



Creting St Mary Annual Parish Meeting

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Village Hall, Creting St Mary at 7pm on Thursday, 9th May 2024

PRESENT:

Cllr S Haynes - *Chairman*

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Jennie Blackburn – *Clerk*

Cllr Matthew Hicks – *County Councillor*

Phil Piper (PC), Lesley Plummer (PC), Roger Coton (PC), Jan Palmer (PC), Kathryn Martin (Newsletter / Welfare Charities / Social Club), Marianne Brame (School), Glynis Clint (PCC / WI).

CSM01/24/25 - CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman of Creting St Mary Parish Council, Cllr Sue Haynes, welcomed those present.

CSM02/24/25 - APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Hugo Craggs (PC) and District Cllr Ross Piper.

CSM03/24/25 - MINUTES 11th MAY 2023

The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting, held on 11th May 2023, were approved as a true record and were duly signed by the Chair.

CSM04/24/25 – REPORTS RELATING TO THE VILLAGE

Representatives of the following organisations were invited to speak and answer any questions, where received, their reports are attached to these Minutes.

- a) **Creting St Mary Parish Council** – *Cllr Sue Haynes*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Haynes read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- b) **Suffolk County Council** - *Cllr Matthew Hicks*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Hicks reported on the main points in his report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- c) **Mid-Suffolk District Council** – *Cllr Terry Lawrence / Cllr Ross Piper*

Cllr Piper was not present at the meeting. His report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- d) **Welfare Charities** – *Kathryn Martin*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Kathryn Martin read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- e) **Village Hall Management Committee** – *Janet Mayell*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Janet Mayell read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- f) **Village Newsletter** – *Kathryn Martin*
(Full reports attached to these Minutes)

Kathryn Martin read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Jennie Blackburn reported on the financial position of the Newsletter.

- g) **Village Primary School** – *Marianne Brame (Chair of Governors)*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Marianne Brame read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- h) **Village WI** – *Glynis Clint*
(Full Report attached to these Minutes)

Glynis Clint read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- i) **Social Club** – *Kathryn Martin*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Kathryn Martin read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- j) **Blacksmiths Field** – *Cllr J Palmer*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Jan Palmer read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Members of the public asked about the proposed basketball net for the field and its size, to which Cllr Palmer confirmed the surface would be eight metres squared. Its exact location had yet to be agreed.

Members of the public asked that shading and a roundabout be considered for the field.

- k) **Parochial Church Council** – *Glynis Clint*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Glynis Clint read through her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

CSM05/24/25 - PUBLIC FORUM

Two members of the public were present but no matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 7.43pm.

Chairman Date

Chairman's Report.

Good Evening All and Welcome.

As usual. This has been a mixed year. We have not had quite as many planning applications as in previous years; maybe we are getting a full Village !

Starting with the Village Hall. The front car park has been resurfaced; a gate has been installed in the rear car park beside the container. This has two main aims: to facilitate the access for a mower to cut the strip of grass beside the Hall and also to allow pedestrian access to the Hall particularly on bonfire night, without going across the whole car park. Hopefully it will serve these purposes. Whilst on the subject of the Hall. The pond on Blacksmith's Field has been cleared, the newts are now visible. Our thanks to Roger Beecroft for this work. Roger dug the pond when it was first 'built'; he was very amused to see that the seat he built years ago, still in position and functioning. Roger is also going to take over the cutting and maintenance of the Wildflower Meadow, once again an area he created and looked after for a few years.

CIL monies have enabled us to pay for these works to be carried out. We have also agreed to use this money to pay for the widening of the door between the pool room and the lounge in the Hall as part of the upgrading to the lounge area of the Hall.

A survey was carried out re what equipment to add to that already in place on Blacksmith's Field. There were not enough in favour of a skatepark to install one. It was also decided that the cost of a table tennis table was too high given the small response in favour. A zip wire was agreed upon and is in the process of being built. We are also looking at where to put a basketball 'net'.

My thanks to Mr Barnes for his work at Lilley's Wood. Three benches have been purchased for the site, yet to be installed; once again, thanks to CIL.

The footpath leading up to the church along All Saints Rd has been cut back, hopefully this can be cut and kept in a better state than in previous years . I feel a tribute must be paid here to Paul Scully who, with his partner Pat, worked hard over the years to keep this path clear. Also to the Hardingham's who helped cut it for us last year. Hopefully, now, we have a bit of funding towards keeping it in a better state.

At last, the A140 junction with All Saints Rd has been resurfaced and a speeding limit of 30mph for this length of All Saints Rd is to be installed. A noticeboard for that end of the village is under discussion. An extra dog bin has been placed at the entrance to the first footpath in Sally Woods Lane.

My thanks to all the Committee Members who have worked over the year to achieve these goals; Jennie Blackburn, the Parish Clerk, for telling us what we can and can't do; Matthew Hicks our SCC Member for helping us achieve items, particularly Highways-related and our MSDC representatives for their support.

Sue Haynes

Chair, Creeting St Mary Parish Council

Cllr Matthew Hicks 2024 Annual Report for the Thredling Division

Council budget approved with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable

Suffolk County Council has confirmed its financial budget for 2024-25. The £752.8m package was approved at the Full Council meeting on Thursday 15 February 2024, with the priority to protect vulnerable adults and children across the county. Despite the recently announced uplift in government funding and asking residents for the maximum Council Tax contribution, it is still not sufficient to cover the rising costs imposed by inflation, or the increasing levels of demand for services - in particular children's care, special educational needs, and disabilities (SEND) and home to school transport. Focusing on those children who have extremely demanding needs and no-one else to turn to, is the right thing to do. The same is true of adults who we want to help lead independent lives, or to have the best quality of life possible. To provide care and services for vulnerable children and adults, the next two years will see an additional £42.7 million allocated to children's services, and an additional £29.9 million for adult services. However, this means £64.7 million of savings needs to be found at the same time. These significant savings over the next two years include:

- £11 million of staffing costs through changing the way services are delivered and restructuring across the council.
- £30.6 million of additional savings from an extension of the council's hugely successful Adult Social Care Transformation programme, which has focused on reducing demand for more expensive social care options by boosting people's independence and ability to stay well for longer through innovative methods including cutting edge care technology. This transformation programme has already saved £30.7 million over the last six years
- £140,000 of savings by centralising Suffolk Archives to The Hold and closing the branches in West and East Suffolk. In February 2023, the council committed £3.4m to relocate the West Suffolk Archives branch to the proposed Western Way development. Remaining at its current location would have required over £5 million to protect the historic records and meet modern archive standards. West Suffolk Council has since decided not to progress with the Western Way development, ending that opportunity. Centralising the three branches into one brings Suffolk in line with the majority of archive services across the country and is better value for taxpayers' money.
- £15.9 million of reserves will be used to balance the 2024/25 budget.

Balancing this budget has been incredibly tough. But by prioritising our spending on those in greatest need, they will hopefully not find life incredibly tough. Focusing on those children who have extremely demanding needs and no-one else to turn to, is the right thing to do. The same is true of adults who we want to help lead independent lives, or to have the best quality of life possible. These are very expensive services to provide. It does not leave us with as much money as we would like to invest in every other service that we are required to deliver. We have just 23p in every £1 to maintain highways and footpaths, fund libraries, run a fire and rescue service, tackle climate change, and so much more.

The council's budget will increase by 8.6% (from £693.0 million to £752.8 million), some of which is generated by a 4.99% increase in the council's share of Council Tax, and additional Government funding. The increase of 4.99% to Council Tax is made up of a 2.99% increase in general Council Tax and a 2.00% increase dedicated to funding adult care. This will see the council's share of a Band B property's bill rise by £1.12 per week, compared to last year.

Councils unite against National Grid pylon proposals

In a [joint letter to National Grid](#), the leaders of the Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex County Councils address the extensive impact on landscapes and local communities that the scheme would bring. They also highlight

that an offshore solution has not been sufficiently investigated, and the opportunities that this could bring to co-ordinate with other large-scale energy projects off the region's coast. The Norwich to Tilbury project would see 114 miles of electricity pylons weave their way through the three counties. Only a small percentage of this cabling would go underground, an issue which the councils also raise, stating that more would be needed particularly in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and near Diss and the Waveney Valley. We have taken to writing at this time, as there is still the opportunity to explore all options and solutions for a development of this scale. We all support the collective effort to tackle climate change, work towards net zero and to create a secure future for the country's energy. But there are so many elements of this proposal which just do not go far enough. The impact that this scheme would have should not be underestimated, particularly on the region's unique, designated landscapes and the many communities that will be affected. We all agree that studies into an offshore solution have not been appropriately explored, this is a viable option which we feel has been dismissed too readily. Should proposals for the project progress, and further consultations take place, we would expect National Grid to invest a lot more time and effort in working with our local communities. These large schemes can be guilty of doing the minimum necessary when they should be working with local people and businesses as much as possible, who know the area and can help find the best solutions, should the project go ahead. We must be looking to a coordinated offshore centred approach to energy transmission in the UK. Given our long-term energy security goals and the infrastructure that will be required, simply installing more pylons, and digging trenches cannot be the only viable solution. We will continue to stand strong on behalf of all the communities who will be affected by these proposals. You can read more about the Norwich to Tilbury project and view a calendar of consultation events on the [National Grid website](#).

Formal opening of £1.3 million Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service training centre

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre at Wattisham Flying Station near Stowmarket has recently undergone a £1.3 million upgrade. It now boasts a tactical firefighting facility, which uses real fire and an LPG-fired facility to simulate incidents firefighters may be faced with. The most recent addition is the modular office complex, which features additional classrooms and welfare facilities for all delegates and staff. The centre was formally declared open at the annual base families' day on Thursday August 24 by Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Jon Lacey of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and Colonel Toby R Moore MBE, Station Commander, Wattisham Flying Station.

This is an exciting new chapter for the training centre, which has been at been based at Wattisham now for over a decade. Our new training centre provides additional classrooms and office space, supporting various aspects of fire and rescue training, such as incident command. It also provides improved welfare facilities, which was designed to bring everyone together in an atmosphere where they feel they belong. Similarly, the new training complexes allow us to give new firefighters the best training possible in a way that is realistic yet less harmful to the environment, through us not having to use as much carbon-based burning material as before. The work of the fire service is vital in protecting our community and often requires them to undertake hazardous work in extremely demanding conditions. Our firefighters deserve the best possible training to prepare them for such work and this facility will offer exactly that for many years to come. The fire service training centre has been at Wattisham since 2011 and occupies a 17-acre site that previously housed the Bloodhound missile system from the Cold War. The training centre is used throughout the year for a wide range of training requirements which include refresher and ongoing assessments by all staff.

SCC Adult Social Care service rated Good overall by Care Quality Commission

Suffolk County Council has been awarded an indicative overall rating of "Good" for the quality of its Adult Social Care services. Following a period of intense inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Suffolk County Council has become one of the first councils nationwide to achieve this standard. Earlier this year CQC announced that 5 local authorities with responsibility for adult social care, including Suffolk, had volunteered to be part of a Local Authority Assessment Pilot, to help CQC develop the new model of inspection to help assess councils against the requirements of the Care Act. This model would then be rolled out across the country with all 153 Local Authorities with responsibility for Adult Social Care being inspected by the commission. The assessment process began this summer with a request for information to

each local authority taking part in the pilot. This collected the written evidence needed to allow CQC to understand how each council is delivering its adult social care services. Following on from this initial ask, the County Council was then required to arrange over 40 different meetings including 4 staff drop-in sessions, with over 150 people, including staff, partners, providers, carers, and people with lived experiences. These meetings allowed the CQC inspection team to meet people directly and ask questions to help further evidence the quality of social care services provided. CQC's final report rated the overall quality of Suffolk County Council's Adult Social Care services as "Good" and highlighted areas of strength including, the quality of its leadership, the culture of learning and support for staff, the range of digital care options available, the good relationships between social care and health colleagues and locality team knowledge and understanding of community needs. I am delighted, this is a fantastic result for Suffolk County Council, especially for those colleagues working within Adult Social Care.

I am especially pleased to see areas like Safeguarding rated as good, this is a real acknowledgement of the hard work SCC and partners have put in place over the last few years to learn from every incident and work closely together as a system to ensure the safety of the most vulnerable in our community. I believe this rating is also a testament to the high levels of financial investment we as a council have consistently put into Adult Social Care over the years, especially during the dark days of the pandemic, and shows how through imagination and service transformation, we are delivering on our priority to put people's health and wellbeing at the top of our agenda as a local authority.

"Of course, there is always more that can be done with something as complex as Adult Social Care and we certainly won't take this overall rating for granted. There are challenges ahead which this report touches upon, but what this rating ultimately should do is give us all confidence that we have the right people and processes in place to provide good quality Adult Social Care services for the people of Suffolk

Almost £1 million extra committed to investigating significant flooding following Babet

Suffolk County Council has committed almost £1 million of funds to bring in additional flood investigation specialists as the response to Storm Babet continues. Since the storm, targeted recovery work has been carried out across the county to ensure damaged highway infrastructure is repaired, those whose properties were flooded get help and that investigations can start which will identify how to reduce flood risk. As lead local flood authority, the county council has a duty to investigate significant flooding under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act. These investigations help to establish the source of flooding, factors which may have caused or exacerbated the flooding, the impacts on people, services and infrastructure and any actions which could be taken to increase resilience to future storm events. In any usual year, Suffolk County Council carries out around three or four of these investigations. Following Babet, up to 100 look set to be needed. The impact of this truly unprecedented event is still being felt across the county and will continue to do so for months to come, so it is important that we recognise that and increase our resources appropriately. These investigations help us to work with communities to establish the cause of flooding in the worst hit areas and identify ways to manage the risk better in future."

New Independent Chair appointed to drive forward SEND reform

SCC announces that Kathryn Boulton has been appointed as the new independent chair of the Local Area Partnership's SEND Improvement Board. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision is delivered by the Local Area Partnership in Suffolk, which includes SCC, NHS Suffolk and North-East Essex Integrated Care Board and NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board. The SEND Improvement Board was set up in response to the inspection of SEND services in Suffolk in November last year by Ofsted and CQC and is a requirement of the Improvement Notice that will be issued to Suffolk by the Department for Education. Made up of senior leaders from the council and NHS, board members will oversee the implementation and review of plans and services aimed at improving the way SEND services are delivered in Suffolk. It will also ensure the successful delivery of the Priority Action Plan, which was co-produced following the inspection and has been agreed by the Department for Education. The new chair of the board, Kathryn, has 37 years of experience across children's services. With an education background and success in several senior leadership roles, Kathryn has significant experience of transforming SEND services in local authorities and ensuring the voices and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families are central to the design and delivery of SEND services. An independent chair is crucial in ensuring we stay on track and improve outcomes for our children and young people with SEND and their

families. Kathryn will hold the partnership to account and will act as both a critical friend and a sounding board. The Improvement Board has an important job to do and we remain focused on providing the best provision for children and young people with SEND. In addition to Kathryn’s appointment, the Local Area Partnership will receive an Improvement Notice from the Department for Education. This was an expected outcome after the Ofsted and CQC inspection. It means that advisors from the Department for Education and NHS England will work with the Local Area Partnership to support and monitor improvement plans until further notice. We welcome this. We already have a good relationship with the Department for Education, and the additional expertise and guidance of specialist advisors will further strengthen our improvement work. SCC Cabinet has also confirmed that 60 new members of staff will be recruited to drive forward important reform to the way special educational needs and disability (SEND) services are delivered in Suffolk.

Highways Statisticiscs

Since storm Babet in October 2023 there has been a substantial increase in the number of customer reports received by Suffolk Highways. When comparing the October to February period for 2022/23 and 2023/24 there has been a:

- 6,133 increase in pothole/road defect reports (105% increase)
- 6,791 increase in flooding/drainage reports (376% increase)

October to February	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Difference
Potholes/Road Defects	3,097	5,843	11,976	105%
Flooding/Drainage	1,819	1,807	8,598	376%
Total Customer Reports	15,455	17,947	34,624	93%

In terms of the Emergency Response Service, Suffolk Highway recorded 2,185 highway emergencies since October 2023. This is an increase of 69% compared to the same period in 2022/23. During the period October to February, the average number of reactive gangs on the network is over 24 per day. For the same period during 2022/23, there were an average of 12.6 reactive gangs per day.

Matthew Hicks - County Councillor for the Thredling Division

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**Mid Suffolk District Councillors' Annual Report for 2023/24
For the Annual Parish Meeting – 2024**

- New administration

The result of the May 2023 elections was that the 24 elected Green Party councillors officially became the administration at Mid Suffolk. Councillor Andy Mellen, as Leader outlined our initial priorities to lead and work with other bodies to address the challenges faced by our communities: cost of living, affordable homes, local services, public transport and climate change.

A cabinet of six councillors was formed and I am The Cabinet member with responsibility for Heritage Planning and Infrastructure. Other roles were provided to members of Council across all political parties in line with our view of collaborative politics.

A Plan for the next few years was agreed which placed environmental and social responsibilities at the heart of everything the Council does.

- Budget

For 2023/24 the General Fund budget was for approximately £15.5 million with an expected £2.3 million surplus which will go into reserves. Funds have also had to be provided from the Housing Revenue Account for the backlog of repairs that has built up.

For 2024/25, net expenditure on services is budgeted at £18.5 million with a 2% increase in council tax. Council home rents increased by 7% and sheltered housing service charges also increased. This has been done to ensure the Council can afford the repairs and maintenance that are needed. All these increases are due to inflation, costs of energy and other cost increases.

The Council has reserves of over £28 million as at the end of the financial year plus an expected dividend from the Gateway 14 business park. Plans for this are on a variety of work including new foot/cycle paths, land for biodiversity and green spaces, regeneration of Stowmarket town centre, improved sports provision in the district and enabling community-led housing.

Approval was also given to increasing council tax on empty homes in 2024/25 and implementing increased council tax on second homes in 2025/26.

- Thriving towns and villages

A group of Councillors has been working on issues around sustainable transport. A new rural transport grants scheme with a pot of £600,000 was set up to help provide passenger transport options across the district.

Approval was gained for the financing of a Green Skills and Innovation Centre on Gateway 14 (G14). This will in part act as a centre of excellence for local businesses and a training site for adults needing new skills. Also on G14, The Range is due to move into the largest building on site and a deal with a sustainable roof products supplier was agreed.

In Stowmarket, the first part of the sports project was approved and work will commence this year for new pitches, an athletics track and other improvements at Chilton Fields and next to the high school.

In conjunction with Suffolk County Council, Mid Suffolk provided much support to residents and businesses affected by the floods of Storm Babet and Storm Ciaran.

The councils of Mid Suffolk and Babergh were jointly awarded *Council of the Year* for their collaboration with different partners, working to improve services and focus on communities.

- Environmental sustainability

The Council launched the *Cosy Homes* scheme, a £2 million project to insulate homes for free. Separately a grant of nearly £1 million was received for retrofitting council homes.

A new *Pride in your Place* grant was established to provide every parish with additional funds to improve the environment for their community.

The Council continues to encourage local groups to improve areas for wildlife and a call for sites from landowners was made so that more trees can be planted across the district. The annual Tree for Life scheme was again a success and tree, hedging and wildflower packs for communities across the district.

The Council published its Carbon Reduction Management Plan with a focus for this year on improving sheltered housing and further work on the leisure centres.

- Planning and Housing

In November 2023, Part 1 of the Joint Local Plan (JLP) for Mid Suffolk and Babergh was approved and adopted. The JLP sets out a planning framework to guide development in the districts over the period to 2037. JLP Part 1 provides a set of strategic and local development management policies against which planning applications and appeals will be assessed. There are 10 strategic policies (such as on affordable housing, climate change and tourism) and 32 local policies (such as on biodiversity, historic environment and sustainable construction).

With regards to Part 2, the Inspector had acknowledged that 90% of Mid Suffolk's housing target is already allocated (either via existing permissions or sites allocated via Neighbourhood Plans) and that this is central to future policies. Work has been continuing on this with public consultation expected later in 2024.

Separately, to support this, the Council is working on Supplementary Planning Documents. The first three, currently at draft stage, are on Housing, Biodiversity and Intensive Livestock and Poultry.

The Council continued to oppose the Norwich to Tilbury pylon project raising significant concerns, particularly over the impact on the environment and the effect on local communities.

Mid Suffolk's annual monitoring report showed that 1,257 new dwellings were built in the district in 2022/23, of which 299 were affordable. This met 144% of the Government target. There are 6,916 outstanding planning permissions (as at 01/04/23) which are either not started or under construction. Mid Suffolk has 10.88 years of housing land supply, well above the Government target of five years.

Over £1.5 million was provided to parish and town councils in the form of the Community Infrastructure Levy during the year.

- Supporting the community

We support local events and community groups where we can and particularly link local groups with external fundraising via the Mid Suffolk community team. Almost £550,000 was allocated by Mid Suffolk District Council Direct to communities across the district from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

We would like to thank the Parish Council for all their work done throughout the year.

Your Mid Suffolk District Councillor for Needham Market Ward

Dr Ross Piper
Mid Suffolk District Councillor
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Telephone: 07928512581

Mid Suffolk District Council: www.midsuffolk.gov.uk 0300 123 4000

ANNUAL REPORT FOR CREETING SAINT MARY
WELFARE CHARITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2023

During the year ending December 31st 2023 there had been a total of eleven retirement grants made to members of the village community.

Three student grants were made and a grant assisting with travel costs for a special needs student.

A grant was also made to assist in purchasing a riser / recliner chair for a person with mobility health concerns.

Income for the year was £6249 with an expenditure being £4710.

The accounts were independently audited by Mrs. Frances Hammond in March 2024.

The statutory annual return was submitted electronically to the Charity Commission March 11th 2024

Paul Stephenson JP (Chairman Creeting St Mary Welfare Charities)

CREETING ST MARY VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT MAY 2024

The Hall continues to be an asset to the local community and has again been well used for regular events as well as individual bookings. There has been a slight downturn in the ad hoc bookings in first few months of the year but recently things seem to be picking up.

We have had a change within the management committee following Mrs Bingley's decision to step down as Chair following 10 years in that role for which we thank her for her hard work and commitment in that role. She has agreed to remain a Trustee for the present time.

This has meant a change to the management roles and as a result I have taken over the role of Chair and Mr William Barnes has taken over Treasurer.

We have undertaken a re-organisation of the storage areas within the hall which has increased the capacity and are looking at a similar project for the cleaners cupboard.

We have re-oiled the Hall floor with the aid of a Locality Grant from Cllr Terry Lawrence and Cllr Ross Piper. This has reinvigorated the floor and provides a better surface for dancing and other events as well as helping prolong its life and maintaining the Hall to a high standard.

Looking forward we are about to commence the delayed refurbishment of the lounge area with some financial assistance from the Parish Council. This will involve removing some of the wall and doors between the pool room area, new lighting, altering the external appearance of the Bar, redecorating, new carpets and curtains. We also hope to be able to invest in some different seating dependent on funds.

We are also intending to update the CCTV system and explore the possible need for a larger capacity electrical consumer unit.

Newsletter Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2023

Joan Hardingham and Kathryn Martin – co-Editors

The Creeping St. Mary Newsletter continues to be published every 2 months with the February edition being the first of what is now Volume 43. It is delivered to approximately 395 (up from 375) houses in Creeping St. Mary by volunteers co-ordinated by David Haynes. There are about 10 distributors and the numbers of copies each distribute varies between 16 and 71 – a big thank you!

The two large housing developments on Flordon Road - at the Breheny site and the Charity Land plus other small in-fills (adding 100 or more houses to the village) will require more newsletters and more distributors though these are already being recruited from the inhabitants.

The Newsletter aims to be a source of local information for every household, with a who's who of local organisations and their contact details. Village events arranged by the very active Social Club and numerous other village organisations are featured, Up-to-date and timely information about future events would be appreciated, as well as items on past events and photos. There are also the reports from Parish, District and County Councillors to be digested.

A big hole has been left with the passing of Paul Scully who for many years reported on the village footpaths and undertook, if found in poor state, to take matters up with the County Council. He also entertained us with fascinating stories from the history of the village – and occasional jokes! Perhaps people would fill this gap by telling us about their walks and any interesting history they might know of. Further information about the old map found in the Church, which Paul mentioned in a recent newsletter could be published.

Advertisers continue to support the publication, going a long way to covering the costs. New advertisers join regularly; please support their businesses. We were grateful to receive donations towards the costs of publication from County Councillor Matthew Hicks.

A difficulty for the editors continues to be people not adhering to the deadline which is 15th of the month prior to publication (January, March, May, July, September and November). This can require re-organising pages at the last minute which can lead to errors creeping in and making it hard for the co-editors Joan Hardingham (on the computer) and Kathryn Martin (proof-reading among other things) to keep up the standards they would like. Another issue is still some over-long articles – a page is about 450 words, with no space for photos!

Thanks to Jennie Blackburn, Parish Clerk, who keeps track of finances and to Gipping Press who not only publish the Newsletter (sometimes at short notice) but also review it to check there are no major mistakes and deliver the copies to the village when complete.

To note – the other reports to the APM will be published in the newsletter over the course of the next year.

Creting St Mary Newsletter – Report to Annual Parish Meeting

Income & Expenditure Account 2023/24

	2023/24
	£
Brought Forward	1162.53
Income from Advertising	1198.00
Donation from Parish Council	500.00
County Council Locality Grant	300.00
Total	1998.00
Printing Costs	2489.00
Other Costs	0
Total	2489.00
Carry Forward	997.53

The CSM Newsletter continues to be published and circulated FOC to all households in the village.

Jennie Blackburn

Creeting St Mary WI - 2024

We've had another interesting year with numbers in the early twenties and have been very fortunate to have new members with new ideas join the group and be willing to take on roles on the committee, sadly two members have decided not to re-join this year due to ill health.

Our programme is varied with speakers amongst others giving talks on drought gardening, East Anglian Stately Homes and Suffolk Ghosts and Hauntings, not so much Jam and Jerusalem these days.

We enjoyed a Ukulele Band 'What no cake 'entertain us earlier in the year with their singing and music and we are looking forward to a talk on 'Natural dyes and colours from plants' later in the year.

This April was our 77 th birthday and we celebrated with afternoon tea at a local cafe and garden centre. The food was excellent and everyone enjoyed the change of scene.

At Christmas time we again go out and enjoy Christmas lunch together.

One of our new ventures this year is to hold dabble afternoons once a month where members and friends can meet and try out varied craft activities together. We also have a lending library of craft materials which can be borrowed. Our patch work group continues to meet twice a month, new friends and members always welcomed.

WI promotes friendships and feeling part of a community. Everyone always made very welcome, come and give us a try.

Glynis Clint.

WI report
May 2024

CREETING ST MARY SOCIAL CLUB REPORT FOR APM 2024

The Social Club has again had a very successful year with many achievements.

The Friday bar opening on the last Friday of each month continues with occasional guest singers, karaoke, bingo and a social guest Elvis and is well attended.

The Coronation Weekend featured a barn dance, royal scarecrows and a field fayre all of which went very well and featured in a special 4 page colour spread in the newsletter funded by a donation from MSDC.

The spring and autumn saw a return of the soup lunch programme, with 25 or so regular attendees, mainly but not all from our senior community members .

The Fireworks event, funded by the PC, and led once more by Kathryn Martin ,featured a spectacular display and saw an excellent turnout with first class catering. Thanks to the many who helped with this event.

Christmas events were repeated this year with a sold out children's party with entertainment, Santa and his elves attending. A most enjoyable adult 80s themed party was held close to Christmas.

This year Jacqui Mann again ran a fantastic Quiz Night with a fish and chip supper provided by the Moving Plaice from their van.

The volunteer bar team have also supported a range of events for village residents and nearby locals including birthday parties, wedding celebrations and wakes.

The Club Committee has established a small charity fund with profits from some of our events through the year which allows us to assist in making Christmas more enjoyable for a few local families with limited resources as well as some other events.

We are looking at improvements to the bar area and stock room which should aid the bar staff in the performance of what at times can be very hectic roles.

We hope that our many events have not only been enjoyed but also helped to provide opportunities for acquaintances to be made and for our ever growing community to be enhanced as a result.

Huge thanks to the committee and the many volunteers who have enabled our programme to be delivered.

Lisa Nobes SC chair

BLACKSMITHS FIELD ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2024

The footpath from All Saints Road into the playing fields has continued to allow access even during the winter months. A gate has also been installed between the path and the village hall car park by the container, which allows access to cut the grass and also to provide safer access to the Village Hall for pedestrians on Bonfire Night.

The play equipment continues to prove very popular and after carrying out a survey around the village, it has been agreed to install a Zip Wire and a hard surface with a Basket Ball net. The Play Equipment Annual Report identified the need to top up the bark in some areas and this was carried out in July last year.

The new moveable goal posts are in constant use.

Roger Beecroft has cleared the pond and is going to undertake maintaining the wildings going forward.

Hugo and team planted a number of blue bells around the field.

The den building equipment has once again disappeared.

Two new benches have been installed and a new gate at the entrance.

The firework night was again a great success.

The White Beam tree planted to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee has suffered a little over the winter, but overall is still looking healthy.

Cllr Jan Palmer

St Mary's Church, Creeting St Mary - May 2024.

We continue with the same format, 2 services a month at 11 am and if there is a fifth Sunday in the month there is a service elsewhere in the Benefice. We have a small but loyal congregation with a number of people who also visit us regularly.

This rota of services could possibly change when our Rector, Reverend Philip Payne retires in July 2024.

Since before Christmas there have been church meetings, ministry meetings, parish meetings working together to plan for the future when Reverend Philip retires. We don't know how long the interregnum will be.

We have 29 people on the Electoral Roll.

In the summer months we open the Church on a Sunday from 11-4pm and other times when requested.

Creeting St Mary VAP school supports the church and meets in Church for end of term services. The whole school visit the cenotaph on Armistice Day. At harvest time the school donates a wonderful array of tins and packets and fruit and vegetables for the Food bank in Stowmarket which they bring across to Church for their harvest service.

This year we are concentrating on raising money to repair the vestry roof and update inside. We are very grateful to our Parish Council and the Gardenau charity based in Coddendam for their very generous support.

We have a fund raising afternoon in the V hall on Saturday June 15 th for the Vestry refurbishment.

We must also thank Maree Connold for her yearly craft days which raise money specifically for the Vestry.

We again had a beautiful pedestal of lilies in the Church over the Easter weekend remembering loved ones. The Easter weekend ended with a Festal evensong with the benefice choir. The church looked beautiful inside and with flood lights outside.

Over this year we have supported the Historic Churches Trust sharing half the money raised by cyclists from our Church in the annual Ride and Stride, Family Refuge in Ipswich, Christian Aid, St Mungos, a charity supporting homeless people in London and Find, an Ipswich based charity that supports people who are homeless, people who have been in prison and providing essential food banks.

Our church yard at the moment has a carpet of buttercups and daisies and will soon have pink pyramid orchids popping up everywhere.

Thank you to the parish council who support a gardener for the church yard and to our volunteers who meet 3 times a year to tidy and garden and to Mr James Mackintosh who keeps all the hedges cut.

This next year will be very challenging for our Church and its congregation, we are very grateful to those who support us.

Glynis Clint
Parish representative.
Church Report 2024.