

Your Councillors are:

Caroline Rebisz (Chairman), Peter Griffiths (Vice-Chairman) and Stuart Knight

All can be contacted via the **Clerk:** Mrs Melanie Eversfield
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The Council's website is:
<https://littleellinghampc.info>

The editor Melanie Eversfield, email: little.ellingham@gmail.com welcomes your comments and village news about events, etc. Please submit information for the next issue **no later than 1st April 2021**

Parish Council Website

The website <https://littleellinghampc.info> contains Minutes, Agendas, past newsletters and financial information regarding the Parish Council. It is regularly updated.

Dates for your diary

Annual Parish Meeting – Wednesday 5th May 2021 – 6.45pm, via Zoom
Parish Council Meeting - Wednesday 5th May 2021 - 7.30pm, via Zoom

Little Ellingham News

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Parish Council Meetings

The next meeting of the Council will be on **Wednesday 5th May 2021 via Zoom**, beginning at 7.30pm. Parishioners are welcome to attend all Council meetings, where they are allowed to speak, but only during the Open Forum, which is for a short time usually at the start of the meeting. Look out for the agenda displayed during the previous week.

Your Parish Council Needs You!!!



It is with regret that we sadly have a vacancy on the Parish Council, thus meaning that we are in need of a new councillor to join our team. If this is something you wish to explore please contact the Parish Clerk or the Chairman for more information.

Mud on the road in the Parish

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, we have received a number of complaints from residents around mud and stones left on the roads. The Parish Council is unable to enforce these issues but everyone can use the reporting tool on Norfolk County Council website to report issues

<https://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/HighwaysDefect/>

It is the responsibility of drivers to clear up spills or mud left on the road from their vehicles. Failure to do so is an offence under Norfolk County Council's Bylaw 27 and under the Highways Act 1980. The police also have powers regarding removal of mud from roads.

As a temporary measure, warning signs should be erected before work starts and any mud should be cleaned up at least daily.

Update on SAM2 (Speed Sign)

The Parish Council are also actively looking for a volunteer from the village who would be willing to download the data each month and concise the information into legible language. If this is something you would be interested in then please do contact the Chairman or Parish Clerk.

Little Ellingham Parochial Charity

The trustees of the Parochial Charity are looking to appoint a clerk, a part time role responsible for meeting agendas and minutes, accounting for income and expenditure, and general administration relating to the properties owned by the charity (Goose Common, the Coal House and some 24 acres of farmland) as well as its charitable objectives. A small honorarium is payable.

For further details contact either Chris Beber on 01953 452199 or Peter Griffiths on 01953 850722

Dogs in the countryside, Farmland and Little Ellingham

- Keep your dog under close control.
- You and your dog should both keep to the line of the path.
- Always carry a dog poo bag and clean up after your dog both in the countryside and on pavements. Fouling is illegal, including in the Churchyard and the Common!
- Please keep your dog on a lead when livestock are in fields.



Kerry Foods Complaints Process

It is important that any parishioners who experience an issue with the Kerry Foods operation, report their concerns on the phone number previously communicated (01953 852600).

These complaints are logged by Kerry Foods and reviewed by Breckland Council to understand the impact on our local community. It also ensures that Kerry Foods and your Parish Council can address the issues which are important to our parishioners.

We know that some parishioners also email Tom Connell at Kerry Foods with issues and this route can also be used to log any concerns. Tom Connell has recently retired and therefore you can now email Paul Dauny at Paul.Dauny@kerryfoods.co.uk

To ensure the Parish Council has full visibility of concerns raised, we would ask that you email a brief summary of the issue to the Parish Clerk or Chairman on the following email addresses. We are keeping a record of all complaints which we will use to discuss and follow up actions with both Kerry Foods and Breckland Council.

Parish Clerk – little.ellingham@gmail.com

Chairman – crebisz7@googlemail.com

Highlights from the Parish Council Meetings

As you will be aware the Parish Council has been unable to meet physically at the Village Hall since March 2020, due to the current pandemic. Therefore, it has been meeting virtually via Zoom since July 2020. Below is a highlight of what was discussed at each virtual meeting for those that cannot access the minutes on our website. Of course, the full set of minutes are on our website if you wish to read them in full.

July 2020

The main focus of the meeting was signing off the 2019/2020 annual accounts for the Parish Council. The Internal Auditors report had also been received which showed, yet again, another clean bill of health.

The Parish Council became aware of the website accessibility regulations that came into force in September 2019 and noted that all existing websites were required to be compliant by September 2020. It therefore, commissioned Steve Jackman, who assisted the Council in originally building the website, to test the website and put right all the wrongs. We can now proudly say that our website is accessible to all.

During the first lockdown the Parish Council put together the Covid-19 support group and managed to secure £1,000 grant funding from Norfolk Community Foundation to assist us in our endeavours. It was reported at the meeting that 10 people had put their names forward to volunteer and assist the community. A number of prescriptions had been sorted for residents who were shielding and food parcels from Kerry Food's had been greatly received.

Various items such as litter on the verges, overgrown verges and broken road signs were also discussed and reported to the relevant authorities.

It was noted that the Kerry Food's Community Liaison Panel had been cancelled due to the pandemic.

Finally, the sad resignation of Sarah Drewery was received.

September 2020

The Parish Council agreed to purchase a defibrillator for the Parish and it was ordered and placed on the outside of the Village Hall. Once Covid-19 permits, training on the use of the defibrillator will be offered to parishioners and we already have a waiting list.

The SAM2 was finally back from the suppliers after being fixed and the Parish Council were pleased to report that it was back in situ and obtaining vital data.

The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk should work towards the Foundation and Quality Award of the Local Council Award Scheme. This scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed by their peers, and to put into place the conditions for continued improvement. The Foundation and Quality Award demonstrates that the council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.

There was a lot of discussion surrounding the implementation of the 7.5 tonne weight limit within the village. It was agreed that a discussion with both Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Constabulary would take place to ascertain a greater understanding.

Various items such as blocked drains, tree branches hanging on telephone lines and litter in the Parish were discussed and reported to the relevant authorities.

It was noted that there was an odour coming from Kerry Food's and the Chairman passed this comment onto them.

District Councillor Sarah Suggitt and County Councillor Ed Connolly also attended the meeting and gave brief updates as to what was happening at both Breckland Council and Norfolk County Council.

November 2020

Sadly, Simon Atherton resigned as Parish Councillor leaving the Parish Council with two vacancies. A lengthy discussion took place on how we could recruit new candidates onto the council.

It was agreed to cancel the litter pick planned for later on in the month due to the current pandemic.

The latest SAM2 data was distributed and this was also placed in the December newsletter for all to see.

Conflicting information and advice had been received from Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Constabulary in relation to the implementation of the 7.5 tonne weight limit in the Parish. It was agreed to hold this item in abeyance for now until further clarity could be sought.

The Parish Council agreed to submit a bid to the Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Bid for 2021/2022 to purchase and erect a village gateway on the Attleborough Road. We should hear the outcome of this bid in March 2021. The Parish Council's reasoning behind only one village gateway at present was to have a phased approach to the project as a whole and this location would be phase 1.

Following a spate of complaints from residents regarding dog waste in the Parish, the council agreed to look into the possibility of further dog waste bins within the Parish. As Breckland Council will not take responsibility for any new waste bins it would fall to the Parish Council to provide and install the dog waste bins and also pay Breckland Council to have the bins emptied. It was agreed in principle to purchase two bins and have them located under the noticeboard in Anchor Corner and at the entrance to Goose Common. Permission to install one at the entrance to Goose Common is being sought from the Parochial Charity and the council have also asked the Charity if they would like to contribute towards the costs. Once permission has been sought the Parish Council can go ahead with ordering the bins. It is hoped that this will alleviate the complaints we received regarding dog waste.

January 2021

The main crux of the meeting was in relation to the budget and precept for 2021/2022. The Council agreed a precept of £4,500.00 for the year thus meaning that it has been increased by £100.00. For a band D property this would equate to an increase of £0.66 per annum for the Parish Council's part of your council tax.

With regard to the 7.5 tonne weight limit the Parish Council were pleased to report that some clarity from Norfolk County Council Highways had been sought in relation to locality issues.

It was noted that there was some fly tipping on the Scoulton Road and that this had been reported to Breckland Council.

It was noted that there was a lot of non-perishable food and toiletry items still in the Village Hall. This is to be highlighted within the Parish to see if anyone needs some of it.

It was noted that the lighting and noise at Kerry Food's was causing some nuisance and pollution. The Chairman to bring this up with Kerry Foods.

It was also noted that someone was sleeping in their car on a regular basis within the Parish. This is to be investigated further.

A lengthy discussion took place in relation to stormwater damage in the Parish. All authorities are on the case and trying to resolve the issues being experienced.

The footpaths in the Parish were discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk report to Highways and let the resident concerned know what action has been taken.

It was noted that some of the ditches on the Ellingham and Hingham Road have been dug out but still needs work. It was agreed that the Clerk to investigate further and contact Hingham Parish Council as it is in their parish.

March 2021

The main item on the agenda was to consider an application from a resident who wished to join the Parish Council. Councillors are pleased to confirm that Carol Ann Warwick was unanimously co-opted onto Little Ellingham Parish Council.

Main areas of discussion surrounded items that only Norfolk County Council Highways can deal with such as ensuring public footpaths are kept open for the general public to use, and various overgrown hedges including hedging that has been disposed of. The Clerk will be reporting all of this to NCC Highways.

District Councillor Sarah Suggitt attended the meeting and gave a brief report as to what is happening at Breckland. Details of her report can be found in this newsletter.

It was noted that a meeting with Kerry Food's earlier on in the meeting had been cancelled by Kerry Food's at the last minute and therefore the Chairman had emailed them some of our concerns in relation to litter and traffic management.

It was noted that once the area is dry enough Gressingham Foods will be making an effort to tidy up and reinstate verges outside of their property.

The Parish Council agreed to purchase a yearly subscription to Zoom as although legislation to allow online meetings is only valid until 7th May 2021, it is believed that due to the continued lockdown this legislation will be extended.

Please note that the subscription to Zoom is shared between three parish councils of which the Clerk works for.

Bottle Bank in Village Hall Car Park

The Village Hall Committee would like to remind residents that there is a bottle bank in the village hall car park for everybody's use. The Village Hall receives a payment for this, so please support your local village hall by using the bottle bank and help raise much needed funds.

Goose Common

The Parochial Charity is pleased to report that it has negotiated with Natural England and the Rural Payments Agency a new 10-year Countryside Stewardship management agreement covering Goose Common, the objectives of which include ensuring the scrub and woodland areas are enhanced and maintained, the areas of acid grassland are grazed by cattle, the range of plant species is protected and improved, and the gorse is controlled. In addition to an annual payment, the charity will be able to draw down funds to help with tree surgery, especially those trees overhanging the public footpath, to facilitate pond management and also to provide bird and wildlife boxes.

The overall aim is to enhance the common, a county wildlife site, as a reservoir for nesting birds, plants and animals.

Once the current lockdown restrictions are lifted, there will be discussions with Natural England and the Norfolk Wildlife Trust in order to agree a work programme.

Rix Petroleum

The Parish Council would like to inform you that it receives money each year from Rix Petroleum to put back into the Parish. This year it received around £230.00. The Parish Council are therefore looking at purchasing a dog waste bin to install in the parish.

The more people from the parish that buy their fuel from Rix Petroleum the more money the Parish Council will receive annually so that it can be put back into the community.

Report of Sarah Suggitt, Breckland District Councillor

Little Ellingham Village Hall

In recent months, damp patches and evidence of water penetration have been increasingly apparent in parts of the village hall. In order to identify the cause of these problems, a survey of the hall was commissioned in January. This has highlighted four principal areas of concern:

- On the roof, failure of the seals between the ridge capping and the metal sheeting
- Where water pools on the floor near the fire exits, the doors don't fit against the draught seals and the frames are ill fitting
- Where dampness in the south east corner of the hall is getting progressively worse, the damp proof membrane between the external brickwork and the coping stones has either failed or wasn't laid correctly; there has also been erosion of the mortar joints
- On the front elevation where the brickwork is spalling and is friable, the design of the coping is such that rainwater runs down the face of the wall rather than being shed away from it.

Obviously, it is important for the village to keep this important asset in good repair, and so surveyors have been instructed to prepare a specification and go out to tender. Subject to the availability of finance, and it may be necessary to apply for grants, it is hoped the repairs can be put in hand later this year.

At the council we continue to fulfil our democratic responsibility and are still carrying out our official council meetings by zoom! At the full council meeting held on 25th February, we approved our sustainability strategy, budget for the upcoming year, our medium-term capital strategy and agreed to separate from a 10-year partnership with South Holland Council.

The sustainability strategy includes releasing £525,000 from our inclusive growth reserve to fund a series of works to tackle our declaration of a climate emergency which includes – Trees and rewilding planting schemes, additional electric vehicle charging points and the creation of a green grants scheme to name but a few.

We are continuing to work with partners to enable our residents and businesses to thrive. We have been able to hand out £40m in grants and around £2m to over 1000 businesses across the district from our discretionary fund.

We've been able to offer assistance to residents with food delivery slots and provided £60k in support for food hardship across the district. This includes supporting the first community supermarket to open its doors in Thetford and enabling Dereham foodbank to move to larger premises.

There will be extra support for the youngsters of our communities by the way of employability workshops. These will be launched under the Young Carers arm of our vulnerability programme which was launched in 2019 with £1M allocated to help the most vulnerable members of our communities.

We are just a short distance away from the start of our new waste contract going live. This is a really good example of collaborative working. With our partners at Kings Lynn and North Norfolk we have secured a waste contract showing significant savings and are awaiting a new fleet of waste vehicles to arrive any day.

We have also had confirmation that the local elections will be going ahead in May. This is where residents can have their say on who they wish to have as their Norfolk County Councillor and Police and Crime Commissioner. You can choose to vote in person, by post or by proxy.

For more information on any of the above please visit our website www.breckland.gov.uk or me directly sarah.suggitt@breckland.gov.uk