same webpage.

**Looking Ahead** - Challenges still continue to include the Local Plan Review formal public consultation, especially over the location of planned growth in housing, services and employment, and Mid Suffolk's plans for the Eye Airfield site. Engaging with County and District officers over options for development and infrastructure have, at the time of writing, still failed to materialise - perhaps work on the Community-led and Neighbourhood Plans might finally change that mindset - let us but hope.

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