



DEBENHAM PARISH COUNCIL- June 2023

Highways: Members welcomed a Suffolk County Council Highways representative, who gave a presentation on the workings of Highways maintenance criteria, their decision-making process, the reporting tool, and dwindling budgets. Members had the opportunity to express their disappointment on how some local issues were handled, i.e. the repair to the oak rail on the High Street has been outstanding for over 12 months, the resurfacing of the road in front of the Primary School had been awaiting instruction for over eight years, potholes took a long time to be repaired, and even then the repair was only temporary. There was an extensive list of white lines which needed to be repainted and footways requiring improvement. It was hoped that some of the outstanding work would be completed, with a new contractor appointed from October 1st and some additional government funding received.

Play and Youth Provision: Cllrs J Sweet and F Winrow-Giffin presented the findings of a recent survey, which confirmed that there is considerable room for improvement (as previously identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Play Strategy). Some of the items on the “wish list” included multi-fitness equipment, a zip wire, a BMX track, and even picnic tables. Work on this project continues.

Allotments: Over the past three years, the Parish Council has managed the allotments in a way that has been mindful of the many issues faced by tenants during the covid period. Members appreciated that for some, things became difficult, either because they were key workers,

had caring responsibilities, or had fallen ill. However, the point had come when tenants were expected to manage their plots effectively and in line with the allotment rules or risk having their tenancy terminated (unless there were mitigating circumstances).

A second site inspection carried out earlier this month identified that there are still several plots which fall well below the level of acceptable good husbandry, with some being totally neglected. The respective tenants will be contacted and informed of the Parish Council's decision with regard to the plots in due course.

It should be noted that the allotments, which are excellent value for money, should be self-financing. It is also important to remember that if a tenant allows their weeds to overgrow and set seed, their boundaries to become untidy, or their waste to attract pests, they are affecting neighbouring tenants, which is unfair and unacceptable.

If you have a large plot and find it unmanageable, we can split it and re-allocate a portion to someone else.

The Allotment Rules are currently being reviewed, and the final document is expected to be approved at our next meeting.

If you are interested in having an allotment, please send your details to the Clerk so you can be registered on our waiting list.

Our next meeting will take place on July 17th, 2023, at 7:30 pm, at Dove Cottage.

Mrs Dina Bedwell, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

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Office hours: Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, 9.30 am to 3.30 pm

Please note that I will be on annual leave between Friday, June 30th, and Sunday, July 9th.