

Parish Council News



Issue 26 - Nov 2016

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Welcome to this Autumn edition of the Creeting St Peter Newsletter.

To include articles in future issues, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Creeting St Peter Newsletter



Remembrance Sunday

Wreaths were laid at the site of the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday by Councillor Mark Valladares on behalf of the Parish Council. A wreath was also laid by the Parochial Church Council.

Poppy Collection

The village poppy collection this year equalled that of last year! So thank you to all those who kindly donated.

A message from District Councillor, Keith Welham



It is proving very difficult to find out any details of the move of the Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Council offices to Endeavour House in Ipswich. Little snippets are heard, much of what we hear is contradictory. One local Conservative councillor has said that there will be satellite offices at Eye, Needham and Stowmarket but the Leader of the Mid Suffolk Administration has said that there will be only one point of contact for residents in each district - Stowmarket and Sudbury. We have heard that it is likely that District Council and Planning Committee meetings would be held in village halls and other places. I am concerned about the logistics and cost of setting up for these meetings but there may not be suitable meeting venues available in Endeavour House.

One of the recent actions of the Conservative Administration is to do away with the cross-party Programme Steering Boards which had the potential of being a relatively informal discussion group to review progress against strategic priorities and offer advice. These have been replaced by a number of Theme Boards made up solely of Conservative members. They do not meet in public and have no press or opposition members in attendance. We have no opportunity to keep residents informed or provide any input. Opposition councillors do not oppose Conservative proposals for the sake of opposing them. We prefer to work with portfolio holders and officers to achieve what is best for the residents of Mid Suffolk, keeping you all informed and feeding back comments and suggestions. Some work may still be carried out by specific Task and Finish Groups and I am currently a member of the group to develop a Strategic Leisure Strategy. This will include indoor and outdoor sports and informal play as well as built leisure facilities.

I have mentioned in the past how user unfriendly the separate Babergh and Mid Suffolk websites have been and how difficult it is for residents and, in particular, Parish Clerks to get in touch with officers and obtain up-to-date information. I'm pleased that the two districts have launched a draft version of their new website and it can be viewed via midsuffolk.gov.uk and clicking on the 'new website' tab. Please take a look. It is due to go fully live and replace the existing separate websites at the end of 2016 or early in 2017.

There is an extreme shortage of emergency bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation in Mid Suffolk for individuals, couples or families who are made homeless for whatever reason. We have recently seen a family evicted from their rented home in Stowmarket and placed in B&B accommodation in Ipswich because there was nowhere in Mid Suffolk for them to go. As a result of questions raised at the recent District Council meeting, officers have been instructed to come up with a strategy for providing for people made homeless in our area. This is vital and urgent as we have a decreasing number of council owned properties. Benefit cuts and the introduction of Universal Credit could well result in an increasing number of families being unable to pay rent.

Devolution has not gone away; or has it? With the majority of Norfolk Councils voting against being part of a Norfolk/Suffolk devolution deal, the Government's offer could not be taken up. Mid Suffolk Council voted unanimously in favour of opening up discussions on a possible deal for just Suffolk or, perhaps, incorporating South Norfolk and Broadland Councils, both of whom are in favour of devolution. I have asked that if discussions do take place, more emphasis should be given to community benefits, rather than solely financial and business benefits. These are important but I was concerned that the previous deal did not include objectives around social care, health and wellbeing and protection of the environment.

At the November Council meeting we debated the District Council's Asset & Investment Strategy. The Council has agreed to borrow up to £25 million to invest mainly in commercial property in order to make a profit which is then used for delivering council services (so-called "profit for purpose"). The reasoning behind this is that central government is reducing the amount of grant they give councils over the next few years and councils need to fill this "funding gap" in order to keep providing the same services. Neighbouring Babergh District Council has also agreed to borrow up to £25 million giving a maximum total fund £50 million. (It should be noted that if the full £25 million loan is taken, MSDC's total borrowing will be over £100 million. This is in the context that Mid Suffolk's own annual net budget is around £10 million.) The Councils are currently working to agree what structure will manage these investments - such as a joint board or some type of holding company. Green Party councillors have expressed a concern that this takes us away from what the council's purpose is - and that, if we have the money to invest, some should be invested in providing housing to rent and to purchase in the local area. I would like to see the council buying land that has planning permission and developing it to provide the homes that our residents need. A second concern: does the council have the necessary expertise to manage a property portfolio? The council may need to involve more consultants with the potential result that decisions taken are quite removed from public accountability and transparency. Our group proposed that the majority of the funds available should be invested locally but the Conservatives, who outnumber the opposition groups, voted against. This strategy is being put in place over the next few months and, if approved, the first investments are expected in 2017. The festive season will soon be upon us; so may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous 2017.



Can we please remind people that the speed limit in the village is currently **30 mph** (soon to be 20 mph). Vehicles are reminded to observe these limits especially entering and leaving the village past the Peterhouses. Many cars are hard accelerating from the phone box, and only slowing down when reaching the phone box. Please can anyone report speeding issues with a time and registration number to the Parish Council or NCT.

Bonus Ball/Village Lottery Winning Numbers: *R indicates a Rollover
 16th Jul - 41, 23rd Jul - 25, 30th Jul - 48, 6th Aug - 8, 13th Aug - 38, 20th Aug - 17, 27th Aug - 8, 3rd Sept - 37, 10th Sept - 2, 17th Sept - 37, 24th Sept - 42, 1st Oct - 55 (R), 8th Oct - 27, 15th Oct - 53, 22nd Oct - 23 and 29th Oct - 42 Congratulations to all the winners!



Fly Tipping - There have been recent incidents of fly tipping in the local area. Could we please ask villagers to look out for this and to report any incidents to the Parish Clerk.



Fen Alder Carr Nature Reserve - Discussions are ongoing as to what is the best way forward for the Nature Reserve. Please can we remind anyone who visits the site that the Boardwalk may be slippery at this time of year so please take care when walking around the site.

Broadband

The difficulty of getting a reasonable broadband connection for many of us continues. Creeting St Peter, if you check the OpenReach "When will I get fibre?" page (<https://www.homeandwork.openreach.co.uk/when-can-i-get-fibre.aspx>), is already fibre enabled but so far from the supplying cabinet that there is no benefit! This typifies the nonsense that is the approach to connecting people to a universal fast broadband with government assured speeds.

So what can we do? There are other options:

1. Use 3G/4G. This is possible using a router with a SIM card in it. If you get 4G the speed will be good but beware the excess charges if you exceed the data allowance. It is a viable option but the excess charges come up very quickly if you are not careful.
2. Use satellite. There are a few companies offering satellite connectivity but they are relatively expensive with the most popular supplier Tooway offering a 2Gb/month service at £19.90.
3. Community Schemes. This is something that is being investigated and would deliver broadband by radio signal. The supplier is in Leiston and is making slow progress in our direction but we are speaking with them regularly.

In summary, there is a fair amount of work under way trying to get the country connected better but it is a lot slower than the politicians would have us believe. If we do nothing, our patience might be rewarded but equally if an opportunity to get consistent viable broadband to all who want it, we should take it. The community scheme option will continue to be looked at and if it becomes a real possibility soon, a round robin will be sent out for everyone to look at.

Poundfield Site, Mill Lane

Could we please remind villagers that if they see any Poundfield or EJF lorries passing through Creeting St Mary into or out of the Poundfield site to please make a note of the number plate, date and time and pass this information onto the Clerk. This information will then be passed on on a regular basis to Mr J Jardine. Thank you.



Defibrillator – The Parish

Council are currently researching the possibility of having a Community Defibrillator within the village. This piece of kit could save someone's life and it would be available for anybody to use it. Training would not be required. The old telephone box is a possible home for it, so watch this space!



The Parish Clerk and Members of the Parish Council would like to wish you all a very merry and happy Christmas!



Services - Matins becomes Morning Prayer

We are trialling changes to some of the services. The main change is to Matins. It is now Morning Prayer, a more modern non-communion service. This service is at 9.30am on 3rd Sunday of the month, which is 18th December and 15th January in the coming two months. All welcome.

Pub Night

Thank you to Russell and Sarah Stott for once again organising a very enjoyable evening. Next evening yet to be fixed so watch this space.

Christmas at Creeting St Peter

Coffee Morning

10 - 12 Saturday 10th December

*Toy and Gift Service,
Father Christmas and
Church Lights Switch-on*

5pm Sunday 11th December

4.30pm Torchlight walk from Church Hall
Tea/coffee and mince pies after the service

All gifts go to the Ipswich Refuge

Carols by Candlelight

6.30pm Saturday 24th December

Christmas Day Communion

9am Sunday 25th December

Christmas Day and New Year's Day Services

Contrary to what it says in the Grapevine, there will be a said communion service on Christmas Day at 9am at Creeting St Peter. Communion services with carols will be at Creeting St Mary 9.30am and Earl Stonham 10am. On New Year's Day, there will be a communion service at 10am at Earl Stonham, with no Together on Sunday for January at Creeting St Peter.

Coffee mornings 

Thank you to Yvette Few, Jenny Hitt and Alice Mathewson for doing the November event. Currently we have a blank for 10th December so please get in touch if you can help.

The Stowmarket Food Bank would appreciate Christmassy food donations as they try and put food hampers together for their clients.

There will be a list of next year's coffee morning dates so please sign up if you can. *Thank you*

Dates for the 2017 diary

Coffee morning - Saturday 14th January - 10-12

Church Maintenance Day - Saturday 28th January - 10am

Coffee morning - Saturday 11th February - 10-12

Ladies' Supper - Friday 24th February - 7.30pm