

Coddenham Parish Council Newsletter

A warm welcome from your Parish Council. Working for You. July 2024

Welcome to our newsletter which aims to keep you in touch with the work of the parish council so that everyone in the community feels involved and connected. There are contact details at the foot of this newsletter. Please do get in touch.

Join The Parish Council

The current council consists of six councillors and, therefore, we find ourselves with five vacancies. Whilst this is in common with the national trend, we would welcome any approaches from parishioners who would like to join us. Training is available and encouraged. The Council meets in the evening every two months so it is not a huge commitment on your time but does result in people becoming involved in a range of local issues and supporting the community in which they live.

'Litter Breeds Litter'

There is something about seeing litter which encourages a minority of people to add to it. From the evidence of our community litter picks, the reverse also is true. The amount of litter collected in April by the 12 keen volunteers had again significantly reduced, the B1078 being the source of over half of that collected. The litter bins purchased with "Pride in your Place" funding from Mid Suffolk district council (MSDC) have been installed by parish councillors on the Old Norwich Road and in the "layby" at the junction of the B1078 and A140. The bin on the Three Cocked Hat has reduced littering of that green space, so we can only hope for a similar outcome for B1078 and Old Norwich Road.



Reserves Policy

All local authorities, including parish councils, need to manage/mitigate risks which includes having financial reserves to call on in the event of unbudgeted demand on their finances. Guidelines are set by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). For Coddenham, in addition to holding monies for likely specific future calls on the council e.g. tree surgery and maintenance of the churchyard wall, we are expected to hold a general reserve for unforeseen events. In recent years, inflation has seen some costs increase above what was budgeted. Given our size, our policy is to hold a general reserve of between 50% and 80%

of the precept. As at 31 March 2024, this was 54% of the precept amount for the current financial year. A copy of our reserves policy is available on the parish council website.

Green Spaces

Whilst we may not have enjoyed the wet winter, spring, and early summer, the flora of our green spaces has reaped the benefit. In spring, a dense carpet of bluebells populated the areas cleared of brambles in February and foxgloves are also becoming more established in patches within the woodland.



The February Broom Hill work morning was well attended with 11 volunteers attacking the bramble growth and the cakes at coffee time.

In addition, parish councillors have repaired the footpath steps on Mill Hill, planted 10 donated oak saplings, repaired and reinstalled an owl box and repaired the kissing gate on Broom Hill. Two replacement lime trees granted by MSDC were also planted on the Three Cocked hat.



In the autumn, the aim is to coppice the southern boundary hedge to the wooded slope and replant with hedging, again granted by MSDC. The volunteer work mornings will also continue the battle against the encroaching bramble and bracken growth on Broom Hill and at the top of Mill Hill.

All are welcome to help on the sociable volunteer work mornings. As you can see, there is much to do and many hands do make light work!

Energy and Recycling

In response to the household survey in 2022 and publication of the community plan in 2023, a separate legal entity, Central Suffolk Community Energy CIC (CSCE), has been established. CSCE aims to help households and community entities decarbonise and support renewable energy generation initiatives which have strong community support in the parishes of central Suffolk. CSCE is fully supported by Suffolk County Council and Suffolk's district councils. Currently three of its directors are from Coddenham, including cllrs. Gregory and Mills, and one from Debenham. A website will be launched shortly and further details will follow over the next few months.

Through cllrs. Soanes and Mills, three 'Reduce, Reuse and Recycle' events are planned annually, with the first held in March and the second in June. The aim is to encourage us all to reduce our black bin waste through buying and throwing away less. The next event is planned for 26 October 2024, with a focus on food.

Parish Council Allotments

Nearly all the allotments have tenants this year. During a recent stroll round the allotments, most were looking very neat with a good growth of crops or flowers to be seen. If you would like to take on an allotment, either this year or next, then please give your name to the clerk whose contact details are at the bottom of this newsletter. The annual rent is £15 for a full plot.



The new rain water collection systems and storage containers have been working well this year but have not been fully tested due to the large amount of frequent rain that we have experienced so far this year. In anticipation of a return to dry conditions in the future, the council has decided to increase the storage capacity by adding a second water tank to each of the existing collectors. These will be added as soon as volunteer time allows for the construction of the necessary stands and linkage to the existing tanks.

Defibrillators

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest and can literally save someone's life. There are two public access defibrillators located in the village; outside the village shop and at Haysel House. The parish council has been looking at whether there are any other available sites in the other parts of the parish for a further defibrillator.

Defibrillators require a power source and need to be located in an easily accessible position. We have been exploring with the businesses at the Beacon Hill site whether it would be possible to locate another defibrillator there as the nearest is otherwise at Needham Lakes. If anyone has a suggestion for another possible location, please contact the clerk at the contact details below.

If someone is in cardiac arrest, call 999 and start CPR. If you're on your own, do not interrupt CPR to go and find a defibrillator. If it's possible, send someone else to find one. When you call 999, the operator can also tell you if there's a public access defibrillator nearby. Anyone can use a defibrillator. You do not need training. Once you turn it on, it will give clear step-by-step voice instructions.

Highways

Over the past year, the roads working group has met on several occasions. Unfortunately, several of its initial ideas and ambitions have had to be dropped or scaled back, before they could even be put out to any public consultation, when faced with either national traffic laws and regulations or Suffolk County Council budgetary constraints. A meeting with Suffolk Highways, which followed some extensive traffic data gathering around the parish, however has enabled some useful progress to be made. County Councillor

Hicks, who was present at that meeting, committed to funding some road improvement initiatives at the Rectory Road, Hemingstone junction with the B1078. Vehicles over 7.5tonnes, heading west along the B1078, should turn into Rectory Road and then rejoin the B1078 via Sandy Lane thus bypassing Coddenham High Street. However, data collected demonstrated that some of these large vehicles were ignoring the weight restricting signage and travelling westbound through the village. In the next few weeks, work will take place to significantly improve both the signage and road markings at the B1078/Rectory Road junction. Hopefully, this will bring some relief to the High Street and Church Road. The roads working group are also exploring the opportunity to work in conjunction with a Hemingstone group who are looking to reduce speed limits along a section of the B1078. Any initiative on speed limit changes will be subject to extensive public consultation.

Community Infrastructure Levy

Community Infrastructure Levy (usually referred to as CIL) was introduced in Mid Suffolk in 2016 as a fixed tariff 'tax' on landowners/developers who get planning permission to build housing on their land. It is based on a fixed charge (per square meterage of internal floor space) to fund local infrastructure and replaces previous negotiated agreements. 80% of the CIL collected is retained by the district council for major projects, 15% is passed on to the

parish councils and 5% covers administration costs. The use of the funds raised is governed by statute but is broad including providing new community infrastructure or updating and repairing existing facilities. Some parishes have now received CIL running into hundreds of thousands of pounds but more locally, given the smaller amount of housing development, Coddenham parish council has received much more modest amounts (about £10k) since its introduction. The parish council have used some of this funding to purchase the commercial dishwasher for The Coddenham Centre and are replacing some of the benches on the recreation ground. The parish council is actively exploring uses for the remaining funds and/or other district council retained CIL funds for which it can bid and would welcome suggestions from residents.



How to contact us

Please contact the parish council through the clerk, Maggie Burt.

Email: clerk.coddenhampc@gmail.com; Phone: 07548 152181.

The parish council website address is: <https://www.coddenhampc.org.uk>