

Community Connection - 4 May, 2019

Richard Hewitt, outgoing Chairman of Bressingham and Fersfield Parish Council, writes:

On Monday 13 May we shall have our Parish Council AGM at 7.15 in Fersfield Church. At this meeting, we will be electing our new Chair. I shan't be standing for this office this time, as I genuinely think it's time we had a change. I will remain on the Parish council for another year to help with continuity as much as I can.

The recent rationalisation of parish council membership has meant that we have been reduced to a maximum of seven members – so far we have filled five of these places. If anyone is thinking of the possibility of becoming a member, please do make yourself known. I am well aware that to many people the Parish Council does not seem to do much. So be it.....we have actual direct statutory responsibility for relatively few areas, especially as our parishes have no street lighting, public toilets and council-owned cemeteries. However, we do have a big role to play in 'encouraging' other agencies to do their job properly, and we do have limited funds to apply to the benefit of our communities: two examples of this could be to help maintain the Village Hall, our two burial grounds – to say nothing of the litter bins and signage in such places as the lay-bys on the A 1066.

If I have three wishes for the future of the Parish Council's future effectiveness as a community asset, near the top of my list would be: that the 'senior' councils listen more attentively to the views of the people from the locality in question (e.g District Council planners); that we are better informed and not left trying to explain in intelligible language the largely inexplicable (e.g the Greater Norwich Plan) and that many people are able to feel more strongly than they do at present that they get some increased value from their Council Tax! (I know there are many hidden commitments here, but the District Council's defences against 'just getting the bins emptied' need more convincing substance.)

I thank everyone for their support, especially those who devote time and energy to our allotments, our litter problem and the more positive activities like the Armistice Centenary Celebrations – and much more, and end by asking you all to take an even greater interest in local matters, and not always when something unpopular is on the horizon, AND please do read the information the PC puts out on the Website, in 'Cockcrow', on posters and on the three notice-boards.

My thanks and best wishes to you all,

Richard.