

Cockfield Parish Council
Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 25th May 2023

The Parish Council continued to deliver a range of services and amenities to further enhance our environment under its statutory obligation. Villagers may be surprised what responsibilities the Parish Council actually have, or may be the areas it does not have any jurisdiction over. (Details of the Parish Council scope can be found on the village web site).

As the village continues to evolve, we've seen many new residents and the Council welcome those coming into the village. The Village Welcome Pack has been updated, and can also be found on the web site <https://www.cockfield.org.uk>.

Considerable hard work has been put in by Parish Councilors and supported by both our Suffolk County Councilor and Babergh District Councilors. From this and Councilor's resilience and determination we have seen many positive improvements.

Some examples are:

1. The Allotments at the Glebe land, a project supported and jointly funded by the Parish and Babergh Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding. This is now up and running with ten plots being worked for its first growing season.
2. The Bus shelter at Mackenzie Place / Jeffreys Green – Another joint CIL project allowed a shelter and complete upgrade of the bus stop in a difficult location. The Parish Council particularly thank the landowners in their support to allow this new facility to be built.
3. After a considerable period of no support, we now have positive engagement with BMSDC and Suffolk Highways regular visits to skirt back vegetation and encroachments along the A1141 footways improving safety for pedestrians. Unfortunately, The Parish Council do still have to

implement some cutting back of verges on the back roads for safety reasons, as SSC do not have funding for sufficient cuts in their program.

4. The Abbey footpath bridge poor condition was reported to Suffolk Highways who initially indicated no concern on its long-term integrity. However, further communication has now seen their acknowledgment of a problem and a commitment to replace the bridge.
5. At Cross Green new planters and bench were provided to replace those beyond economic repair. These were funded from Village CIL.
6. The carved Village sign at Parsonage Green which has been in place for many years was showing signs of deterioration. Councillors, assisted by some residents, were able to save the sign with a complete refurbishment and new post.
7. The playground at Great Green remains extremely popular with the local community and those from further afield. This is clearly a significant benefit and efforts are in progress to widen the user appeal with some additional equipment.
8. The Parish Council remains willing to help other good causes with charitable donations allowed by section 137 Legislation and also practically with the hire of the Great Green football pitches to Bury U10 team.
9. The village came together welcoming friends old and new to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and the Coronation. This was with assistance from the Community Council and a number of individuals. These events are something Cockfield does well, and they were a good opportunity for our spread-out locations to meet.
10. Progress has been made towards facilitating a long-term aspiration of a footpath from Mill Corner, the former railway station and the school lane. Initial site inspections have occurred to discuss options available. However, these rely heavily on the good will of the landowner adjacent to the road

and practically SCC Highways compliance demands being satisfied, as Highways cannot support not compliant paving solutions.

11. Local needs housing (Jeffreys Green) – Very positive feedback has been received from residents on this now thriving area. Also, during the year, it was encouraging to see planning applications in for consultation for the initial self-build plots. This together with the ongoing occupation of the completed properties.

The nearby Earls Meadow / Bruffs Line project is further developing with the volunteer group and their immense efforts.

The Parish Council would like to thank all those individuals and contractors who have assisted during the year to deliver this range of projects and the ongoing maintenance to Parish assets. Without this it would not be possible, especially in the present financial climate where it can be challenging to secure prompt commitment that is sometimes needed.

Personally, I would like to thank all the Parish Councilors, District and County Councillors in another successful year.

Derek Southgate