



Dear Residents

We hope that you have had as good a summer that you can. The challenges of COVID have been added to with fuel and power issues – not an easy time for anybody! This newsletter is a brief update on progress with our local projects and other information which may be useful.

Christmas

Yes, it is getting to that time of year when we begin to think about the Christmas festivities. We are planning to put a Christmas tree with lights on the Village Green! Many residents have in the past put up amazing light displays over the holiday period which have added to the feelgood factor in the village. So, we are going to have a local competition and award (modest) prizes for the three best displays in the parish – these will be judged between 17 – 20 December on overall impact and innovation. If you would like to be included, please let Mo (our Clerk) know before 17 December (contact details at the end of this newsletter). We hope to have an event around the tree on the green with mulled wine and mince pies one evening in the week before Christmas Day for everyone in the village when the winner will be announced! We will publish details of this and hope it will add to our enjoyment of Christmas and bring together people in the parish.

Playing Field

Following the planting of trees in February 2020, about 200 died because of the dry then hot weather so replacements were planted by volunteers earlier this year. We are trying hard to look after all the trees - all have been weeded over the last few weeks as part of the tree management plan. Earlier this year over 10000 wildflower plugs were planted by the Green Fingers Garden Club members into the long grass fringes to produce spring and summer colour and texture. A new parking area off Bridge Road has been completed using advanced recycled grass reinforcement plastic mesh and this is now open to use. In addition, the Parish Council has approved that the field will be called "Elden's Retreat" to recognise the family who gifted the land to the community.

Village Green

3 new oak trees have been planted at the north end of the green and a new privet hedge has been planted by volunteers along the east and south sides of the Bowling Green as well as crocus and daffodil bulbs around the edges of the green – these all looked very splendid in spring. More bulbs will be planted this autumn!

Telephone Kiosk

More display panels are being added, when completed we will arrange a launch event.

Village Hall

The major community initiative to repair and update the hall moves on. Volunteers and Councillors formed into Working Groups, overseen by The Parish Council and these have made enormous progress. Under the short-term plan, £15,000.00 has been committed by the Management Committee for immediate repairs – these include some roofing, electrical improvements and painting and decorating.



Under the medium-term plan, we have been working hard to submit applications for grant funding and we have had some early successes – first for wall insulation from Build Back Greener via Norfolk Community Foundation and second, for window and door replacements from North Norfolk District Council sustainable communities Fund We thank them for these awards. Another bid for a new heating system has been submitted to the Sheringham Shoal fund and we await the outcome. We are confident that the short and medium-term projects will be completed around March 2022, at which time we will be able to see the results of all the hard work. We are also working on a new website and signage for the Hall.

The long-term plan looks into 2022 and beyond, work is being proposed to plan and fund a major change to the hall - with an application to Norfolk County Council Social Infrastructure Fund. The intention is to have a good quality and self-funding community asset at the heart of The Parish. Parishioners have and will continue to be informed with public meetings and newsletters.

Community Fibre Partnership

The last newsletter explained our wish to see improvements to the speed and reliability of internet connections – and a community scheme was worked up to discuss with Openreach, the provider of broadband in our area. Subsequent discussions revealed that the Aylsham exchange which serves much of the south of our parish is due for a significant upgrade over the coming 15 months which means that our community scheme will not now attract any government funding. We will keep a watch on progress of this and meanwhile look at whether connections to the Hanworth exchange (mostly to the Colby end of the parish) can be improved any further.

Volunteers

Despite Covid, from December 2019 this community has planned and is delivering amazing projects which will go into 2022 and 2023. We estimate that about 100 people have been involved in some way so far. We need everybody's help in any way possible. Your skills and time can transform this community together.

Services

Newspapers

S&V News deliver newspapers and magazines in our parish. Stephen Easter who runs it says that numbers of users in our area are declining meaning it might be difficult to continue. If interested, call 01692 598159 or mail to Stephen.easter778@btinternet.com

Community oil purchase

Do you know about Thinking Fuel – the community oil purchasing scheme operated by Community Action Norfolk? Unlike other schemes, members place their own orders, and there are two ordering dates in the month. It's free to join, go to <https://www.communityactionnorfolk.org.uk/sites/content/thinkingfuel> for more information and the registration form.

We hope that you and your families will remain safe and well in these trying times and if you have any further questions, then please do call the Parish Clerk on 01263 732530 or e-mail clerk@colby-banningham-pc.gov.uk