

HEPWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting took place on Thursday 4th April 2019 at the village hall where the following items were discussed.

Attendees	Mr D Stannard (Chairman)	Mrs M MacPherson
	Mr G Bloomfield	Mr A Yorke (Vice Chairman)
	Mrs S Yeomans (Parish Clerk)	Mrs R Vernon
	Cllr C Bull	Mrs N Yorke
	Ms L Robinson	Mrs M Waterson
	Cllr J Spicer	Mr P Penn (Tree Warden)

Apologies None

There were 7 members of the public present

Mr Mike Wabe gave a very interesting and informative talk on The History of the Town Crier before commencement of the meeting.

1.	Welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council	Action
	Mr D Stannard, Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting	
2.	Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 5th April 2018	
	The minutes were confirmed as a true record	
3.	<p>Chairman’s Report</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked the councillors for their input over the year, and thanked Cllr Spicer and Cllr Bull for all their help and advice both to the Parish Council and individual parishioners. The Chairman also thanked the Clerk. Thanks to Perry Penn, our Tree Warden, and John Horridge who voluntarily keeps many areas of our village tidy. Thanks to our Speedwatch Team, and in particular to Richard Hinton the organiser.</p> <p>There have been a few, fairly run of the mill, planning applications. The Shepherds Grove, Stanton planning review has been discussed and feedback, based on parishioners’ comments, sent to the developers.</p> <p>The Parish Councillor have supported Perry Penn, our Tree Warden, and his tree planting scheme.</p> <p>Our Battles’ Over Event on 11 November 2018 went very well, and was well attended. The parish magazine, which was sorely missed, has been relaunched as the Hepworth Herald. Plans are in hand to re-instate the footpath on the Market Weston Road. The Parish Council are looking at ways to replace or refurbish the village sign, which is showing signs of age. Flooding problems across the road at Reeves Hall are ongoing, but as we have experienced a very dry winter no problems have yet occurred this year, but it could very well reappear next winter. A site is being sought for allotments; discussions are ongoing.</p>	
4.	<p>Hepworth Parochial Church Council</p> <p>No report was submitted</p>	
5.	<p>Report from Joanna Spicer – County Councillor</p> <p>I would like to thank David Stannard and all the Parish Councillors very much for their welcome to me at meetings. Sue Yeomans has been an excellent clerk and I thank her for keeping me in touch with issues in Hepworth. I believe that Carol Bull and I have an effective partnership covering the services provided to you here in Hepworth with the</p>	

services provided by our Councils. I welcome the new West Suffolk Council which has my full support

I want to particularly congratulate Hepworth on the excellent preparations and celebrations they arranged in November to commemorate the end of the First World War. I felt very honoured to have been invited

At the County Council I took on a new role a year ago as Chairman of the Audit Committee which has responsibility for all aspects of governance as well as financial responsibility. I also play a role in the constitutional side of the Council. I am chairman of the West Suffolk Community Safety Partnership. This involves bringing together local authorities, the Police, the NHS, Probation and the voluntary sector in establishing joint community safety plans.

In May last year the Council elected a new Leader, Matthew Hicks, who has my full support. The new Deputy is Councillor Mary Evans from Clare and I am really pleased with how she has tackled her role as Cabinet member for Highways and Transport.

Improvements are now visible. We also have a new Chief Executive, Nicola Beach, who joined us from Essex County Council.

You may have read in the press about “unitary” councils again being discussed. As with previous reviews I would very much support the principal to save money and create efficiencies – but I am not sure the time is right. But there is a review of county council division boundaries under way and I suspect my current division of 16 villages and over 8,000 people may increase.

The County Council has had to continue the relentless search for savings with the continuing cut in our grant from Government and with some reluctance we have again put up the Council tax this year. We have made more than £260 million savings since 2011 and some of the changes have been tough. This year our budget, which excludes money going direct to schools, is around £520 million

The biggest budget pressures continue to be adult care services and child protection. This represents 75% of our expenditure. It is interesting that whenever we do surveys although the people of Suffolk recognise the importance of our statutory duty to protect the vulnerable and elderly, they continue to suggest highways should be our highest priority.

Which leads me on to highways! The contract that SCC have with Keir is considered to be working better now and the programme for potholes using new technology is making progress. It is really important that the website reporting tool is used

Specifically, in Hepworth:

- I have managed to get confirmation of replacing the 40 MPH VAS on the A143 which has died.
- The biggest worry for your village this time last year was the flood across the road close to Reeves Hall. County Council engineers believe there is a broken drain pipe underneath the road. They seem slow to do the urgent investigation it needs. Meanwhile the dry winter has ensured safe passage
- Changes have been agreed to the provision of school transport. This will mean that Hepworth children will no longer get free transportation to Thurston Community College – only to Ixworth Free School. This only affects new year 7 children from this September
- Another big issue on the horizon for Hepworth is the possibility of a significant development on the Shepherds Grove Park, Stanton, involving houses and light industry and a new spine road to a roundabout on the A143. I am keeping in touch with the developers jointly with County Council officers. I have ensured that the impact on Hepworth is included in the County Council’s formal response as well as my own

	<p>Cllr Spicer presented David Stannard, the outgoing Chairman of the Parish Council, with a Long Service Certificate marking his more than 25 years on the Parish Council, 15 of which have been as Chairman. David Ray, who was a Borough Councillor for more than 10 years during David's councillorship, also thanked him for his sterling long service to the village.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Report from Carol Bull – Borough Councillor</p> <p>It doesn't seem anytime at all since the last Parish Meeting which, as I remember was a huge success. It was lovely to see the hall packed with people and I admit to being very surprised and heartened by the number and variety of organisations represented and to hear all that is going on.</p> <p>Clearly looking at the turnout tonight this does seem to be a winning format for the Annual Parish Meeting and long may it continue.</p> <p>I had a quick read through of my report to last year's meeting and also the minutes of all the parish council meetings though the year to refresh my memory on what had been happening and what has been achieved.</p> <p>I am pleased to report that we did get a waste bin installed at the layby on the B143 and also sorted out the regular collection of black rubbish bags from the layby in the village where Clare leaves them after her litter picking walks. I also managed to get the Borough to provide the black bags free of charge and I believe Clare has a good supply to keep her going for a while!</p> <p>I was also able from my Locality Budget to make contributions to the re-launch of the Hepworth Herald and the Battles Over event. Which I am told was a wonderful evening which regretfully I was not able to attend.</p> <p>I know there are a lot of other village projects being considered: setting up allotments, provision of a village noticeboard and work to update the pavilion to name but a few and I hope in the coming year to support these things in any way I can.</p> <p>May I say I have enjoyed attending Parish Council meetings and thank councillors for always making me feel very welcome. Like Joanna Spicer and David Ray I would also like to acknowledge the long service of your Chairman David and wish him all the very best in his "retirement".</p> <p>There has also been an enormous amount going on at Borough level with the coming together of St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council and as of this Monday 1 April we are now officially one council – the West Suffolk council. I am sure some of you may wonder what this all means for you as residents of west Suffolk. Although it has been a complex process the reason behind it is very simple. It is to ensure that as a council we are able to maintain our services to the community and wherever possible to improve them all this despite the huge funding cuts we experience from Government.</p> <p>At the moment we are in the build up to Local elections both for the new West Suffolk Council and Parish and Town councils. When preparing this report was going to say that I won't know until after the elections on the 2nd May whether I shall be here to serve you for a further four years but I am keeping my fingers crossed as it has been a privilege for the last four years to be involved with my local parishes and communities. However earlier this evening I was informed that I have not been contested so I am very pleased to say I shall be continuing as you ward councillor.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Report by Police</p> <p>No police representative attended and no report was submitted</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Reports from Hepworth Community Groups</p> <p>Hepworth Art – Wendy Summerell</p> <p>We are now into our 10th year. We currently have 21 members and a long waiting list of people eager to join us, so it is very popular. The standard of art work produced by our members is amazing.</p> <p>We have an outing in June to the Van Gogh exhibition in London (there are still a couple of seats available, please contact me if interested).</p>	

We are holding our Annual Art Exhibition in the Pavilion on the 5th and 6th October 2019. A selection of Art Work is on display this evening.

Hepworth Angels – Clare Jones-Davies

The Hepworth Angels (singing group) practice on a Monday evening in the Church, at the moment we are singing songs from the musicals, all good fun and very casual. We desperately need someone who can play the piano to help us start off on the right note!!! Please, if anyone can help us contact me, you would be so welcome. Clare Jones-Davies. 01359 250 660

Hepworth Speedwatch Team – Richard Hinton, Co-ordinator

I would like to thank the Speedwatch Team, we have been doing at least 1 session a month over the past year. We do still need more members so that we could do more sessions.

If you could spare 1 hour a month and would like to join our team contact me on 01359 251484 or Sue Yeomans, Clerk.

There is very little police involvement now, we do badly need some feedback from them, we regularly submit our data but never hear back. We aim to be a deterrent; we are highly visible with signage and our fluorescent jackets. Our SID (Speed Indicator Device) regularly moves about the village, maintained by David Yeomans. We recently recorded speeds of 65mph and 68mph at the A143 end of The Street, coming into the village.

Hepworth Herald – Neel Shearer

Sorry I can't be with you tonight. The Hepworth Herald is a bimonthly magazine distributed free to all the residents of Hepworth. We print 240 copies each edition, and this is funded completely by our advertisers and a grant from the Parish Council. Please support our advertisers if you can - they are supporting us! It is distributed very quickly and effectively by Pat, Chris and their team, and grateful thanks go to them for their continued backing.

We love to get contributions from residents, and over the last year, amongst other things, we have featured the continuing adventures of our Hepworth housewife, a recipe for parsnip soup, some beautiful artwork and photographs for our cover, a continuing weather almanac, speedwatch news, and a number of articles about the many events and fundraisers that happen in the village. We also publish a condensed version of the minutes of the Parish Council Meetings.

Over the next few editions, we will continue to print small biographies of the men of the village who fought and died in the Great War, over 100 years ago, and we hope to bring you news of the many events that are already highlighted in the What's On section. If anyone would like to contribute articles, recipes, artwork or anything else at all, we really would love to hear from you.

Finally, I would also like to make special thanks to David Fennell and Nicola Yorke who provided essential proofreading and accounting skills respectively, both of whom have handed on their batons in the last 12 months. If any villagers would like to contribute time to our small team, contact details can be found in every edition of the Herald.
(hepworthherald@gmail.com)

Hepworth Bee Cooperative – Geoff Beckett

We have 4 beekeepers, ours is a very loose arrangement with no regular meetings, just supporting and helping each other with David Yeomans providing advice. We are all members of the West Suffolk Bee Keepers. We are continually amazed at just how much there is to learn. Anyone interested in keeping bees please contact me on 01359 252166.

	<p>Hepworth2Enjoy – Sue Yeomans A fluid group of like-minded people who enjoy putting on fun, not for profit, social events. In 2018 we organised a Burns Night Supper, Scarecrow Competition with Cream Tea, Curry Evening and Christmas Get Together. This year so far, we have hosted a Pancake Extravaganza. Still to come we have a Cheese, Wine and Quiz Evening and a Bingo with Buffet Bash. We also help with the ever-popular St George’s Day Supper. We welcome any suggestions for events, and any offers of help – our motto is <i>‘the more the merrier’</i>.</p> <p>Hepworth Recreation Ground Committee – Dave Stannard The Pavilion is used on a regular basis by The Art Group, Martial Arts Club, Parish Council, Café Hepworth, a band for practise several evenings a month, outside football teams (who like to use our excellent pitch and facilities). It is also used for children’s parties, wedding receptions and funeral wakes.</p> <p>The accounts have not been completed for year end 31st March 2019 but a summary is as follows: -</p> <p>Income approx. £4,000 (Lettings £3,000, Lottery £1,000) Expenses £5,000 (includes grass cutting £1,000; cleaning £1,000; £500 Insurance; approx. £800 for gas; plus water, electricity and maintenance) Reserves of £27,000 due to a legacy left by a local resident.</p> <p>It is hoped to decorate and spruce up the hall over the course of next year.</p> <p>Tree Warden – Peregrine Penn I am currently working on a project to plant 13 trees for the 13 soldiers who fell in WWI, and who were honoured in our Battles Over Event in November 2018. Display boards are on show this evening.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Parishioners Comments The following ideas were collected from our ‘Post-it Suggestion Board’: - More flowers planted around the village; ‘Slow Down’ stickers for bins; Memorial Garden for war dead; A prominent notice board for advertising village events; Path ways; a Gardening Club for green fingered individuals; Litter Picking needed down Market Weston Road; with regard to Shepherds Grove Development – could we ask the developers to install Average Speed Cameras in The Street as part of the acceptance.</p> <p>Cllr A Yorke thanked David Stannard, on behalf of the parishioners, for all his work and dedication during his councillorship. David responded saying he had very much enjoyed his time with the council, he had found it no problem with good councillors and a clerk to support him.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>The meeting closed at 9.20 pm</p>	