

Minutes of the KETTLEBURGH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held in the Village Hall on 12 May 2010 at 7:30p.m.

Present: 24 Parishioners, County Councillor, District Councillor, representative from Suffolk Police.

Following refreshments which were served from 7:00p.m, the meeting began at 7:30p.m. The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr David Harris, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Before opening the Annual Parish Meeting, the Chairman reported on a matter of concern to the village. Longstanding problems with increasing outflow from Anglia Water's (AW) sewers have resulted in sewage discharge to the River Deben. The Environment Agency refused AW's request for discharge consent at the beginning of 2009. AW has appealed against this decision and a hearing will take place at Seckford Hall on 20 May 2010. Cllr Harris will attend this hearing and make known the views of those present at Kettleburgh APM: all were strongly against any discharge into the River Deben, on grounds of pollution and destroying the quality of the river.

1. APOLOGIES for Absence: Mr & Mrs Robert Marzetti, Mr & Mrs Paul Norman.

2. MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13 May 2009 were approved and signed.

3. REPORTS were received from the following and are attached to these minutes:

- a) **County Councillor** Cllr Peter Bellfield
- b) **District Councillor** Cllr Bob Snell
- c) **Suffolk Police** PCSO Christian Hassler

This year the format of the rest of the meeting was different, with an emphasis on the Parish Questionnaire which took place towards the end of 2009. To make time for this, reports from village organisations were not read out, but they will be available for every household in printed form and on the website. They are also attached to these minutes.

4. PARISH QUESTIONNAIRE

a) Overview of process & demographics - Cllr Garland

The Kettleburgh questionnaire developed from an unsuccessful attempt to launch a Parish Plan. The Parish Council felt it was important to gain the views of the parish and designed a questionnaire tailored to the needs of our village. 109 questionnaires were delivered, of which 59 were returned, with 121 individual responses. Some statistics from the results:

- Almost half the working population work in Kettleburgh, with 17% employed in Kettleburgh and 27% working from home.
- A large proportion of residents are aged 60+
- Fundraising, followed by local taxation (the Parish precept) were the most popular suggested methods for raising money
- The overwhelming desire for Kettleburgh's future was: to retain a sense of community, to be small and peaceful in unspoilt countryside.

Comments & questions:

- Query about conflicting statistics – some of the sample answers were not precise.
- Query over progress in 'improving the appearance of the village' and the previously made suggestion to plant trees on small area of grass by the bus shelter – Cllr Chase responded that the owners of this small piece of land, Flagship Housing, had been contacted and were happy to finance the planting of some trees, providing that all maintenance was taken care of.

b) Communication - Parish Clerk

From the questionnaire:

90% of respondents were interested in keeping up to date with parish affairs.

Methods of communication identified were:

KPC Newsletter, Parish magazine, notice board, website, Councillors, PC meetings.

There was an overwhelming preference for information provided in written form which could be read on paper at home.

The response to the use of the website was disappointing, particularly considering the amount of time it takes to keep it updated. It can be accessed at: www.kettleburgh.suffolk.gov.uk

There were requests for more information about – village activities (for adults and children), planning issues, Local & national Government issues, and social services.

- For local government and social services issues, KPC is a conduit for information – it is very often a case of sifting through wads of paperwork/emails, to decide what is relevant to Kettleburgh.
- Village activities and children's activities are covered separately.
- The Parish Council newsletter - would it be useful to have an annual 'directory of services' relating specifically to Kettleburgh? Perhaps in the format of the Welcome Pack that was distributed to everyone over a year ago. One is given to each new resident and it is kept updated and published on the website – but it could be redistributed with some more information in it.
- Councillors are available – they have all put themselves forward as your local representatives because they want to be involved and helpful.

Some Suggestions:

- Possibility of an Internet connection for the Village Hall – would it be used?
- A new information pack – what should be included in it?
- Possibility of using the website to advertise local businesses – a local directory.
- And finally – communication is a two way process. We can also let others know what we are doing – the Parish Clerk is now a 'Community Correspondent' for the EADT – so any reports, notices of events can be publicised.

c) Traffic calming - Cllr Durbin

The speed of traffic going through village communities has always been of great concern to residents. A number of surveys have shown that the subject is at the top of the list of concerns expressed by village communities – not just here in Kettleburgh, but actually throughout the UK as a whole.

As anybody who attended the Focus on Traffic meeting held at end of 2008 will have heard, perceived speed is a tricky concept, which is why we have regular speed checks carried out by the mobile police speed check team.

In addition, Suffolk County Council Highways Department have now re-instated their SID (Speed Identification Device) checks which monitor speeds using slightly more sophisticated equipment than the mobile police van. Even so, results from the SID checks (the last one was in March) do indicate – and have done fairly consistently - that around 80 – 85% of drivers going through Kettleburgh actually travel within the speed limit. However, we have all seen vehicles going too fast through our village especially in the rush hour. Even if they are in a minority, complacency is obviously not an option.

The Parish Council is doing what it can on this issue. In addition to the speed checks we have, for example, written to the heads of Brandeston School and Framlingham College to request they ask parents to be aware of the speed issue when they are doing the school run. They have responded and in both cases have said that they would take the opportunity to speak to parents.

With the limited funds available to a Parish Council, the extra funding from SCC for traffic calming measures in Kettleburgh is very good news. From the limited pot for this scheme throughout the county we have been allocated £5,000 to cover a package which will include new gateways, new speed signs and new road markings on The Street and Brandeston Road. The details are now being finalised, including some possible additions to the scheme, and work should start very soon.

The Parish Council does of course, maintain regular liaison with other bodies on these issues and I would like to thank Councillor Peter Bellfield who has played an important role in helping us win the funding and also to Luke Barber of the Highways Dept who I and other members of the Parish Council have worked with closely and who has been very supportive in moving the programme ahead.

Comments & questions:

- Was the SID camera used on the Brandeston Road? PCSO Hassler responded that it was, but not regularly, limited funds being a governing factor of its use.. He added that he was happy for villagers to observe the use of the speed gun – he would be able to explain its use and comment on the speeds recorded. He added that the perception of speed on small country roads was often faulty.

d) Planning & local services - Cllr Jessop

Topics covered in the questionnaire included planning applications, what was important to residents and how they saw Kettleburgh in the future. Cllr Jessop outlined changes in local planning:

- the 'Local Plan' has been replaced by the 'Local Development Framework' (LDF),
- possible Boundary Commission recommendations on unitary status
- the new 'Infrastructure Planning Commission' (IPC)

Locally, the main outcome of the LDF was to change Kettleburgh's designation in the settlement hierarchy from 'Local Service Centre' to 'Other Villages', with a resultant presumption of no further development for our village. This underpins the questionnaire results mentioned above. The IPC was created in 2008 to streamline decision-making on applications for nationally significant infrastructure in England and Wales. Locally, the overhead power lines at Bramford and Sizewell nuclear power are plans that it will consider.

Comments & questions:

- IPC Sizewell application: SCDC took the view that it was not opposed to nuclear power, but that it disliked the planning process, wishing to be able to insist on aspects that will affect local communities – roads, housing, the protection of AONB sites.
- Provision of infrastructure, in particular sewerage, and lack of off road parking - can KPC make representations about these issues when considering planning applications? Correspondence with the utility companies did not provide any reassuring responses about their ability to cope with more housing. The new hierarchy designation of 'Other Villages' will make further development unlikely.

e) Sports facilities - Ellie Frost:

Comments & questions:

- Is there enough for young people to do in Kettleburgh? No, but unrealistic to provide more facilities in small village – rather a need for better transport links to Framlingham, Ipswich, Leiston, Norwich.
- Schools provide after hours clubs and activities.
- Teenagers rely on parents for transport

f) Children's Facilities – Katherine Grogan:

g) Public transport - Parish Clerk:

From the questionnaire: of the 119 respondents, just over a third have used our local bus service and of these, 12 are regular users. Three quarters of users were satisfied with the service provided. Our local service (118) is currently operated commercially (without SCC support) by Far East Travel. Some comments from the questionnaire – 'Too much changing – no good for weekly shop - Noisy - Service to Wickham Market and/ or a link to the rail station needed - Last service is too early - On time - Friendly driver - Buggy access good'.

A SCC travel survey was distributed at a recent coffee morning after the Parish Clerk attended a meeting organised by SCC looking at local parishes responses to the present levels of public transport provision. Some outcomes from the SCC meeting:

An hourly service between Ipswich and Saxmundham is due to begin in December 2010: once the Beccles passing loop is built there will be hourly trains between Ipswich and Lowestoft. The lack of a bus service passing the rail station was noted. A bus scheme referred to was the 'Demand Responsive Transport' which already operates in the Wilford area. With this scheme, you can phone to book a journey, the cost being similar to a bus fare. A similar scheme – Dial a Ride – is in place particularly for those with mobility issues. All this information can be accessed on the www.suffolkonboard.com website.

There is a link on the links page of the Kettleburgh website.

Another site that is excellent to use when planning a journey on public transport is www.traveline.org.uk

It is well worth giving the local bus service a try. You can get into Ipswich in almost the same time as it takes to drive, and there is no need to search for a parking space.

Buses run every two hours – there is a shortened form of the timetable on the notice board, or the full version is available in the bus shelter. The driver will stop the bus for you anywhere along the route – not just at bus stops. For those aged 60+ the free bus pass enables travel across Suffolk at any time and nationally in off peak hours. And of course there is also the Park & Ride Scheme from Martlesham.

h) Sense of Community, summing up - Cllr Harris:

Responses to questionnaire and views expressed this evening show an excellent sense of community and what can be achieved by working together. The idea of introducing a formal Good Neighbour Scheme was rejected due to the many constraints – CRB checks, insurance, paperwork – but it was felt that in a small village, help was offered when needed – the Parish Council should be informed if any needs were not being met. Alongside the views expressed in the questionnaire, the Parish Council has also been considering their role. With few powers and little money, Councillors felt that, whilst one area where their views were sought was about planning applications, their role includes the following:

- To be a facilitator
- To express concerns to local and wider authorities
- To be a channel for information.
- To be a clearing house for other organisations
- To try and make Kettleburgh an even better place to live.

Although villagers attending Parish Council meetings were few in number, it is good to see a slight increase. There is one more year before the next Council election; maybe younger and newer residents will consider standing as a Councillor in 2011.

The Parish Clerk thanked Cllr and Mrs Harris for providing refreshments and Cllr and Mr Neilson for serving them.

4. QUESTION TIME

There were no further questions

5. The meeting closed at 9:20p.m.

REPORTS

a) Report from County Councillor – Peter Bellfield:

The Election in 2009

Early in the year we had our four yearly election, the only difference this time was that we did not know whether we were being elected for one, two or four years because of the Local Government review. The result produced an increased number of seats for the Conservatives, 55 (45 at the 2005 election), mainly at the expense of Labour, 4 seats (22 in 2005), with the Liberals 11 seats (7 in 2005), 2 Independents (one in 2005) and for the first time I believe two seats taken by the Green party and one by the UK Independence party. This made the Liberals the main opposition party for the first time.

Local Government Review

This saga has now been running for the best part of three years since Ipswich Borough Council first requested Unitary status in response to the Government seeking the views on the future of local government in Suffolk. All seven councils have spent very considerable time and money, although no one knows how much as a record of officer time spent was not kept by any council, in compiling reports to the Boundary Committee and the Minister. It has also had a serious detrimental effect on Officer moral because they have not known what their future holds. In a recent announcement from the Minister he said that he had found widespread support for a unitary government in Suffolk, but that there was no consensus for a particular proposal. He has therefore suggested that a solution should be found through a countywide constitutional convention. We have asked civil servants in the Ministry what this means and we are told that they have no idea. Clearly no further action will take place until after the general election. What will happen after that depends upon which party forms the next government.

The bad winter weather

On the whole the Council performed well with the clearing and gritting of priority 1 roads (A and B roads plus a few well used C roads), but priority 2 roads were less well covered after the first week or so. This was because the forecast became “a prolonged spell of snow and ice” and the salt supply position was going to become critical. We started the Winter with our salt bins full

and orders to replace used stocks as necessary but the Government took over the distribution and our replenishment supplies were diverted to areas deemed to be in greater need. If you did have any major problems in the parish please let me know and I will pass your comments on so that we can ensure that there is not a repeat in future years. The weather has also played havoc with the road surfaces. Please report potholes, if you have not already done so, to East Area Highways at Saxmundham giving as precise a position as possible and the depth of the hole, over 5 centimeters will be dealt with as a priority. The teams are working as quickly as possible, particularly with temporary repairs but the weather continued to disrupt and damage the work being done. From the 17th December to the 11th January the gritters drove over 101,000 miles and the cost was approximately £1,150,000.

Council Performance

Last month we had the result of our first Comprehensive Area Assessment (the latest name of performance judging by the Audit Commission) and received ***and "performing well". Although this is one star down on previously we were told that we had done better than last year but that the Government had raised the criteria for attaining four stars. In fact they said that the "Council has a strong track record in delivering significant savings and continues to take positive action to manage and reduce costs." We also received 3 green flags for excellence in three particular areas, more than any other council in the country. In addition, the Council has been short-listed for awards under the headings of "the Greenest County" and "e-government", becoming the winner in one case. We must be doing some things right, or at least better than many other councils!

Pension Fund

There has recently been general comment in the national press, and specific to Suffolk in the local press, about employer pension fund contributions because of the deficit on most funds and the effect it will have on Council Tax levels. While the local press comment has been correct when it has said that the employer contribution would have to rise from 19% of salary to 31% when using the valuation criteria of three years ago, part of that criteria is now believed to be inappropriate. As Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee I do not expect more than a minimal rise at worst when we have the result of our next valuation later this year and which will have to be applied from April 2011. I think, therefore, that pension fund cost will not have a significant adverse effect on the council tax level from April 2011.

2010/11 Council Tax rise

As you know the rise in the council tax has been set at 2.45%, the lowest ever and below the pension rise of 2.5% and the consumer price index rise at that time of 2.9%. The future looks very much more difficult, the Chief Executive has talked of the possibility of having to reducing expenditure by between 20% and 30% in future years. The recent press report of letters sent to senior managers by the C.E. concern the broad outline of what will have to be done if the Council is to achieve this degree of expenditure saving. Additionally, to attain this level of reduction ideas will have to take on a much broader concept. Interestingly, the state, through all its agencies, spent £4.9 billion in Suffolk in the last financial year, including £1.3 billion by local government, £750 million by the PCT and £100 million by the police. The balance of some £2.6 billion by the government directly and quangos. The Council is looking at ways of working with these agencies so that savings in partnership working can be achieved. There must be plenty of scope to save money out of £4.9 billion.

Lastly I should like to remind all of you that I am always available if you should have any problem or need any help with the County Council. Just telephone me and I will come and see you as soon as possible.

b) Report from District Councillor – Bob Snell:

Two major processes occupied much time of councillors and officers alike in the year:

Local government reorganisation

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government decided in the end not to implement either of the options recommended by the Boundary Committee – its preferred option of one giant council for all of Suffolk or an Ipswich/Felixstowe unitary (the so-called North Haven option) along with a Rural Suffolk unitary council covering the rest of the county.

Instead, for Suffolk there was supposed to be a county wide Constitutional Convention, although no-one (even at Westminster) seemed to know whether we would be able to consult with everyone before such an event, or about the conclusions that could emerge, or whether there will be any Government support for any changes. The general feeling is that this was the government's way of kicking the whole thing expensively into the long grass (hopefully for good), knowing that nothing could be done until after the general election. Personally, whilst I think that the new government, when it is eventually formed, will have other priorities that will hopefully kill it for good, I am not yet convinced that all ministers, and many civil servants will permit the concept of Unitary authorities to be dropped completely.

In the meantime, it is business as usual for Suffolk local authorities, with SCDC and Waveney continuing their joint search for efficiency savings, among other cost cutting measures and joint working arrangements with other local authorities, which SCDC have been pursuing for several years. There is to be no reduction in any SCDC front line services.

Local Development Framework

The draft Core Strategy was duly approved by Council and, unless the process is changed by a new government (which seems unlikely), it will be submitted to an independent inspector, whose decision on its "soundness" will be final. Now we shall return to the "site specific" exercise, to identify the land supply that is available to enable the housing target to be met over the next twenty years. This means that we shall now explore of all the potential sites that have been offered to or identified by the council.

2010/2011 budget

The Council's new budget on 1 April meant just an eight pence increase in the weekly cost of its services to an average Band D home, a rise of 2.9 per cent. A total of £7.4 million will be raised from the district's Council Taxpayers to fund the Council's annual budget of £15.68 million, while its total of efficiencies made since 2001 will come to more than £10 million.

The Council's total budget has risen by £457,000 since last year, despite planned efficiency savings and additional income of £1.85 million. While the Council is investing £402,000 in improved services, inflation alone will cost it a further £464,000 and its fixed costs will increase by £884,000. While diktats about how to run things from central government and its agencies and quangos continue unabated, the portion of our costs funded from central government continues to decline. The amount of Business Rates (in which we act as Tax Collector for the Government), at £7.2m, has risen by £633K, whereas the revenue support grant we expect to receive from them will be down £472k, so you can see where an increasing part of the total local taxes goes.

A snapshot of Suffolk Coastal District Council service improvements 2009/10

Crime & Disorder: crime rate 46 crimes per 1,000 population, lowest among five Community Safety Partnerships in Suffolk.

Place Survey: 92% residents satisfied with area as place to live (7th in country; top district in county) and have the highest level of satisfaction with their District Council in Suffolk and 55th nationally (best out of 340).

Play & Leisure Facilities – more than £200k paid or allocated to 36 different schemes. More than 10,000 attendances at summer holiday activities.

Recycling: More than 51% household waste recycled or composted. 91% homes have access to kerb side recycling; roll out now completed ahead of time.

SCDC Travel Plan adopted to reduce carbon dioxide & promote travel efficiency; improved insulation, heating and lighting efficiency at Melton Hill & other Council properties to help cut energy bills & reduce carbon emissions.

Coastal Defences: Innovative SCDC Bawdsey scheme completed and applauded by government. First Integrated Coastal Zone Management scheme (ICZM); Aide & Ore Futures; Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) review concluded.

Sizewell C: we have insisted that local issues are fully addressed, despite national Infrastructure Planning Authority's new role in deciding such applications.

Economic Development Support Fund – £150k available in grants for schemes to promote growth. (£40,500 awarded so far).

Holiday Guide: 60,000 copies, tourism value £260m (up from £184m).

Felixstowe Futures: encourage new economic investment & regenerate seafront & town centre, applying for multi-million restoration grant for seafront gardens (£152K received so far).

Housing – 2nd highest performer in Suffolk for processing new housing benefit claims & changes of circumstance.

Affordable Homes: 38 units completed *2007/08*, 113 in *2008/09*. *2009/10*: 9 units delivered, 97 in development, approval for further 15 units.

Homelessness: no-one in bed & breakfast at year end first time in 9 years. Numbers in temporary accommodation halved for first 9 months of the year, compared to same period in previous year.

Planning Services: government targets are being exceeded in all categories, and enforcement cases are being determined quickly, with outstanding number of cases being reduced.

Concessionary Travel: over 15,000 people aged 60 or over, or disabled have free national bus travel.

Car parking prices frozen until 2012. RingGo service in some car parks Customer Focus groups held to help deliver improved access to services.

Free swimming for over 60s: over 40,000 attendances.

Joint CEO & Head of Planning with Waveney DC; Joint Partnership Board set up; Developing shared Officer structure & services as Preferred Partners.

Sickness: staff absence levels remain low; recruit & retention historic low levels.

PHILIS IT system at Port Health, increased Felixstowe efficiency & capacity; system now being marketed to other port authorities.

The overall picture

SCDC continued to deliver one of the lowest council taxes in Suffolk over the last 10 years and the 14th year of a single digit increase.

The government has continued to fail to adequately fund local services (and will no doubt continue to do so).

There is no planned use of reserves in current year (used £328K in 2009/10).

Created £8m of efficiency savings and additional income since 2001.

Audit Commission "performing well" ranking in "use of resources".

c) Report from Suffolk Police – PCSO Christian Hassler:

Crime report

From May 2009 to present day the Parish of Kettleburgh had 8 recorded crimes.

1. 2 Burglaries to an outbuilding where scrap metal was taken. (same location)
2. 3 Reports of damage to the same hedge.
3. 1 Distraction Burglary.
4. 1 Fraud by false representation.
5. 1 Theft of a water bowser.

Speeding and Parking concerns

Speed enforcement checks in and around the village will continue, so please be mindful to watch your speed.

Crime Prevention Advice

Suffolk Police are urging residents to keep their property safe. As the evenings get lighter and the weather improves.

Criminals' can/will take advantage of people spending more time outdoors and of people leaving windows and doors open. Please make sure that all windows and doors are secured when leaving your property.

Also as the price of petrol and heating oil going up Please be mindful and check your oil tanks regularly as this seems to be one of the favourite types of crimes that is accruing in the county of Suffolk.

Comments & questions:

- It was noted that parking of up to 5 cars on the bend in The Street causes a large obstruction.. PCSO Hassler responded that if the cars were seen to be causing an obstruction, owners could be asked to move them, but that there is also the view that parked cars can help in reducing traffic speed.
- Drivers along The Street are often warned of speed checks by oncoming traffic – but this is all part of profile raising and can in itself be an aid to speed reduction.

d) Report from St Andrew's Church – Rev Robin Alderson:

The Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council of St Andrew's Church, Kettleburgh is available on the Kettleburgh Village Webb Site. This represents, simply a summary of some of the topics which are covered in more detail in the full report.

Valerie Upson and John Bater have continued to serve as Churchwardens during the year. Thanks are due to them and to the PCC Treasurer, Trevor Butcher, and PCC Secretary, Mrs Vicki Neilson, for all the leadership and support they have given to St Andrew's Church during the year.

Worship has been offered in Kettleburgh Church following our customary pattern for the great festivals of the Christian Year, and on weekly basis throughout the year. We have continued to unite with Brandeston and Easton and the Churches of the wider Benefice on a regular basis. Gathering in this way has been uplifting and encouraging to the Kettleburgh congregation.

The Choir continues to sing Choral Evensong on the third Sunday of every month, and the ever-popular Christmas Eve service of nine lessons and carols. They have also joined with other choirs in the Greater Benefice at our United services. Their singing enhances our worship, and thanks are due to choir members and to Anne Bater, our organist, for their continued commitment during the year.

During the past year, the PCC has been considering how accessibility to the Church building can be improved and what can be done to enhance its facilities. We have an outline concept on which we have already invited comments. We hope to finalise our proposals in the next few months, after which there will be a further opportunity for Kettleburgh people to comment before any work is begun.

The Church continues to be in a relatively healthy state. The Church Accounts have been examined by an independent examiner and have been published.

We continue to be grateful to all those people who, over the year, have contributed to the healthy financial position of Kettleburgh Church by organising and by supporting the many fundraising events that have taken place during the year. Their efforts are immensely appreciated. The Church relies on such support not just for the maintenance of the fabric of the oldest building in the Parish, but also to enable it to continue to be a place of worship each week, and to provide for the needs of Kettleburgh people for baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

If anyone would like any further information about St Andrew's Church, its fellowship or activities, please do not hesitate to contact 01728 688255 or 07790 242002, or speak to me or the Churchwardens whenever you see us around the village.

e) Report from Kettleburgh Green Trust – Mr David Harris:

Before I comment on the major events occurring during the last twelve months, it struck me recently that not everyone is aware that the Green was laid out in accordance with the most extensive consultation exercise carried out in the village prior to the questionnaire issued by the Parish Council earlier this year. Everyone was invited to put forward their ideas on what they would like to see and whilst inevitably there were some differences substantial consensus was achieved. The outcome of this has drawn much praise from visitors and the aim of the KGT is to continue the excellent work of those who worked so hard to make the Green a possibility.

Our first and greatest task is to ensure that all parts of the Green (the flower meadow, the large open area of grassland, the paths, the treescape, the pond, fencing etc) are all maintained to a very high standard and as far as possible are litter free. This requires a great deal of work particularly through the spring and summer and I would like to say a large thank you to Darran Frost for the excellent work he does and also to the many volunteers who give their support. It would be all too easy to allow the Green to deteriorate.

Of course this takes money and the KGT holds events to raise funds for this purpose as well as hosting activities which contribute to making our village such an enjoyable place to live. Events last year included the very successful Strut your Mutt dog show, the ever popular quiz night, the well supported village lottery and the delicious village breakfasts attended by many (and not only from the village!). Together these activities more than covered the costs of running the Green and we have enough in reserves to ensure that we can face the year ahead with confidence.

This year saw the construction of the Trim Trail which can be used by people of all ages as part of an exercise regime, however strenuous or gentle. Together with the children's play area all the activities envisaged in the consultation have been fulfilled and there are no plans for further expenditure of this kind – our focus now is on high quality maintenance.

Having served for several years two Trustees resigned during the year, namely Gwenda Weeks and Helen Kay. It has been a pleasure to work with both of them and their contribution has been enormous. I am sure that Helen will not mind if I add that in my opinion we would not have a village green had it not been for the tireless work of Gwenda Weeks who did so much to turn the possibility into a reality. After a period of more than two hundred years Kettleburgh once more has a village green it can be proud of.

For my part, I would like to give my deepest thanks to all the Trustees and our Treasurer who have given up many evenings and a lot of other time to ensure that the Trust achieves its goals. It is always the case that a relatively small number of people work very hard on behalf of the many but in the case of the Green we all derive much satisfaction from seeing the pleasure it gives to others.

In addition, I would like to thank all those who supported our activities by, for instance, buying lottery tickets and those who gave donations. Special mention must be made of Derek Hill who has been a wonderful supporter of the Green from the very outset and continues to be so.

If you haven't looked lately, may I suggest you look at our website which has just been refreshed and renewed by the combined efforts of Robert Marzetti and Jackie Clark – I hope you enjoy it.

As is evident from the above, maintaining The Green to a high standard is demanding, both on time and finance and we would welcome anyone in the village who would like to make a contribution whether as a trustee, participating in events, or fundraising. Also, I would like to see an endowment fund established to secure the long-term future and would be delighted to speak to anyone who is interested in making a donation or a bequest.

f) Report from the Village Hall – Mr Robert Marzetti:

The Village Hall has had another encouraging year with progress being made on various fronts. All committee members made significant contributions to the success of fund raising events put on by the hall and for the benefit of the hall. The Pantomime made a profit of £1,375 and the Harvest Hop a profit of £529. Another valuable fundraiser for the hall has been the profit from the monthly coffee mornings which raised a very welcome £647 over the year. We are grateful to both the Mooneys and the Baters for their achievement. As we all know, your village hall owes a great debt of gratitude to the Fete Committee who provide us with such a magnificent annual donation. In addition to that the hall received two generous donations from "Past Times". Grateful thanks are due once again to both organisations.

Jane O'Leary, our treasurer, has had a lot to do this year but has coped magnificently with all the extra banking movements. I would like to take this opportunity to offer a sincere vote of thanks to Persephone Booth for again producing our accounts.

Tony Murphy once again kept the hirers happy on the booking front and we had a number of compliments from them about the overall presentation and appearance of the hall. To a large extent this was due to the enthusiasm of the members of the cleaning rota who all did a great job.

During the year a total of £5,300 has been spent on repairs maintenance and improvements which we hope you believe has been money well spent. For example during the year the interior of the hall, lobby area and loos were all redecorated and new curtains were hung. A much-needed new built in broom cupboard was constructed. The rotten bottom halves of the main fire doors were replaced. Your hall is now in reasonable shape but there will always be more work to be done and we are committed to a continued programme of ongoing essential repairs and maintenance.

The hall continues to enjoy a good level of usage from our regular hirers. We are grateful to the 1st Earl Soham Scout Group who use the hall most Mondays and Fridays. Just as important is

for the hall to be available for all our village activities such as the Plant Sale and the Produce Show, Church and Village Green activities and all other private functions such as family parties, birthday parties etc.

It remains for me to thank personally all committee members, which of course includes our secretary, for all their hard work, support and advice over the past year. We also should also mention that Julie Todd left us during the year and we thank her for her contributions. And finally we are sad to lose Maggie Meadows from the committee, one of our longer standing members, and we are grateful for all her input over the years.

g) Report from the Village Produce Association – Mrs Jackie Clark:

2009 was another successful year for the Kettleburgh Village Produce Association. Once again the judges, provided by the Suffolk Horticultural and Produce Association, were impressed with the standard and number of entries for a small village. There were over fifty competitors in 2009, entering the usual classes for fruit, vegetables, cookery, wine and photography - there is always a pleasant sense of competition and it was encouraging to see several young people entering the cookery classes.

The Village Hall is the setting for the show, which is held on the first Saturday in September. In the morning, entries are carefully set out on tables, ready for the judges, who arrive at 10:30a.m. Once judging is finished, the hall is open in the afternoon for competitors and visitors to admire and discuss the results, whilst enjoying tea and cake. The prize giving is followed by an auction of any produce that has been donated and the afternoon ends with a raffle.

This year's show will be held on Saturday 4th September. We are always looking for ideas for new classes, and are pleased to see new competitors – particularly children. We would welcome additional support with the organization and running of the show. If you can help in any way please contact the secretary, Claire Norman.

h) Report from Neighbourhood Watch – Derrick Neilson:

The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is someone who acts as a contact/link between the local people and the Police. It is a voluntary 'job', unpaid, and it is not necessary to have been a police officer to do it! I am fortunate to have worked for the Police Force for 22 years as a Dispatcher, speaking to police vehicles and staff on the radio; therefore I have picked up and learnt some of the legalities etc.

So, if something is confusing or bothering anyone about strange vehicles, suspicious people/callers etc, feel free to call me and if I can assist with advice I will. If I cannot, I will probably know or find the right person who can. I make no apologies for saying, IF your problem is urgent or you think a crime is being committed AT THE TIME, please call 999, give as much detail as you can to the experts, and leave it to them. Should anyone want to discuss anything non-urgent, these are my contact details:

Tel: 01728723266,

email derrick48@btopenworld.com.

Address: 1 Barrel Cottages

j) Report from Parish Council Chairman – Cllr David Harris:

Before I comment on the past year I would like to pay tribute to my immediate predecessors, Paul Norman and Trevor Jessop. The reason for this is that some very good things have happened in Kettleburgh over the past three or four years which would not have occurred without their leadership and efforts.

Firstly, we have seen the creation and development of our wonderful village green which is used on a daily basis by many. This would never have happened without the work done over many

months by Paul Norman and Gwenda Weeks together with an extensive and democratic consultation process. What we have today is the fulfilment of that consultation and a report on the current state of the Green has been prepared by the Kettleburgh Green Trust, which I have the privilege of chairing.

Secondly, there was another extensive consultation process led by Trevor Jessop on the status of our village in planning terms. This was absolutely vital because the outcome would determine whether or not the village was likely to grow significantly in future. In the draft documents circulated by the District Council, Kettleburgh fell into the category where development was possible. At a packed meeting to discuss this, chaired by Trevor Jessop and with considerable inputs from many people in the village, it became clear that we believed we had been wrongly classified and should be treated as an "other village". In this category there is a presumption against any development other than conversion of existing buildings. Furthermore, the strongly expressed view of the great majority of those who live in the village is that this is exactly what we want - to remain a small rural community. Sadly, many lovely villages have been destroyed by inappropriate development but, following representations, Kettleburgh was reclassified as an "other village" - this is a major achievement.

Another item which has been on the agenda for several years is the matter of road safety in the village and particularly speeding. Despite many representations and discussions it had been difficult to make any progress. Rod Durbin, the councillor charged with taking this matter forward, has worked tirelessly over the last two years and as a result we will have "entry gates" to the village which with additional road marking should encourage vehicles to travel more slowly. These gates will be paid for from external funding and the Parish Council is looking for further funds to install gates on the road from Framlingham.

Incidentally, several speed surveys have been carried out in the village and the measured speed through the street has been very close to the 30mph limit with few exceptions.

The last specific matter I would like to comment on is the questionnaire circulated to everyone in the parish so that views could be obtained on a wide range of topics. This exercise was led by Patrick Garland, although he rightly insists that this was an activity involving all members of the Parish Council. Nothing like this has been done before and this is the reason why today's Annual Parish Meeting is different from its predecessors in that the Parish Council has opened up the major part of the meeting so that we come together to consider the outcome of that process and what actions should follow.

In parallel with the questionnaire I asked Parish Councillors to give me their views on the "role and responsibilities of the Parish Council". This produced a range of views but we all agreed upon the following: -

- The Parish Council has very limited authority and even more limited funds.
- The Parish Council should act as a facilitator and a channel of information and provide any support it can for those activities which benefit the village.
- On behalf of parishioners we review all planning applications and send our comments to the planning authority. It is the general feeling however that the views of the Parish Council over the years have had little impact on the decision making process.
- We should do what we can to encourage good neighbourliness which is at the heart of all successful communities. In this context the Parish Council was asked if we wished to set up a formal scheme with external support. After reflection we decided this is not the way to go as it involved new structures, CRB checks and insurance and we believe that in our village if anyone has a problem then their neighbours will help in the traditional way.

The Parish Council has significantly changed in another important way over the years. A large number of bodies have been set up, such as the Suffolk Association of Local Councils and Suffolk Acre, which seek to involve us in varieties of activity. One of the consequences of this is that there is a great deal more work for the Clerk and Parish Councillors who have to look at the many invitations etc, which come our way and decide whether or not to participate. In turn this

frequently involves Councillors and the Clerk in attending meetings, usually at the weekend or in the evening.

I would like to thank all Parish Councillors for their work over the past year and I know they will join me in recording our gratitude to our Clerk, Jackie Clark, who puts in a tremendous amount of work, to keep our affairs in excellent order. Without her efforts my job would become very difficult indeed.

I am sad to report that after almost three years service as a Parish Councillor, Gwenda Weeks stood down recently and I would like to say how much she has contributed to our village over the years. Thank you Gwenda for all you have done. At our last meeting, she was replaced by Debbie Germain and we welcome her to the Council.

Finally, the Parish Council exists only to serve our village and constructive criticism is welcome, as is anyone who comes to our meetings where you can raise issues with your County Councillor, District Councillor or Parish Councillor over a cup of tea or coffee. Please come if you can.