

Scarning Parish Council Chairman's Report 2013

Scarning Parish Council has had yet another very busy year and I would like to thank all of the councillors for their help and support.

A special thank you should go to Councillor Reg Walton for the maintenance work that he has carried out on the Beacon and Village sign and on other items in the village and also to Councillor Stephen Faulkner who along with Reg has spent many hours going through the finer points of the lease for Scarning Water Meadows.

Mrs Janet Hamlin resigned from the Parish Council at the end of last year but we have been pleased to have Mrs Fiona Bradford join us.

The Horticultural show that the Parish Council organised in August was a great success with over 70 entries and we hope to hold another one this year with additional classes.

The Christmas Tree Festival held in December was well supported and helped 18 different charities to raise funds. It ran over three days with refreshments, crafts, games and raffles and a visit from a storyteller. Again thank you to everyone who helped out.

Problems with the newsletter delivery have been resolved and 3 councillors, the Clerk and 5 members of the public now deliver it.

A fence and self-closing gates have been erected on the small play area near Ted Ellis Walk to prevent dogs from entering and fouling on the play area.

The Water Meadows Lease and the anti social behaviour surrounding the Zip Wire are ongoing matters although the lease has nearly been finalised.

A grant was given to the PCC to enable a path to be made good at the rear of St Peter and St Paul Church.

Charitable donations have been given to Dereham Cancer Care, The Air Ambulance, The East Anglian Children's Hospice, The Royal British Legion, The Citizens Advice Bureau and Dereham Meeting Point.

Finally a big thank you to our clerk Nick Hartley who put in hours of extra work to ensure the Christmas Tree Festival was a success. He makes sense of all of our instructions and ensures that everything we do is legal and above board.

SCARNING WATER MEADOW ANNUAL REPORT.

2012-2013

Introduction.

This is the second year of the Scarning Water Meadow Sub Committee which was formed in May 2011 by the Scarning Parish Council.

The year 2012-2013 has once again been dominated by the Scarning Water Meadow Lease. The Committee has vetted and submitted amendments and suggestions to Breckland District Council on many occasions to produce a workable Lease. This is still ongoing with a few points still to rectify.

Very little voluntary work has been carried out on the Scarning Water Meadow except for the occasional litter pick and one mowing of Himalayan Balsam destroying.

The first meeting of the new period was held on Tuesday 15th May 2012.

Discussions included: The proposed Lease update – still awaiting production by BDC.
Development Plan - Produced by Steve Dalliston (copy to all members)
Interpretation Board – It was proposed to have an unveiling on Lucy's Meadow on 21st July 12. (This was cancelled due to BDC non approval).

Meeting 02 July 2012 (by E-Mail)

BDC produce a lease for the Scarning Water Meadow. A copy of the lease was sent to all members of the SWMC. It was a unanimous decision by all members that the lease was not fit for purpose. The lease was written for a house or property and not for a conservation area. All members had also read the Scarning Water Meadow Management Plan and were happy with its presentation and content. After approval by the SPC the lease was returned to BDC with the Management Plan requesting that a new Lease be written with the Management Plan actions incorporated.

Meeting 12th July 2012.

This meeting was held on the Scarning Water Meadow to assess any damage that required repair. The following damage was found:
a. The Area and Footpath by the stream north east of playing field – The bridge had brickwork and mortar missing which had been washed away by the stream. The footpath had surface areas missing due to the flooding of the stream.
b. Other matters included: The Main Playing Field had large amount of weeds in its grass content. The Small Football Pitch required essential maintenance -including removal of bricks and reseeding of areas and more signs were required discouraging dog fouling.

A meeting with BDC to address the above points happened on 18th July 2013. The repair of the Bridge was already in hand by BDC –awaiting tenders and finances. The repair of the path was deemed too small at this moment.

Meeting 01st September 2012 (By Email).

Due to the Lease being rejected again by the SWMC a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) had been drafted by Stephen Faulkner and all members of the SWMC agreed to submit this after approval by the SPC to BDC for consideration instead of a lease.

Meeting 20th November 2012.

Further to the submission of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to BDC a meeting had been setup for members of the SWMC to meet BDC on 23rd November 2012 at Breckland District Council Offices.

It was agreed to build a new fence round one side of the play area off Ted Ellis Walk so that pedestrians and dog walkers would not cross the play area.

It was also agreed to approach BDC at the above meeting reference drainage and bridgework.

Meeting 23rd November 2012.

This meeting was held at the Breckland District Council Offices.

The point was put forward by the SWMC to BDC that the proposed Lease was not workable and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be more suitable.

BDC did not like the idea of the MOU and produced a Lease with the paragraphs/clauses amended which the SWMC had initially requested to be deleted or amended. It was agreed for the SWMC to take the new lease and study it.

The subject reference the damage caused by the Contractors on the Scaming Playing Fields was raised. BDC stated they would inform SPC of any further work that would affect the Scaming Parish. BDC also stated that on the completion of the work they would make good the area in consultation with SPC with the possibility of a new path being constructed going on to the Playing Field.

Meeting 11th December 2012.

The following were discussed:

1. New Lease and Map.

A study of the new Lease and map was carried out with several points for clarification or exclusion by BDC.

a. Exclude the pond at Blackthorn Drive until ownership decided.

b. Clarify Clause 3.23, 3.25, 5.4 and Schedule 1, clause 2.

Who is responsibility for maintaining all conduits?

The Ownership of the small white triangle on the map near the bridge and stream.

A request to extend the proposed new lease to 2028 was made.

2. Childrens Play Areas.

It was agreed to put up two new signs at the large play area and one sign at the Ted Ellis Walk Play Area stating "Children's Play Area No Dogs". It was also agreed to attach hooks to the play areas to tether dogs outside the fences.

A fungicide/limber treatment that included algaecide is required to treat all wooden outdoor play equipment as noted in the Play Area Inspection Report.

Meeting 5th March 2013.

The main subject of this meeting was to analyze the letter from BDC with the clarification of the clauses and points raised by the SWMC of the new Lease.

All clauses and points were accepted by the SWMC except for the following:

- a. Responsibility of dangerous trees- who once the Lease is signed does the Lease Holder or Owner bear the responsibility?
- b. Request a Break Clause in the Lease.
- c. Further clarification of which agencies are responsible for the maintenance and repair of the conduits.

Other items on the agenda included:

- a. Arrange an onsite inspection to consider location of new benches and a picnic table.
- b. Accept the quote of Sulec to clean Play Equipment and Outdoor Fitness Equipment.
- c. Accept the quote of CGM to reseed the goalmouth area
- d. Arrange a Village Litter Pick in May 2013.
- e. New member appointed Fiona Bradford to sub committee.

Meeting 26th March 2013 (by E-Mail).

An e-mail (sent to all members of SWMC) from BDC was received on 20th March 2013 stating:

- a. That the Parish Council would be responsible for any dangerous trees once the lease was signed.
- b. That BDC would include a six month break clause in the lease.
- c. That they would ask their solicitors to draft some wording regarding the conduits stating "to the best of their knowledge" reference the responsibility of maintenance or repair by agencies.

The response by the SWMC was to ask the Parish Clerk to return the following response to BDC:
a. Conduits-It was felt that BDC answer was too vague and that BDC would know who was responsible for the maintenance of the conduits.

b. Dangerous Trees- Due to Insurance requirements it was important for all dangerous trees to be identified and rectified by a survey being carried out.

Conclusion.

It is the SWMC goals to be involved in producing a Lease for the Water Meadow that will be workable for a Parish Council without consequences and making the Water Meadow a place that the public will appreciate through leisure and its natural resources.

Report for AGM

Some of Breckland Council Achievements for 12/13

- **'Could We – Should We consultation'** - 746 responses, over 300 people attended meetings. The results will help inform how savings are made and services are delivered over the next 5 years. Including, keeping free parking in market towns
- **Raising Council Tax** (by less than 10p per week for Band D, still the lowest DC Council Tax)
- **Assets and Property** - Asset achieved end of year 97% let, c£2.1m raised from commercial property.
- **Welcome Home Parade** - The Light Dragoons parade attended by an estimated crowd of 6000 people including nearly 1000 schoolchildren and 100 VIP's.
- **Big (Energy) Switch and Save** - led on the launch for the initiative for Breckland and the other five LAs across Norfolk involved in the scheme.
- **Anti Social Behaviour** - 26% reduction in antisocial behaviour to 31 March 2012 and then a further 14% to date. The figure is significant as it is the third year in a row that the Breckland District has seen double figure reduction in ASB.
- **Economic Development** - Through the REV ACTIVE Project 119 local businesses have had site visits from a Breckland EDO and £1,300,000 cost savings have been identified over the last 12 months

12/04/2013

- **Housing** - The Enabling Team (Affordable Housing) worked to deliver 118 new affordable dwellings since April 2012.
- **Breckland Training Services Launched** – Training to other Councils, UEA, LGA
- **Environmental Health** - Seen a continuing upward movement of ratings awarded at the time of routine food safety inspections under the National Food Hygiene Rating scheme. Currently over 96% of the 1,141 eligible food premises have the top 3-5 ratings, with 8% rated as being categorised 'Generally Satisfactory', 27% as 'Good' and 61% as 'Very Good'.
- **Shared Management** - Share CEx and Head of Housing over 3 Councils, delivering service improvements and savings on budget.
- **Budget** - Overall efficiency target for **F/Y 12/13** and **FY 13/14** achieved but, but further difficult decisions and savings required over the Mid Term Financial Plan. As shown below, unless we take direct action, by FY 17/18 we have a budget gap of £2.5m

April 2013

Good evening everyone and apologies for not being able to be with you this evening.

Firstly I would like to thank all the residents of Scarning and the Parish Council for their fantastic support and kindness throughout the past 4 years and especially during the past 9 months which has been emotionally difficult on a personal front. It is with regret that this will be my final annual report as your County Councillor as I decided not to re-stand due to personal reasons.

Together we have had significant achievements for our parish such as

- improvements to Draytonhall Lane after the numerous incidents
- the opening of the new recycling centre
- the huge tidying up of Riverside
- proposed highway safety improvements to Dereham Road after a spate of crashes

As a County Council, Norfolk has

- not increased their share of the council tax for the last 3 years
- released a further £20m investment for road improvements
- there have been no library closures in Norfolk
- purchase of new fire engines & also investment at the Dereham station
- an additional £1m to support school improvements
- secured funding for rolling out better Broadband for rural areas

Thank you once again for your incredible support and it's been an absolute privilege to serve you all and please be assured that I will give support to my replacement ensuring a smooth handover.

Kind regards as always
Diana