

Community Connection, 11 November, 2017.

I hope you're all enjoying the 'not bad' Autumn weather, and the last displays of the wonderful colours of the countryside. The dark evenings are well established, but there is plenty to do. Last Monday (6 Nov) we had our monthly Parish Council meeting. This one was 'special' as we welcomed two guest organisations: Neighbourhood Watch and Anglian Water, who took part in an open session. The local community had a large representation as well.

Following the usual brief formalities, we heard from our County Councillor, Beverly Spratt. His tidings were not necessarily what we wanted to hear: Beverly believes the 'Harvest House' development will proceed as planned (planned?)....and that there could be a future rise in Council Tax. Barry Stone, our District Council Member, tendered his apologies: constrained to be a somewhat serial event, but he does produce a comprehensive regular news-sheet.

Moving into the open session, we first heard from Alan Kennison, Vice-Chairman of Norfolk Neighbourhood Watch. Alan explained that this scheme is no longer a Home Office adjunct, but is now an entity in its own right. Council Member John Phillips had already reported back to the meeting on the police briefing he had attended – a recent apparent rise in crime against property was likely to coincide with police attention being more focussed on 'serious' crime (cyber, child abuse for example) – so it is obvious that we will need to do more ourselves to prevent crime locally. Neighbourhood Watch presents one such process, and your Parish Council will seriously consider joining this organisation as an entity – we will need your support, but the benefits are clearly visible! (There will be more to come on this on our Website.)

Alan Boulter and Kevin (Anglian Water) then spoke about the water main works our villages will experience in the next few months. These will be in the Wood Lane, Nordle Corner, Algar Road, Stone Lane (Fersfield) and Fersfield Road, High Road (Bressingham) areas. The period of disruption is suggested as lasting from November until March.....There will be road closures of course – please be careful not to infringe these closure orders (there is a possible fine)! Open discussion centred on the unreliable main supply (4? Recent bursts & water stoppages) in the Heath Road area of Kenninghall – on the water-tower side of the forthcoming works. Concern was expressed at the earlier-than-anticipated work at the Bressingham School Rd./High Rd. junction, and a worrying mess at the adjacent War Memorial. Issues were raised also about compliance with road closure at Wood Lane – are road users able to remove barriers to the side of the road at will (!) and is the road open if this happens? Alan apologised for some local difficulty at Wood Lane, and hoped such confusion would not be repeated. He emphasised the need for clear communication, and will be working with our Clerk and Website to make sure there is maximum co-operation. He recognised that we would be monitoring and reporting on progress, and that our previous experience of utilities disrupting our roads had not been encouraging! (Please refer to the website for future details).

The rest of our meeting was shortened, and included two standard planning issues, a very satisfactory financial statement, the retention of our monthly meeting arrangements and the Pillar Box Corner sign (does anyone have any views, as already requested?) Our next meeting will be on 4 December.

Other matters we have been concerned with recently are the on-going issue of dangerously muddy roads – please report any examples you encounter – and the continued improvement and health of our allotments. We have also had reports (and experience!) of thefts of heating-oil in our villages. Please make things as difficult as possible for any would-be thieves and report anything suspicious – especially cars and vans which appear to contain a collection of jerry-cans!

Parish Council Members will be laying wreaths at the Bressingham (11.55am) and Fersfield (3pm) Remembrance Services this Sunday (12 November). We very much hope members of the community will take part.