

Chairman's Annual Report 2023/24

I have now been Chair for 12 months and it has been a busy year for the Parish Council. One well-liked and very useful Councillor resigned, and three new Councillors came on board.

Minor repairs have been carried out to the Pavilion Building. It is good to see the recreation ground in use by the football teams, residents and the wider community. The defibrillator on the external wall is maintained by the Parish Council. A replacement battery and pads were recently installed. The defib has been used on a number of occasions.

Dog fouling has been on the increase once again. The voluntary dog wardens patrol the streets and report issues to GYBC Environmental Health. A campaign to stamp out this unhealthy, unsociable and irresponsible practise is on-going.

We have trimmed back some of the trees on the recreation ground and planted more laurel bushes along the front fence line. The car park barrier has also been repaired.

Another Councillor and I attended Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Development Control Committee meeting to raise concerns about the proposed changes to the Haven site. Comments in relation to GYBC's new draft local plan have been submitted and further consultations are due in April 2024.

A new SAM2 camera bracket was installed on Links Road south side (being part of Hopton Parish), and the camera is now spending part of its time there as well as Station Road, Lowestoft Road, Sidegate Road and Coast Road.

In May we presented pupils at Hopton CE Primary academy with leather bookmarks to commemorate the crowning of King Charles 111 which was a joyous event.

The Parish Council was pleased to financially support Party in the Park and Carols around the Ruin 2023.

The litter picking events are still ongoing and have been reasonably well attended, although we could always do with more volunteers. It is amazing how much rubbish we collect.

In August we held another skateboarding, BMX, scooter event. Despite delays which were out of our control, the event was well attended.

We are making slow progress with our application to use developers' money for the upgrade of St Clair Court play area. All the necessary quotations have been received and submitted in good time to Great Yarmouth Borough Council, who have now advised that no decision will be made until late spring.

The Christmas tree purchased last year for the Millennium Garden failed to survive, despite frequent watering. A temporary one was purchased and lit for the Christmas period 2023. A new tree has been donated and hopefully, will be a reasonable size in 2 years.

Although the unadopted pathway along Warren Road to Gorleston is not the responsibility of the Parish Council, we have listened to the complaints regarding overgrowth at the sides, hedges and trees, and arranged for these to be cut back where possible.

The pigeon proofing at the tower in the Millennium Garden has been completed with new netting installed which does seem to be doing its job! The walls of the ruin are to be repaired in accordance with the advice of the Conservation Officer when the weather is warmer.

We maintain the flower tubs throughout the village and if anyone would like to sponsor the boat in the Millennium Garden, or the two tubs Station Road/Anglian Way, please let us know.

A new biodiversity policy, with action plan, has been approved and will take shape over the coming months.

Village News magazine continues to be produced on a monthly basis and delivered to all homes in the Parish. If you would like to advertise, or have any suggestions for articles, please let us know. We continue to communicate with residents via the magazine, Hopton Residents Facebook and Nextdoor. Two of the noticeboards were repaired last summer.

Thanks to our County and Borough Cllr. Carl Annison new updated flashing 20mph signs are soon to be installed outside the school on Coast Road.

Budgets are always tight. Due to increased general costs, and the diminishing funding from GYBC, the Parish Council has increased the Precept (the small part of your Council tax you pay to the Borough Council for Parish use) by £4.76 per year for a Band D property from April 2024. Other bands are proportionate.

Finally, a big thank you to all volunteers (including councillors) for donating their time and energy for the benefit of the village.

Cllr. Jan Windsor-Luck
Chairman
April 2024