



Great Bricett Annual Parish Meeting

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Village Hall on Tuesday, 14th May 2024 at 7pm

PRESENT: Cllr S Burnett (PC), Cllr A Autcherlonie (PC), Cllr M Parnell (PC, Cllr L Jefferson (PC, A Shawe-Taylor (PCC)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs J Blackburn (Clerk), County Cllr Kay Oakes and District Cllr Dan Pratt.

GB01/24/25 - CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman of Great Bricett, Cllr Sue Burnett, welcomed those present.

GB02/24/25 - APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr Morley, Cllr Walsh, Martin Kinsey (Wattisham) and Mr Gough (Ringshall Primary School).

GM03/24/25 - MINUTES 9th MAY 2023

The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting, held on 9th May 2023, were approved as a true record and were duly signed by the Chair.

GB04/24/25 - REPORTS RELATING TO THE PARISH

Representatives of the following organisations were invited to speak and answer any questions. Where received, their reports are attached to the Minutes.

- a) **Great Bricett Parish Council** – *Cllr Sue Burnett*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Burnett's report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Cllr Burnett briefly went through her report.

- b) **Suffolk County Council** – *Cllr Kay Oakes*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Oakes' report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- c) **Mid-Suffolk District Council** – *Cllr Daniel Pratt*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Pratts' report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- d) **Village Hall Management Committee** – *Judy Walsh*
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Walsh was not present at the meeting and a report had not been received.

- e) **Parochial Church Council (PCC) – Arland Shawe-Taylor**
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Arland's report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

He briefly went through his report. He added that works to the church wall had commenced and following receipt of letters of support grants had been awarded for which he wished to thank the Parish Council. He confirmed that the church would be back in operation in approximately six weeks.

- f) **Tree Warden / Community Woodland – Cllr Sue Burnett**
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Burnett's report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Cllr Burnett briefly went through her report.

- g) **Ringshall Primary School – Mr Gough**
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Mr Gough was not present at the meeting. His report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

- h) **Community Speed Watch – Cllr Sue Burnett**
(Full report attached to these Minutes)

Cllr Burnett's report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Cllr Burnett briefly went through her report.

- i) **Wattisham Airfield – Martin Kinsey**

Martin Kinsey was not present at the meeting. His report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

GB05/24/25 - PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were present.

The meeting closed at 7.18pm.

Chairman Date

Chairmans Report

2023-2024

We had hopes that the Red Lion would be in operation by March this year but alas progress is very slow – we understand that the current owners are being difficult with the lady who wishes to purchase it. The Heritage and listed building department are monitoring the building.

There is a new project available to smaller Parishes – the People and Places Plan, we are currently considering this for our village.

The winter 23-24 has caused serious flooding in the village and we have had to approach the local land owner and farmer to clear the ditches. The local roads into Needham Market were severely flooded – many thanks go to Kay Oakes, our County Councillor for her sterling work in trying to get the problems sorted as soon as possible.

We have received a considerable amount of money from the Community Infrastructure Levy, and thanks to Jennie we now know which building projects generate this money and when it is due to us. We have yet to find a suitable project to use this money for the benefit of the village.

We have requested new repeater 30 signs for the village, these will be installed as and when the Highways Team are available.

Business Park. This month April we have noticed considerable activity in the Business Park, new drainage and electrical supply – also kerbs painted white!! No-one seems to have much idea about what is planned for this area, although a number of people have enquired.

Many thanks go to Arland Shawe-Taylor for moving the Speed Indicator Device (SID) for us – making sure that no-one gets too familiar with its position. Jennie has given us the data for understanding the number of cars that have been speeding.

April 2023

99% of pupils receive a preferred primary school place on National Offer Day

99.18% of children were offered a place on National Offer Day at one of their three preferred primary schools and 95.78% were offered a place at their first preference school.

Suffolk County Council received 7,056 applications from parents and carers indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to join in September 2023.

May 2023

Library services protected as Suffolk County Council approves additional funding

Suffolk County Council has underlined its commitment to library services in Suffolk, as it approved plans to increase its funding to Suffolk Libraries, to enable the service to continue operating at its current level, until the end of the contract in July 2024.

Suffolk Libraries currently receives £5.9m per year from Suffolk County Council, however the service is forecasting a deficit of £60k per month from April 2023. The service has cited increases in service costs, a reduction in income opportunities following the Coronavirus Pandemic and rising inflation, as causes of the deficit.

June 2023

Suffolk Fire Service to bring control room back to the County

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has announced plans to create a new fire control centre here in Suffolk.

Since October 2011, Suffolk has shared a control room with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire and Rescue Service in Huntingdon. The joint project has worked well, saving both fire services money and enabling greater cross-border resource sharing.

However, the company behind a project to deliver a new IT system, initiated in 2019, has run into technical and financial problems, causing a significant delay. This, in addition to advancements in technology, has led to the decision to bring fire control back into the county by the end of 2024.

July 2023

Councils set out concerns as public consultation opens for Norwich to Tilbury proposals

National Grid has opened its consultation to anyone wishing to comment on its Norwich to Tilbury proposal, previously known as East Anglia Green. This is an eight-week non-statutory consultation period which closes on 21 August 2023.

The project will see a new 400kV electricity transmission line built between Norwich and Tilbury, running 111 miles. It will be made up mostly of overhead lines and pylons, along with some underground cables and a new substation.

The new consultation reveals the route for the pylons, passing through Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. It shows the line will run underground through the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the Essex-Suffolk border.

August 2023

Council fears new energy proposals will harm Suffolk's coastline

Suffolk County Council is disappointed to learn that the LionLink interconnector project from National Grid Ventures has identified an alternative landfall at Walberswick, with cable routing making its way to the north of Southwold.

The Council will study the details of the new proposals, and will prepare its response to the National Grid's second public consultation, which opens on 8 September.

The non-statutory consultation on [National Grid Venture's LionLink project](#) will commence on the 8 September 2023, and will remain open until 3 November 2023.

September 2023

Councils unite against National Grid pylon proposals

In a [joint letter to National Grid](#), the leaders of the three councils address the extensive impact on landscapes and local communities that the scheme would bring.

They also highlight that an offshore solution has not been sufficiently investigated, and the opportunities that this could bring to co-ordinate with other large-scale energy projects off the region's coast.

The Norwich to Tilbury project would see 114 miles of electricity pylons weave their way through the three counties. Only a small percentage of this cabling would go underground, an issue which the councils also raise, stating that more would be needed particularly in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and near Diss and the Waveney Valley.

October 2023

New highways services arrive in Suffolk as multi-million-pound partnership goes live

The new contract, which is worth in the region of £800 million - £1 billion, will deliver highway projects and improvements across Suffolk for up to 20 years, including maintaining roads, pavements and rights of way, improving drainage, hedge trimming, construction of new road schemes, snow-clearing and gritting and much more.

Milestone Infrastructure, part of M Group Services, was awarded Suffolk's new highways services contract back in February and since then has been working with Suffolk County Council to mobilise the new contract ahead of it commencing on 1 October.

November 2023

Cabinet approved £10 million new funding to resurface residential roads

At Suffolk County Council's Cabinet meeting (7th November), Cabinet approved an extra £10 million to repair and resurface local roads in villages and residential areas across Suffolk.

The funding will nearly double Suffolk Highways' £11 million annual road maintenance budget but be targeted at smaller residential streets which are typically maintained less frequently than busier A and B roads.

December 2023

More public money for adult and children's care, but difficult decisions are needed to balance the books

In the next two years, Suffolk County Council needs to pump almost £74 million extra into protecting the county's most vulnerable residents.

- £74 million extra needed to protect the most vulnerable over two years
- £64.7 million savings to be made over two years
- Council set to reduce workforce, services and use savings

As part of financial plans to prioritise those in greatest need, an additional £42.7 million for children's services and £29.9 million for adult care are being proposed.

Along with local authorities up and down the country, the council has been hit hard by inflation and rising demand for services such as children's care, special educational needs and disabilities and home to school transport. It means having to make difficult decisions about the services it provides, including £64.7 million of savings in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

January 2024

Council to propose new funding for arts & heritage in Suffolk

Suffolk County Council is today (26th January) announcing its intention to create a new funding pot open to all arts and heritage organisations in the county.

- Core funding for nine arts and heritage organisations still to cease after 2024/25
- New £500,000 funding pot proposed from 2025/26, open to all arts and heritage organisations in Suffolk
- Proposal to be tabled at Cabinet meeting on 30 January

Following this week's announcement from government that £600 million of further funding will be available to local councils, the council intends to propose a new £500,000 project fund to which all Suffolk's arts and heritage organisations can apply.

February 2024

Public consultation on Suffolk County Council's proposed devolution deal starts on 18th March

A 10-week public consultation on our proposed devolution deal with the Government will start on 18th March and run through until 26th May. The consultation will be in two main parts – an open survey, hosted by Suffolk County Council, that any residents can complete and a sample survey of 1000 Suffolk residents conducted independently by Ipsos Mori. The consultation will be available through our website www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution and social media. There will also be media coverage highlighting the consultation.

March 2024

Funding boost for new and existing bus services across Suffolk

Suffolk County Council is to spend £3.6 million of Government funding over the next two years on strengthening and expanding Suffolk's bus network.

The council has been awarded £1.8 million per year for two years – a total of £3.6 million – from the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Fund Phase 2 (BSIP 2, renamed from BSIP+) to deliver improvements to public transport in Suffolk.

April 2024

Over 400 Suffolk roads set for upgrade as largest ever surfacing project gets underway

Residents across Suffolk are set to benefit from 421 newly surfaced roads this year - almost doubling the number of roads completed last year, as Suffolk Highways' largest ever resurfacing programmes get underway.

With the start of the surface dressing programme beginning this week, 102 roads will be surface dressed, whilst a further 319 sites will benefit from a full machine resurfacing during the year.

DRAFT

Mid Suffolk District Councillors' Annual Report (2023/24)

New administration

The result of the May 2023 elections was that the 24 elected Green Party councillors officially became the administration at Mid Suffolk. Councillor Andy Mellen, as Leader outlined our initial priorities to lead and work with other bodies to address the challenges faced by our communities: cost of living, affordable homes, local services, public transport and climate change. A Plan for the next three years was agreed which placed environmental and social responsibilities at the heart of everything the MSDC does.

Budget

- For 2023/24 the General Fund budget was for approximately £15.5 million with an expected £2.3 million surplus which will go into reserves. Funds have also had to be provided from the Housing Revenue Account for the backlog of repairs that has built up.
- For 2024/25, net expenditure on services is budgeted at £18.5 million with a 2% increase in council tax. Council home rents increased by 7% and sheltered housing service charges also increased. These increases will ensure the Council can afford the repairs and maintenance that are needed. All these increases are due to inflation, costs of energy and other cost increases.
- The Council has reserves of over £28 million at the end of the financial year plus an expected dividend from the Gateway 14 business park. Some of these surpluses will be invested in a variety of work including new footpaths and cycle paths, land for biodiversity and green spaces, regeneration of Stowmarket town centre, improved sports provision in the district and enabling community-led housing.
- Approval was also given to increasing council tax on empty homes in 2024/25 and implementing increased council tax on second homes in 2025/26.

Thriving towns and villages

- A group of Councillors have been working on issues around sustainable transport. A new rural transport grants scheme with a pot of £600,000 was set up to help provide passenger transport options across the district including villages in the Battsford and Ringshall ward.
- Approval was gained for the financing of a Green Skills and Innovation Centre on Gateway 14. This will in part act as a centre of excellence for local businesses and a training site for adults needing to update or gain new skills.
- On the Gateway 14 site, The Range is due to move into the largest building on site. Additionally, a deal with a company specialising in supplying sustainable roof products was agreed.
- In Stowmarket, the first part of the SHELF sports project was approved and work will commence this year for new pitches, an athletics track and other improvements at Chilton Fields and next to the high school.
- In conjunction with Suffolk County Council, Mid Suffolk provided much support to residents and businesses affected by the floods of Storm Babet and Storm Ciaran.

- The councils of Mid Suffolk and Babergh were jointly awarded 'Council of the Year' for their collaboration with different partners, working to improve services and focus on communities.

Environmental sustainability

- The Council launched the *Cosy Homes* scheme, a £2 million project to insulate homes for free. Separately a grant of nearly £1 million was received for retrofitting council homes.
- A new *Pride in your Place* grant was established to provide every parish with additional funds to improve the environment for their community.
- The Council continues to encourage local groups to improve areas for wildlife and a call for sites from landowners was made so that more trees can be planted across the district. The annual Tree for Life scheme was again a success and tree, hedging and wildflower packs for communities across the district.
- The Council published its Carbon Reduction Management Plan with a focus for this year on improving sheltered housing and further work on the leisure centres.

Planning and Housing

- In November 2023, Part 1 of the Joint Local Plan (JLP) for Mid Suffolk and Babergh was approved and adopted. The JLP sets out a planning framework to guide development in the districts over the period to 2037. The JLP Part 1 provides a set of strategic and local development management policies against which planning applications and appeals will be assessed. There are 10 strategic policies (such as on affordable housing, climate change and tourism) and 32 local policies (such as on biodiversity, the historic environment, and sustainable construction).
- The Council is continuing to work on Part 2 as well as publishing Supplementary Planning Documents to support the JLP. The first three, currently at draft stage, are the Housing SPD, Biodiversity and Trees SPD and the Intensive Livestock and Poultry SPD.
- Over £1.5 million was provided to parish and town councils in the form of the Community Infrastructure Levy during the year.
- Within our ward, a proposal for 20 new light and general industrial buildings and office units in Charles Tye, Ringshall, was recently refused by planning committee on the basis of the rural location of the site and poor transport links.

Supporting the community

- Almost £550,000 was allocated by Mid Suffolk District Council Direct to communities across the district from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- Battisford Village Hall benefited from the Capital Grant and S106 funding from our Communities Team, funding new insulation scheme that will reduce carbon emissions by 1.8 tonnes CO₂e per year.
- I supported the following projects in Battisford and Ringshall ward from my Locality Budget 2023-24:
 - Battisford Village Hall – funding towards insulation upgrades
 - Great Bricett Parish Council – safety lighting for telephone box and defibrillator

- Offton and Willisham Village Hall – funding for replacement of fire doors
- Battisford Punchbowl CIC – funding for new garden fence
- Suffolk Wildlife Action Group – funding for new mapping and wildlife tracking equipment
- Orchard Barn CIC – funding towards fitting new external doors in new education building

Mid Suffolk District Council information is available via www.midsuffolk.gov.uk or by phone **0300 123 4000**

The end of term report can be found here: <https://bmsdchosting.net/End-of-Term-Report/Mid-Suffolk-District-Council-2019-2022/>

I would like to thank the Parish Council for all their work done throughout the year.

Dr Dan Pratt

Ward Member for Battisford and Ringshall

Mid Suffolk District Council

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Telephone: 07775389193

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT - May 2024

May I as always record the thanks from the PCC for the continued support from the Parish Council with churchyard mowing and for providing the illumination of the South side of church during the winter months. With the support of Kate & Phil Hatch we were again able to illuminate the North side of the church this year. We remain grateful to The Hall Farm for providing additional parking space for special occasions and services.

During the year the PCC has been successful in securing a grant of £30,620 from the Valencia Communities Fund towards the cost of replacing the unsightly cement render around the lower sections of the inner walls with breathable lime render [this is a 'landfill grant' available as we are within 10 miles of Masons landfill site in Claydon]. With an additional £3,000 grant from Suffolk Historic Churches Trust plus a predicted £5,000 balance from PCC funds this work is currently under way.

As part of this repair and redecoration a structural engineering investigation is being done into new concerns about the reopening of cracks in the SE corner since the 2019 roof works as well as into the apparent movement of the porch. The outcome of this will enable the cost of remedying these problems to be identified.

As a reminder we are one of eight churches under the care of Rev Dan Harrison and we continue to have our regular monthly service of communion on the 3rd Sunday (currently in the Village Hall during the church repair works).

Arland Shawe-Taylor
Churchwarden

Tree Warden/Community Woodland

In the last PC meeting I suggested that we combine these two items as the village does not have many trees that require the attention of a Tree Warden. I am still part of the Suffolk Tree Warden WhatsApp group. This Group has many interesting items on the Group including advice, tree nursery exchanges and information about such subjects grafting and tree diseases.

The Community Woodland is progressing well, we had two oak trees that succumbed to the dry summer, but Swann Nurseries were kind enough to replace these. I went to fetch them from the Nursery and purchased another tree for a person in the village, this time a Lime Tree. The PC agreed that I could purchase 12 fruit trees, a selection including Apple, Pear, Cherry and Plum. These trees and the new oaks were planted for us by NSK who look after the grass for us.

The pond had a good year with a hose connected to the water butts keeping it topped up. We have noticed newts in the pond also many dragonflies and other water insects. Swallows have also been seen swooping down for a drink.

A family, who have now left the village, asked if they could move a tree from their garden to the Woodland as they had planted in memory of their dog who loved the area. So that tree a flowering cherry has joined the other trees.

Written by James Gough, Headteacher - Ringshall Primary School

This report will give an overview of the current learning provision and plans in place at Ringshall Primary School. It will also summarise the outcome of the OFSTED visit that took place in December 2023.

OFSTED outcome - Ringshall School remain a Good School

At the end of the Autumn term we had an inspection visit from OFSTED. The outcome of this visit was incredibly positive. The school's high learning outcomes were acknowledged and the rigour and effectiveness of our curriculum was praised. Below are a few quotes from the report. The full report is available on our website.

December 2023 OFSTED report - Ringshall School - Quotes from the report:

- Pupils are happy and proud to attend this school.
- Pupils strive to embody the 'Ringshall Circle,' which focuses on pupils learning to be awesome, be kind and to believe in themselves.
- The curriculum promotes academic success. Pupils also seem to have a lot of fun in the process.
- Pupils listen to teachers and work hard in lessons. Helped by their positive attitudes, pupils progress well through the curriculum.
- Pupils respond positively to the high expectations of behaviour.
- Pupils feel safe at school.
- The school has created an ambitious curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported.
- The development of reading is a priority and a strength of the school.
- There is a broad programme to support pupils' personal development.
- Pupils know discrimination is not tolerated and learn to celebrate cultural differences.

Learning outcomes - SATs 2023

Our current Key Stage 2 SATS data from June 2023 shows that not only was attainment well above national average in all subject areas, our children's progress data from starting points was also significantly above the national average. Year 6 progress results show Ringshall in the top 5% of all schools in the country for reading progress. We were in the top 25% for Maths progress and the top 40% for Writing progress. Well above the national average in all areas. We also had the best results in all subjects of any school in our Trust of 14 schools.

The year so far - a commentary

September started with a 'learning to learn' week, then all preceding terms and half terms commenced with a single 'learning to learn' day. These 'learning to learn days' focus on reviewing our core values and curriculum drivers, working on mindset and behaviour expectations and teaching the children wellbeing and self regulation skills. Children also have an e-safety lesson and a wellbeing lesson in each of the 6 learning to learn sessions that span the year.

September also saw the launch of MyHappyMind in school. This is a wellbeing and mental health whole school intervention, which takes the form of weekly 20 minute sessions. It is NHS backed and teaches the children about how their brain works and what they can do to help themselves to self regulate - included is journaling, songs, quizzes, happy breathing etc... The lesson takes place on a Monday and so fits perfectly into our Mindful Monday mental health focus day. Along with our entire approach to pupil

mental health and wellbeing, MyHappyMind was praised during the OFSTED visit. As a result of its success, we are renewing it again for next year.

September saw the closure of a class, due to our reduced role size. Year 1 and 2 merged into one class and so did year 5 and 6. All other classes remain single year group classes. Ringshall now has five classes as opposed to six. We did have some teething problems with our year 1 and 2 class initially but these have been resolved. Our year 5 and 6 class has worked very well. Next year will see this five class structure continue.

The September Personal Development days saw a range of SEN (Special Education Needs), Safeguarding and teaching CPD (Continued Personal Development) training. We also relaunched our Ringshall Ways and revamped the website.

In terms of curriculum - this year we have moved to Kapow for our RE scheme. We are also no longer teaching music through a mixture of Kapow and Suffolk Music services, instead we now use our own hybrid curriculum using an amalgamation of Kapow, the Music excellence document, the ofsted music curriculum and a ukulele curriculum to teach music through singing and Ukulele. Every child in Key Stage 2 now learns the ukulele.

PE is now taught in-house (instead of through a sports company) by Mrs Draper (a former secondary PE teacher). We have purchased a new scheme of work to support her - Get Set for PE. After two full terms of this change we are really pleased with the positive effect this move has had on children's PE and sport at Ringshall.

Forest schools also became a year round activity for EYFS and Year 1 in this year. Following on from our successful SATs outcomes last year we have started our afterschool and in school tuition programme and our in-class SAT preparation early for the current year 6. At the time of writing this report, the SATs tests will take place next week (W/C May 13th). We are confident that our children will again exceed expectations.

The new 'School Development Plan' was launched at the start of the year to drive our teaching and learning throughout the year. The 5 new areas in the plan are; A dynamic, proactive and trauma Informed approach to wellbeing, mental health and behaviour, developing writing outcomes in all subjects, every child a fluent reader with an expansive vocabulary, subject leaders drive excellence across the curriculum and Inclusion of all vulnerable groups.

At the end of last year our trust, Asset Education, launched a school improvement strategy called 'school circles.' Ringshall is working in a Circle group called Blue Skies with Cliff Lane and Holton Primary schools to maintain our drive to continually raise standards of teaching and learning. As a team, we have decided to look at maths teaching and learning across the three schools. We have two main areas for development for maths - 1) Developing subject leaders for maths 2) Developing KS1 teachers teaching of maths with a focus on how they use TA support in lessons, how maths resources are used, how sentence stems are used to impact understanding and how thinking is recorded, including how well children can articulate how they solved the maths problem.

On a final note

The 2023 to 24 academic year has been incredibly successful for Ringshall School so far. Our excellent OFSTED outcome was just one of many highlights this year. The children have benefited from a vast array of exciting experiences and learning activities. Multiple class trips, visitors and themed days have brought fun and wonder to learning at Ringshall. This has also been the second full year of 'Parent Cafe's,' our termly open afternoon for parents to come in and work with their children in class on a particular subject and the launch year of pupil parliament - a trust wide pupil voice initiative.

In fact to fully appreciate our incredible year please look at our Twitter feed or the news section of our website. See below for links;

Twitter - [@RingshallPS](https://twitter.com/RingshallPS)

News sections - <https://www.ringshallprimary.co.uk/our-school/latest-news>

As always, Ringshall Primary School intends to position itself fully within the communities it serves. Developing links and partnerships within the community is a central ambition for the school as it moves forward. If you have any questions. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

Draft

Community Speedwatch

The Safer Neighbourhood Team have supplied us with a number of new things to use whilst doing Speedwatch. We have received 2 new jackets and clip boards marked with the SNT Logo. We also have two new standing signs and two new signs that are attached to posts at each end of the village.

An attempt was made to try and get Wattisham Camp – Martin Kinsey -involved in getting those who drive through the village to keep to the speed limit. Martin Kinsey is well aware of this problem.

Ringshall have reached an agreement that a single person with a speed gun can report any drivers straight to Wattisham. I contacted the SNT to ask if we were permitted to do this with the data we collect – but as we are volunteers for the SNT we are not allowed to do this – data protection. However, new speed signs have been put up at the Wattisham Gates to remind drivers of the speed limit through the villages.

The team have been unable to do any sessions since before Christmas, Bill Dewick has been unwell and is now just getting fit again, due to personal circumstances Lesley has not been able to help and I have been away, in addition to all this the weather has been awful. We hope to get going again soon.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team has a new reporting system on Excel and we now get a monthly run down on all the occurrences of speeding in Suffolk villages.



REPORT FROM WATTISHAM FLYING STATION

My apologies for not presenting in person, but this perhaps demonstrates, in part, the current position within the Civil Service, Ministry of Defence and wider Government... we are all feeling the strain with headcount reductions and significant post gapping.... do same/more with less!

The Station has been a hectic place over the last year, receiving into service a number of new model Apaches and, at the end of March 2024, flying the last sortie of the original Mk 1 type helicopters. Receipt of the new model has concurrently required significant training and upskilling for both air and ground crews, as they convert to the new model. At the same time, Wattisham units have supported numerous exercises throughout the year travelling to Oman, Estonia (twice), Norway and most counties within the UK!

Life on the Station has continued at the same pace, with significant construction activity particularly over the Autumn and Winter with three major projects starting; replacement of the 1950 era ring main electric cables, pipework for the District heating mains and crucially, the demolition of 168 bedspaces, part of a program to modernise the Single Living Accommodation for our soldiers. I look forward to later in the year when the Station returns to a form of steady state and we stop resembling a building site.. albeit briefly. There remain plans to improve the estate over the next ten years.

We held a Families Day in August, kindly supported by a number of visiting aircraft, including a full display by the Red Arrows. Attended by some 5000 family members and friends, a fantastic event, but not sadly to be repeated this year, due to other commitments.

1 May 2024

MJ KINSEY
Station Staff Officer
Wattisham Flying Station