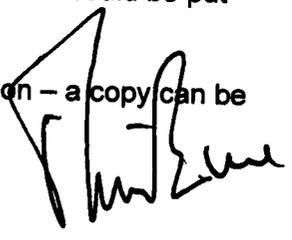


**HOLTON ST MARY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
WEDNESDAY 10th April 2024 2000hrs
HOLTON ST MARY VILLAGE HALL**

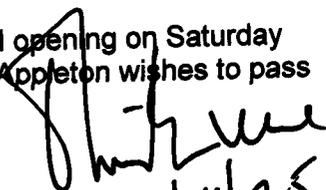
MINUTES

Present: Oliver Greene (Chair), Faye Hall (Clerk), John Ward (District Councillor), Georgia Hall (County Councillor) and 14 Parishioners

1. **Chairman's Welcome:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Mark Rogers, Cllr Mike Hay, Cllr Claire Rowan, Richard Appleton, Jeanette Appleton, Bob Holmes, Sally Thurlow, Liz Norton and Jan Cheng.
3. **Minutes of 2023 Annual Parish Meeting:** To agree as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 12th April 2023: The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.
4. **Matters Arising:** None
5. **Parish Council: Chairman's Report:** The report was presented by the Chairman and is attached in Appendix A. A Parishioner asked if the Chairman had any thoughts on what should go where the hedge between Church Square and the Churchyard has been removed. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council and the PCC will discuss options of what could go there and that a boarder needs to be maintained between Church Square and the Churchyard. A resident raised that Pylons and that an alternative option is to go underground using HDVC. James Cartlidge is holding a public meeting on the 26th of April 7pm at Hintlesham Village Hall and National Grid are holding a public information event at Copdock Village Hall on the 1st of May between 11am-4pm. The Chairman encouraged everyone to look at the documents that have been sent out by National Grid and comment. Clerk to look into whether the Parish Council can make a donation to the Pylon Campaign Group as funding will be needed for legal fees etc.
6. **Parish Council: Financial Report:** The report was presented by the Clerk and is attached in Appendix A. A Parishioner asked when CIL money will expire, the Clerk advised that CIL money must be spent within 5 years of being received but the Clerk has double checked with Babergh and they have advised that they usually do not ask for it back.
7. **District Councillor's Report:** District Councillor John Ward presented his report – a copy can be found in Appendix A. A Parishioner asked how the free parking in Hadleigh if you were attending the doctors would be applied, Cllr Ward advised that in the doctors surgery there will be a screen to put your vehicle registration into and this would be the same if you were parking to collect a prescription. This will only apply to Toppesfield Hall carpark. There will be no carparking charges after 6pm, on Sundays or bank holidays and blue badge holders are free. A Parishioner asked if Holton St Mary was going to be reclassified from a hinterland to a hamlet – Cllr Ward advised that he will look into this. The Chairman commented in the previous Babergh Plan Holton was designated as a hamlet and that that if HSM was a hamlet then commercial developments such as the ones that we are dealing with now would not be approved.
8. **County Councillor's Report:** County Councillor Georgia Hall presented her report – she highlighted school funding – if any children in Holton St Mary receives funding for travel to school they need to reapply for this funding. Parents will receive emails but has asked if this could be put on Facebook. A copy of the full report is attached in Appendix A.
9. **Speeding and Road Issues Report:** The report was presented by Mark Anderson – a copy can be found in Appendix A.

9/4/24 

10. **Parish Church Report:** The report was presented by Paul Torrington – a copy can be found in Appendix A. Paul confirmed that the border between Church Square and the Churchyard will be reinstated.
11. **Social Club Report:** In the absence of Bob Holmes the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A. If anyone would be interested in volunteering for the Committee or the bar rota then please contact the Social Club.
12. **Village Hall Management Committee Report:** Peter Longmate presented the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A. Peter advised that they have a rough cost of £400,000 for the works that could be done to the Village Hall so they are now working through what could actually be potentially achieved.
13. **Millennium Green Trust Report:** The report was presented by Pam from the Millennium Green Trust – a copy can be found in Appendix A. The Green has been going now for 25 years now and all the infrastructure is deteriorating so expenditure will increase over the coming years. Pam thanked Marjorie Haste for 25 years of commitment to the Green.
14. **United Charities Trust Report:** The report was presented by Frances Torrington – a copy of the United Charities Trust accounts can be found in Appendix A. The constitution of the trust is in the process of being changed. The piece of land between the Church and the Millenium Green, now known as the Well Piece, will be leased to a community project for a small fee. This will be known as The Well Piece Community Garden. Ongoing plans are for accessibility to the garden from the Church and Millennium Green and for a compost toilet to be placed in the Well Piece Community Garden so that the Church has a toilet that can be accessed. Anne and Bill Priestley are leading the community group and would like to get as much information as possible as to what residents would like in the Community Garden and would like to incorporate as many ideas as possible. They have already had volunteers come forward to help and people are able to make donations towards the garden.
15. **Constable Country Medical Practice Patient Participation Group Report:** In the absence of Jan Cheng the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
16. **FFOTMLC (First Friday of the month Lunch Club) Report:** In the absence of Sally Thurlow the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
17. **Slow Stitch Group Report:** In the absence of Jeanette Appleton the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
18. **Green Gym Group Report:** In the absence of Richard Appleton the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
19. **Litter Picking Team Report:** In the absence of Richard Appleton the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
20. **HSM Woman's Book Club Report:** In the absence of Liz Norton the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
21. **Facebook Report:** In the absence of Sally Thurlow the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
22. **Village Recorder Update:** In the absence of Sally Thurlow the Chairman read out the report – a copy can be found in Appendix A.
23. **Any other business:** The Little Free Lending Library will be having a grand opening on Saturday 20th of April at 2pm on the Millennium Green by the willow tunnel. Jeanette Appleton wishes to pass


9/4/25

on her thanks to County Councillor Georgia Hall for enabling this project to come to fruition by supporting the application for funding.

Meeting closed at 2130hrs


9/4/25

Appendix One – Reports

- 1. Parish Council: Chairman's Report**
- 2. Parish Council: Financial Report**
- 3. District Councillor's Report**
- 4. County Councillor's Report**
- 5. Speeding and Road Issues Report**
- 6. Parish Church Report**
- 7. Social Club Report**
- 8. Village Hall Management Committee Report**
- 9. Millennium Green Trust Report**
- 10. United Charities Trust Report**
- 11. Constable Country Medical Practice Patient Participation Group Report**
- 12. FFOTMLC (First Friday of the month Lunch Club) Report, Facebook Report and Village Recorder Update**
- 13. Slow Stitch Group Report**
- 14. Green Gym Group Report**
- 15. Litter Picking Team Report**
- 16. HSM Woman's Book Club Report**

HOLTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
Annual General Meeting
10th April 2024

Parish Council Report

Parish Council Members

Mark Anderson

Mike Hay

David Johnson

Oliver Greene (Chair)

Mark Rogers

Claire Rowan (Vice Chair)

Parish Clerk: Faye Hall

Following the ending of Covid restrictions all Parish Council meetings were held face to face. Zoom meetings are not permitted. We were joined on most of them by John Ward our Babergh Councillor and Georgia Hall our Suffolk Council representative. Their knowledge and support have been greatly appreciated.

Council Membership

Janice Cheng and Sally Thurlow stepped down at the election last May. We thank them for their many years of service to our community. Oliver Greene and Claire Rowan were elected Chair and Vice Chair respectively. For much of the year we operated as a team of four but are very fortunate now to have been joined by Mark Rogers and David Johnson. They are very welcome particularly as they bring diverse experience to the table. Faye Hall has done a sterling job in her role as Parish Clerk.

We are still at least one Councillor short but hope that one or more candidates will come forward during the course of this year.

Planning

The Council considered some 15 planning applications, including applications outside the village boundary that also impact the village. The latter included the housing development at Brett Vale Golf Course, the winery proposal at Holton Hall Farm, developments at Notley Enterprise Park.

The application for the large rehabilitation facility at Holton Hall Farm is currently scheduled to be considered on 17th April. Moreover, the proposed wine factory also at Holton Hall Farm, will be considered fairly soon. Besides yet more noise and traffic through the village and 24/7 operation, if approved, the winery would be a precedent setting first manufacturing facility at that site, leading to creeping industrialisation with the consequential impacts on our village. As a Parish Council we opposed both these proposals; the only supporters appear to have actual or potential commercial connections with the applicants. If you agree with us, please

write to planninggreen@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk to express your views; It may be useful. The determination deadline is 16th April.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have completed and received approval for Part 1 of their Joint Local Plan in which its development and other policies are stated. The next phase is the allocation of sites for development and we shall be looking at these insofar as they might affect our village directly or the wider environment around it. We urge you to look at this too.

Finance

This year we have lived within the last precept that is used to pay for the maintenance of parish assets, paying the wage of our excellent Parish Clerk and covering the costs of Parish Council meetings, grass and other maintenance, dog bin emptying, repainting of the pump, replacing styles with the new footpath gates, new signs and other improvements. We have been fortunate to have had the support of our District and County Councillors in providing funding for Jeanette Appleton's Little Lending Library project. And Community Infrastructure Funds (CIL) are being used to upgrade the footpath styles around the village to make them more accessible. We continue to have some CIL funds available that can be allocated to qualifying projects. We expect to receive a request for the Well Piece community garden project and the Village Hall as that initiative develops. Additionally, in conjunction with the PCC, work will need to be undertaken on remedying the border between Church Square and the Churchyard.

Although we have suffered inflation in a number of our ongoing costs, we decided not to increase the precept for 2024/2025.

Volunteering

Our village is blessed with a significant number of members who volunteer their time to activities designed to make the village a more cohesive and enjoyable place to live, particularly as our infrastructure is so limited. Initiatives such as the Green Gym group, the Litter picking group, the First Friday of the Month Club cooks, music events that increase footfall in the village hall, the Little Lending Library and others all contribute to the betterment of our situation; a special mention goes to those involved with the production and distribution of the Quartet Magazine- a wonderful source of information about Holton St. Mary village and our neighbouring villages. Going forward, the exciting project of redesigning the Village Hall will involve yet more benefits so I am hopeful that the requisite funding for that will be raised. Those of you who have participated as volunteers, too many to mention individually, have our sincere thanks.

Communications

Subject to the usual data protection issues I would like to improve our communications within the village so that those who cannot get to meetings or pick up information in the Quartet Magazine or on the Parish website can have another avenue through which to get know what we are up to and reminders of meetings and events etc. In this regard we intend to send out a short form requesting your email details if you have one; but it is by no means a requirement. This initiative will simply be an addition to and not a substitute for existing communications. In the past we have used leaflets and a bit of door knocking. But these are time consuming and can be expensive.

The future

Turning to the current year specifically I would like to mention the following issues that continue to challenge us.

- **Development.** Residential and commercial development in Babergh District has continued to grow, placing increased pressures on the village from through traffic including HGVs and noise, pollution, etc. Owing to our proximity to the A12, attempts to commercialize nearby are likely to continue. As mentioned above, at the time of writing there are two major development proposals awaiting Babergh consideration that could place more pressure on our quality of life. As a designated hamlet under the Babergh Mid-Suffolk plan, these projects are wholly inappropriate; we will continue to oppose them. We will continue to press Babergh Council Planning to ensure we are consulted about any planning applications that affect the volume of traffic, noise or other disturbance to Holton and consider its cumulative effect.
- **Speeding through the village** remains a major issue despite the installed ANPR cameras and occasional attendance by Police Officers. We are proposing to join with Raydon Parish Council to commission an independent speed survey to ensure our data on speeding is current. We will support initiatives to reduce the speed limits between Holton and East Bergholt and between Holton and Raydon to 40 mph which will be more pressing as the East Bergholt development builds out. We thank Mark Anderson for his unstinting work on this issue.
- **National Grid's pylons project** will also be a major challenge and, even though it is proposed to underground it near to us, the disruption would be enormous. The case for offshoring is not being given appropriate weight: we need to consider the quality of life for our children and grandchildren.

On the other hand, it is encouraging to see more young people in the village, enjoying the amenity of the Millenium Green and other activities and we look forward to the evolution of the consultation processes for the Well Piece and the Village Hall that would greatly enhance our environment and facilities.

This year will see the 80th anniversary of D-day in June for which I expect plans will emerge soon. We shall be marking the planting of the rowan tree commemorating the coronation of King Charles 111 and, no doubt, many other events.

We look forward to representing you during the coming year. Come to our meetings if you can; after all, it is your village and what you think about it is important to us as your representatives.

Finally, my profound thanks to my fellow Councillors for their commitment, support and individual work on the business of the village.

Oliver Greene
Chairman

Parish Council – Financial Report for Year 2022-23 (Parish Clerk- Faye Hall)

This report may appear to be a year behind but this is because the accounting year ends in March and the accounts are then audited and agreed before they are reported to the Parish.

The audited end of year accounts for Year 2022/23 are summarised as follows:

Income	2021/22	2022/23
Precept	£8,016.00	£6,816
VAT Reclaimed	£561.55	£101.12
Interest	£1.01	£56.68
CIL	£0	£2083.73 (total at 31.03.23 £7,543.30)
Insurance claim (post & rails Church Sq)	£0	£0
Bank Compensation (received for poor customer service)	£0	£0
Locality Grant	£0	£0
Parish Grant	£67.00	
	£8,645.56	£9,057.53
Expenditure		
Payroll	£3,639.96	£3,838.66
Admin	£475.80	£110.65
Hall Hire/Zoom Expenses	£173.95	£157.00
Grass Cutting	£490.00	£522.24
Defibrillator	£82.00	£265.00
Insurance	£379.28	£379.28
Audit	£189.60	£193.20
Subscriptions	£145.33	£205.92
Website	£60.00	£0
Poppy Wreath	£30.00	£30.00
Dog Bin	£52.19	£52.19
Elections	£0	£0
Flowers	£0	£0
Training	£0	£312.00
Infrastructure	£0	£0
Noticeboard (funded by locality grant)	£304.80	£0
Expenditure covered by CIL Funds	£200.00	£0
Phone Box	£400.00	£0
ICO Fee	£35.00	£35.00
Solicitor Fees	£1,440.00	£0
	£8,097.91	£6,101.14

The total expenditure was lower than income in 2022/23, this is mainly due to additional income received of VAT reclaim, a higher amount of interest paid and a substantial amount of CIL money being received.

Assets £2935

Balances at 31.3.23

Current Account £4,439.93
Reserve Account £13,006.75 (Including CIL funds)

Financial Year 2023/2024

The Budget was set at £7,154.00.

The accounts will be audited by the Internal Auditor within the next few months. All the required documents including a copy of the Asset Register, the Certificate of Exemption and the Governance and Accountability Statements for the year will be published on the village website over the next few months. You are welcome to email the Parish Clerk if you have any queries about the accounts. hsmparishclerk@gmail.com

Budget for 2024/25

The Budget has been set at £7,154.00 so remains unchanged from the previous year. This includes costs towards general maintenance, training, subscriptions, insurance, defib batteries/pads, and other maintenance as required. This budget also allows for the cost increases for services.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Parish Council also has a remaining amount of £6,214.47 (as of 31.03.24) from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL is levied on the developer of new properties when any new homes are built, this money has to be spent within five years of receipt on infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on our Village).

Faye Hall – Parish Clerk

Brett Vale Annual Parish Meetings 2024

Babergh District Councillor's Report

New Administration

The Green, Independent and Liberal Democrat groups agreed to power-share at Babergh for the next four years after no party achieved an overall majority in the elections last May. Part of the agreement was to have a rotating leadership, with a change each May. Cllr David Busby was elected leader for the first year. Unfortunately, he had to step down in September and take a break from council business due to health issues, with me acting up temporarily into the leader's role. I will be handing over to Cllr Deborah Saw next month.

We set out our initial vision and priorities for the next four years and then held a major engagement exercise with residents, communities, businesses, stakeholders and partners – so they could tell us whether they think we are focusing on the right issues. It was a very useful exercise which confirmed that, for the most part, we have got the priorities right, but we did make some changes. The priorities are grouped into three themes:

- Revitalised and improved environment
- Thriving economy
- Resilient communities

State of the District reports

In October, we published our State of the District report, which provides a treasure trove of useful data on issues such as housing, environment, health and wellbeing, and the local economy. Insight from these reports is also helping influence future council priorities. The report is available on our website.

Planning

In November, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils formally adopted part 1 of our Joint Local Plan - the blueprint for the districts' future development until 2037. This followed examination by the inspectors over the Summer, followed by their assessment that the plan is sound. It is proving to be very effective – not only in giving clear guidance to developers, our planning officers and planning committee members, but also in defending appeals against planning decisions. Part 2 is now well underway.

We are also progressing a local listed building consent order to enable owners to install energy efficiency measures, including solar panels, in listed buildings, without the need for individual listed building consent.

Neighbourhood Plans

The number of parishes with Neighbourhood Plans is steadily increasing with 17 adopted now and another 21 are in progress. These have considerable weight as they form part of our planning policy

- More than 30 community projects in Babergh and Mid Suffolk have each received a share of more than £36,000 to keep residents warm and connected this winter.
- Other projects have received a share of £230,000 in grants and funding as part of our commitment to residents' wellbeing and ensuring communities have access to local community facilities.

Repairs and energy efficiency improvements in council houses

We are carrying out a major programme of repairs and installing energy efficiency measures in our council houses. The repairs programme has suffered recently for a number of reasons, but we have committed extra funding and are carrying out a major overhaul of the repairs service.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk received £1.6m of government funding last month to add to £2.25m already committed by the councils to install energy saving measures.

Homelessness Prevention

We continue to help households at risk of homelessness with more than 1,500 having been helped across Babergh and Mid Suffolk since 2019 as part of our homelessness reduction and rough sleeping strategy.

Changing Places Toilets

New fully accessible toilet facilities for those with additional needs are being installed with the help of a government grant. There will be one as part of the new café in Belle Vue Park in Sudbury, and I attended the official opening of another at Flatford Mill, managed by the National Trust, last month. Official openings of toilets – the glamorous life of a council leader.

Flood support

Emergency council teams worked to support areas impacted by floods this winter, particularly in the wake of Storm Babet in January, offering practical support, as well as information and advice on what to do for those whose homes or businesses were affected.

Budget

We have increased Babergh's element of council tax bills by 2.99%, the maximum we are allowed by government – any more would require a referendum to get approval. This is an additional £5.46 to £188.10 a year, or £3.62 per week, for a Band D home. Babergh's proportion is only 9% of the total council tax.

We have also agreed higher tax premiums for owners of second homes and long-term empty properties as part of a raft of measures to bring more homes back into use.

We have also had to increase our council house rents to ensure that we can afford ourthe repairs and energy efficiency improvements.

and, despite some cynicism, planning decisions are made on the basis of what a neighbourhood plan says, as Assington can attest.

CIL

Significant amounts of CIL continue to be collected from developers, with much going back to communities to fund community projects including play areas, cycle paths and village hall improvements, in addition to funding major infrastructure such as school extensions.

EV charging points in council car parks

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are installing 28 new electric vehicle chargers in our car parks, financed by a government grant. The government is encouraging councils to do this. This has proven to be controversial with many people questioning whether there is the demand. It may well be that we are ahead of the curve on this and, if it proves that demand is not as expected, we will return some of the bays to general parking until demand increases.

NG Pylons

The pylons saga grinds on.

The Norwich to Tilbury project non-statutory consultations took place last year and the 10-week statutory consultation started on 10th April.

Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk continue to oppose the plans and we have significant concerns, particularly over the impact on our residents and the environment. We continue to state our preference for a coordinated offshore grid as it provides the best technological solution for connecting the North Sea wind farms off the East Anglian coast with those further north, the interconnectors to the continent and delivery of the energy to London and the South-east. We don't believe this is being given the serious consideration it deserves. However, in the light of the recent NG ESO Review's assessment of underground HVDC we will look at this to determine how we respond to the consultation.

The Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement project is progressing towards its Development Consent Order. We have continued to submit formal opposition to the proposals, with concerns with the site of the Dedham Vale East CSE compound and the overhead section between the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley underground sections.

Community Support

We continue with our varied and important programme of support activities for our communities and residents. This work is often under the radar as it is not a statutory service, but it is valued greatly and makes a huge difference to many. We have:

- Provided support for residents struggling with the cost of living crisis.
- Provided activities to help tackle loneliness for older residents.
- Introduced a new scheme to improve the wellbeing of young people in schools and connect them with their communities.

Balancing the budget has only been achieved through the planned use of £1.1m of earmarked reserves. In total we are forecasting to use 48% of our earmarked reserves over the two years 2023/24 and 2024/25 – clearly not a sustainable position.

We are facing a forecast cumulative budget gap of £6.7m over the next four years and we will be undertaking a number of measures to address this: we are increasing the fees we charge for many of our discretionary services, we have identified further savings we can make in how we do things, we will reconfigure the senior leadership team, we will not fill staff vacancies unless the post is essential and we will postpone some capital projects, but we do want to try to maintain the services that many people want and value. There aren't any easy decisions, which brings me on to the most controversial: the decision to charge for short-term parking. The majority of stays will only cost £1 and we will be including measures to ensure those attending surgery appointments won't have to pay and to provide permits for parents dropping off and picking up children from schools. We simply have no choice but to do this and our charges will still be among the lowest in Suffolk – indeed the country.

Fears that businesses will suffer are simply not seen elsewhere – if this were true, it would mean that nearly every town in the country is struggling and councils everywhere would be rushing to remove parking charges. The truth is high streets thrive or fail for reasons unrelated to parking. What they have to offer matters.

Most councils are struggling: some have issued bankruptcy notices and other may well follow in the coming months. All, irrespective of political control, are critical of the current local government financing regime, which is no longer fit for purpose. A long-term settlement has been promised and postponed for many years. Along with other council leaders, I have called on the government to address the local authority funding crisis.

And finally...

Babergh, along with most county and district councils, was 50 years old on 1st April. Created by the Local Government Act 1972, the new councils came into being in 1974. Some, of course, have since undergone further reorganisation with the abolition of the short-live metropolitan county councils and the on-going formation of unitary councils. It will be interesting to see what the future brings for us. The previous local government structure lasted 80 years so change is probably inevitable at some point.

For all its perceived shortcomings, Babergh does work extremely well for our residents in increasingly challenging circumstances. So, it was wonderful to see our staff and councillors recognised by Babergh and Mid Suffolk being named UK council of the year 2024 at the prestigious iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards. I was delighted to represent Babergh at the ceremony at Church House, Westminster, last month. More glamorous than the opening of a toilet!

John Ward

Babergh District Councillor

Brett Vale

john.ward@babergh.gov.uk

Holton St Mary Millennium Green Trust

AGM REPORT FOR THE YEAR JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2023

The Millennium Green Trust has eight volunteer Trustees who maintain the Green on behalf of the village.

FINANCIAL REPORT The Trust ended the year on a sound financial footing with £9,485 in the bank. This was slightly down on the previous year because of an increase in overall expenditure. Insurance has increased, essential maintenance items were purchased and we paid for the removal of a dead tree. The Trustees rely on the support of the Century Club annual subscriptions as this is our only source of income. Half of the money received is returned in prize money and the balance used for the upkeep of the Millennium Green.

SPRING After the exceptionally dry year of 2023, this reporting year has been much wetter. This has had its challenges but also benefits. The newly planted hedge on the north side of the Green has established well and has not needed much additional watering. There was a wonderful display of snowdrops but it has been difficult to establish primroses. The willow tunnel didn't do very well and failing sections were replanted with Hornbeam by the Green Gym team. Most of the bird boxes were used and they have been monitored and maintained by Chris Haste.

SPRING INTO SUMMER After the bonfire area was cleared; an area of rubber matting was purchased to cover over the area. This not only provided a nicer base for the picnic table and chairs but also helped to suppress the weeds. In May, the Green was the centre of village celebrations for the coronation of King Charles 3rd. The social club committee organized a hugely successful and well attended dance and hog roast in a large marque. True to form for an English summer, the rain poured down all evening but it certainly didn't dampen spirits! Anne and Bill Priestley designed and managed a 'crown trail' around the Green: the trail was highlighted by knitted crowns, supplied by the Slow Stitch Team, and fastened around the trunks. Late summer, Jeanette Appleton organized the first Teddy Bears' picnic and this was enthusiastically attended by several Holton families. Weather permitting; the Green was a weekly 'get together' venue for informal drinks and chat.

AUTUMN Unfortunately, another mature tree had to be taken down when a Chestnut near the church entrance to the Green, split and was found to be rotten in the centre. At the same time two smaller dead trees were taken down. The very popular and excellent village fireworks and bonfire was held in November and enjoyed by everyone.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE Throughout the year there were many ongoing tasks to maintain the Green. There was a regular risk-assessment, the finding of which were recorded and action taken where necessary. This year there was a proliferation of goose grass to remove, stinging nettles to be cut back in some areas and large rabbit holes filled in, where possible, but this was a losing battle. The grass was cut regularly and leaves raked up on the wild

flower meadow. The picnic tables and chairs got an annual clean and a preservative applied. Richard Appleton repaired the stepping logs and continued to maintain the willow tunnel.

In conclusion, the Green remains at the center of our community, enjoyed by many all-year round. It would not be possible to keep up such a high standard and the Green looking so lovely without the income the Trustees receive from the Century Club Draw: a huge thank you to everyone who contributes to this. We are also most grateful to those people who are not Trustees but willingly give their time to help out. Finally, thank you to all the Trustees for their continued enthusiasm and commitment to ensure the Millennium Green remains a special and valued part of our village.

Millennium Green Trust

Samford Report 2023-2024

April 23 - 99% of pupils receive a preferred primary school place on National Offer Day

99.18% of children were offered a place on National Offer Day at one of their three preferred primary schools and 95.78% were offered a place at their first preference school.

Suffolk County Council received 7,056 applications from parents and carers indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to join in September 2023.

Families who applied online can log on to the Admissions Portal from today to see the school their child has been offered. They will also receive an email to confirm this offer. Letters will be sent to parents who made a paper application by second-class post today (17 April 2023).

May 23 - Revised policy agreed to protect Suffolk's water supplies

Suffolk County Council Cabinet has today (16th May) agreed to a revised infrastructure policy to support water security in the region.

As part of its focus on adapting to a changing climate, Cabinet members agreed a revision to the Energy Infrastructure Policy to cover future projects needed to protect and maintain water resources, including reservoirs, pipelines, and water recycling plants.

This new policy addition lays out how future water infrastructure projects will be managed and the council's role with stakeholders, such as the water companies, Ofwat and the Environment Agency. It also sets out how the council will recover the money it has to spend in the planning process for infrastructure projects.

June 23 - Suffolk Fire Service to bring control room back to the County

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has announced plans to create a new fire control centre here in Suffolk.

Since October 2011, Suffolk has shared a control room with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire and Rescue Service in Huntingdon. The joint project has worked well, saving both fire services money and enabling greater cross-border resource sharing.

However, the company behind a project to deliver a new IT system, initiated in 2019, has run into technical and financial problems, causing a significant delay. This, in addition to advancements in technology, has led to the decision to bring fire control back into the county by the end of 2024.

The proposed new control centre will be brought to Suffolk County Council's Cabinet for approval in September 2023.

July 23 - Councils set out concerns as public consultation opens for Norwich to Tilbury proposals

National Grid has opened its consultation to anyone wishing to comment on its Norwich to Tilbury proposal, previously known as East Anglia Green. This is an eight-week non-statutory consultation period which closes on 21 August 2023.

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The project will see a new 400kV electricity transmission line built between Norwich and Tilbury, running a distance of 111 miles. It will be made up mostly of overhead lines and pylons, along with some underground cables and a new substation.

The new consultation reveals the route for the pylons, passing through Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. It shows the line will run underground through the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the Essex-Suffolk border.

The consultation is open to residents, landowners, businesses and any individuals or groups that may be interested in commenting on the revised proposals. Consultees can participate online or via face-to-face events.

Essex County Council, Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council are also being consulted on the proposals as statutory consultees. All three councils have already raised concerns to the initial consultation undertaken last year.

August 23 - Formal opening of £1.3 million Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service training centre

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre at Wattisham Flying Station near Stowmarket has recently undergone a £1.3 million upgrade.

It now boasts a tactical firefighting facility, which uses real fire and an LPG-fired facility to simulate incidents firefighters may be faced with.

The most recent addition is the modular office complex, which features additional classrooms and welfare facilities for all delegates and staff.

The centre was formally declared open at the annual base families' day on Thursday August 24 by Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Jon Lacey of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and Colonel Toby R Moore MBE, Station Commander, Wattisham Flying Station.

September 23 - Inflation, SEND school transport and care costs contribute to council's predicted overspend

Inflation, school transport for children with SEND, and looking after children in care are the main factors for SCC forecasting to spend £22.3m over its £688.1m budget for this year.

This is a similar story for many councils across the country, due to higher demand for their services, inflation remaining higher than expected for longer, and interest rates rising to levels not forecast by financial markets.

Recent research by the County Councils Network suggests that England's largest councils will need to make at least £1bn in savings to balance their current 2023/24 budgets.

A BBC investigation also reported that councils expect to be £5.2bn short of balancing budgets by April 2026, the average council facing a £33m predicted deficit by 2025-26.

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Suffolk County Council projects a 4% overspend (£29.3m), to be partially offset by an additional Section 31 grant from Government, and additional income from the pooling of business rates with the district and borough councils in Suffolk, totalling £7m.

October 23 - New highways services arrive in Suffolk as multi-million-pound partnership goes live

The new contract, which is worth in the region of £800 million - £1 billion, will deliver highway projects and improvements across Suffolk for up to 20 years, including maintaining roads, pavements and rights of way, improving drainage, hedge trimming, construction of new road schemes, snow-clearing and gritting and much more.

Milestone Infrastructure, part of M Group Services, was awarded Suffolk's new highways services contract back in February and since then has been working with Suffolk County Council to mobilise the new contract ahead of it commencing on 1 October.

When seeking a new highways partner, the county council wanted a keener focus on delivering greater social value, building on the council's commitment to carbon reduction and protecting the environment, using local skills and talent, and giving young people the opportunity to work in the sector.

With this in mind, the new partnership was built around six key contract objectives, which will form the basis for all that Suffolk Highways delivers going forward. These objectives are:

- Collaboration and Partnership
- Social Value
- Environment and Net Zero Carbon
- Customer Communication and Engagement
- Commercialism and Enterprise
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

November 23 - Cabinet approved £10 million new funding to resurface residential roads

At Suffolk County Council's Cabinet meeting (7th November), Cabinet approved an extra £10 million to repair and resurface local roads in villages and residential areas across Suffolk.

The funding will nearly double Suffolk Highways' £11 million annual road maintenance budget but be targeted at smaller residential streets which are typically maintained less frequently than busier A and B roads.

Over recent years, the county council has recognised the importance of improving roads for residents, this new proposal follows the successful £21 million contribution towards the resurfacing of 1,000 miles of road between 2017 and 2021, and more recently the committed £21 million between 2021 – 2025 to increase pavement maintenance, deliver drainage improvement schemes and repair road signs.

It is hoped that the extra £10 million boost to resurface some local roads, minor rural roads and urban cul-de-sacs would result in a reduction of new potholes, which in turn will reduce the overall financial burden on the council's emergency and reactive repair budgets. Between 2020 and 2023, 2

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out of 3 pothole repairs were carried out on local roads, minor rural roads, and urban cul-de-sacs. During that period, more than half of all defects reported by the public were on these types of roads.

The extra investment will make use of more sustainable materials such as warm mix asphalts that have a lower CO2 footprint than traditional hot mix asphalts and which include recycled materials to reduce raw material use; resulting in a more positive impact on Suffolk's environment.

December 23 - Government backs A12 road improvements with funding commitment

The government has confirmed (on 31st October) funding for a transformative package of improvements as part of Suffolk County Council's A12 Major Road Network scheme.

The scheme will see upgrades to the key roundabouts from the A14 at Seven Hills, east of Ipswich, north to the A1152 at Woods Lane, and a new dual carriageway section replacing the existing single carriageway bottleneck at Seckford Hall between the B1438 and B1079.

It will also deliver improvements to bus links and walking and cycling connections to reduce the issue of severance for communities on either side of the A12 – for example, where the A12 separates houses from local employment and retail areas.

The Department for Transport has committed to funding up to £ 54 million of the scheme's estimated £ 64 million total cost. The remainder of the cost will be funded by local development contributions, including from Sizewell C and Brightwell Lakes.

January 24 - More public money for adult and children's care, but difficult decisions are needed to balance the books

In the next two years, Suffolk County Council needs to pump almost £74 million extra into protecting the county's most vulnerable residents.

- £74 million extra needed to protect the most vulnerable over two years
- £64.7 million savings to be made over two years
- Council set to reduce workforce, services and use savings

As part of financial plans to prioritise those in greatest need, an additional £42.7 million for children's services and £29.9 million for adult care are being proposed.

Along with local authorities up and down the country, the council has been hit hard by inflation and rising demand for services such as children's care, special educational needs and disabilities and home to school transport. It means having to make difficult decisions about the services it provides, including £64.7 million of savings in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The two-year savings proposals, which have been published on the council's website today, include:

- £11 million of staffing costs through changing the way services are delivered and restructuring across the council.
- £30.6 million of additional savings from an extension of the council's hugely successful Adult Social Care Transformation programme, which has focused on reducing demand for more expensive social care options by boosting people's independence and ability to stay well for

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longer through innovative methods including cutting edge care technology. This transformation programme has already saved £30.7 million over the last six years

- £0.5 million of savings by stopping core funding to Art and Museum sector organisations. To assist with the transition, £528,000 of COVID recovery money will be made available to Arts and Museum sector organisations for 2024/25 which will fully cover the funding reduction for one year.
- £140,000 of savings by centralising Suffolk Archives to The Hold and closing the branches in West and East Suffolk. In February 2023, the council committed £3.4m to relocate the West Suffolk Archives branch to the proposed Western Way development. Remaining at its current location would have required over £5 million to protect the historic records and meet modern archive standards. West Suffolk Council has since decided not to progress with the Western Way development, ending that opportunity. Centralising the three branches into one brings Suffolk in line with the majority of archive services across the country and is better value for taxpayers' money.
- £15.9 million of reserves will be used to balance the 2024/25 budget.

Feb 24 Public consultation on Suffolk County Council's proposed devolution deal starts on 18th March

A 10-week public consultation on our proposed devolution deal with the Government will start on 18th March and run through until 26th May. The consultation will be in two main parts – an open survey, hosted by Suffolk County Council, that any residents can complete and a sample survey of 1000 Suffolk residents conducted independently by Ipsos Mori. The consultation will be available through our website www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution and social media. There will also be media coverage highlighting the consultation.

Speeding and Road Issues Report

Speeding traffic remains an issue for road safety in the village, including Bacons Green. Because of this, we get regular safety camera visits with continued support from Suffolk Police. We get the speeding camera system (ANPR cameras) and in rotation with other villages in Suffolk, here is an example of the data from the last placement of the cameras, 50% of the traffic was over the speed limit:

- Total photos taken – 1003
- 27-30mph – 452
- 31-34mph – 338
- 35mph+ – 213
- Fastest speed – 50mph

We still have the ongoing support from Suffolk County Council with the placement of the temporary speed warning sign.

The Parish Council have been looking into the idea of getting a gated village sign installed at the entrance to the village, Hadleigh bound and on the left-hand side.

Another road safety concern is regarding the T Junction that joins the B1070 from the Four Sisters A12 junction and the increasing number of accidents that have happened, SCC Highways are aware of the matter and reviews have been ongoing.

The 20s plenty scheme is being proposed and aims to reduce the speed limit to 20mph in certain places, the Parish Council have expressed an initial interest in the scheme.

Following a reported near-miss involving a cyclist and an HGV, the Parish Council contacted the company (Phillips Brothers) and it was agreed that it was unsafe for their HGV's to be able to safely overtake cyclists through the village and their drivers were instructed to not overtake.

Any road issues identified can be reported at any time by a resident using the online tool : <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>

Councillor Mark Anderson

REPORT ON HOLTON ST MARY PARISH CHURCH FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL: 2023/24

During 2023, our services followed the regular pattern of one communion service a month in Holton St Mary, usually on the third Sunday of the month, with services held in the other three churches, Stratford St Mary, Higham and Raydon on the other Sundays. We also held the occasional Evensong in Holton, usually on the first Sunday of the month.

There were no weddings, funerals or baptisms held in the church in 2023. It was decided not to hold the usual Advent Carol Service in the church, but instead a carol sing-along was held in the Village Hall shortly before Christmas with piano accompaniment provided by Emma Bishton. This was a great success and was attended and enjoyed by around 40 people from the village. We hope to repeat this again in 2024.

We continue to be led by the Rev'd Manette Crossman and Rev'd Nicola Tindall.

The fabric of the church is generally sound. May I take this opportunity of thanking the Parish Council for the support it has continued to show us in 2023 and in particular for keeping the churchyard tidy with regular mowing. The hedge between the churchyard and Church Square was removed, somewhat to the surprise of the PCC and I suspect the Parish Council. The PCC and PC will need to decide what to replace it with, if it is indeed replaced at all.

On a more positive note, the piece of land bordering the churchyard and Barbara Yorke-Edwards' garden which is owned by the United Charities' Trust, sometimes known as the Well Piece land, is to be developed into a community garden. This project is being discussed between the trustees of the United Charities and Anne and Bill Priestley.

The church finances are in good order. I would like to thank those donors who generously give on a regular basis, whose support we could not possibly do without. I would also like to thank those who have helped organise fund-raising events which also provide vital income for the church.

Finally, as always, may I take this opportunity to thank those in the village who assist with the upkeep and administration of the church in any way, whether that be serving on the PCC, helping with fundraising, participating in services, assisting with churchyard clean-up days, cleaning the church, decorating the church with beautiful floral displays, polishing the brass, cleaning and starching the linen, reviewing the church accounts, locking and unlocking the church, and anything else which serves to keep the church a living and vibrant part of our community.

PAUL TORRINGTON

Churchwarden

Holton St Mary Social Club Chairman's Report

The last year has been busy, but also sad with the passing of Gil Mann, Paul Smith and Ernie Eagle who were all prominent members of the Holton St Mary Social Club. Ernie Eagle was one of the original instigators in the setting up and building of the Village Hall and without his efforts the Social Club and numerous other activities would most likely not have happened. So with many happy memories we send our sympathies to their families.

It was not originally planned to have another large event in 2023, but a King's coronation is such a rare celebration, that it had been decided to have another dance on the Millennium Green which was heavily subsidised by the social club. This event was a lot of work for the committee and willing volunteers, but was enjoyed by everyone attending even though the weather and a leaky marquee tried hard to spoil the evening.

Other regular events were held throughout the year including 2 quiz nights, bonfire night and the progressive dinner (this is run jointly with the Church Fundraising Committee, with all proceeds going to support the church).

There were also some new ideas, a coffee and bacon get together on the Millennium Green, an impromptu carol singing evening, a meet and greet get together, plus Lee Rose singing on a number of occasions (which if you haven't been, you are missing out). All these events were well supported and enjoyed by all.

Unfortunately at the time of writing this, the financial accounts were not available but with the running of the coronation event along with the purchase of a new marquee, the accounts will show a loss.

There is no cost to become a member of the Holton St Mary Social Club. To join please come to the village hall on a Friday evening when the bar is open to sign up, or let a committee member know. The committee members for 2024 are Steve Sleight, James Lancaster, Lee Barton, Sally Longmate, Kevin O'Connor, Jayne Brown and Justin Brown.

Don't forget that the marquees owned by the Holton St Mary Social Club are free to use if you live in the village.

I would like to thank all of those who have helped during the year, especially the committee and the bar rota volunteers, as without your support the Holton St Mary Social Club would not exist.

If anybody is interested in volunteering for the committee or the bar rota, it would be greatly welcomed.

Thank you

Bob Holmes (outgoing Chairman)

Annual Parish Meeting April 2024

Report on Behalf of The Village Hall Management Committee

For the Year up to April 2024

The Hall has continued to be hired by its regular users throughout the past year, with the additional use of the Social Club as commented on in their annual report.

Following on from the feedback gathered in a recent survey the committee decided that it should investigate the possibility of modernizing the Hall. So, a sub-group was formed to consider what would be the best refurbishment solution.

The subgroup is currently working with a team from the local architect and are at the stage where we have received the costings of the initial feasibility study and are evaluating these prior to presenting our findings to the main committee in May.

Out with the larger project we have started to make a few small changes, firstly by renewing the fencing on the left-hand side, secondly along with the Social Club helping to have a new bench seat for use at the front, weather permitting of course.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members for their help and support over the past year.

Here's to an exciting year ahead,

•
Peter

Peter Longmate

Chairman VHMC.

April 2024

Litter-picking team: 2023-2024

We have had a very busy year, in part because we audited all the litter and rubbish collected in the calendar year of 2023. The full audit and analysis of the litter picked was printed in the February 2024 issue (426) of the Quartet; I will therefore not repeat the findings in this report. For the calendar year 2024 we are auditing all glass bottles. In part this is because there seemed to be a worrying trend in an increase in their number looking at the final three months of 2023. Unfortunately, this continues: in the first three months of 2024, we have collected 71 bottles, compared to 163 for the whole of 2023... Clearly, glass bottles and particularly if broken, pose a far greater risk to wildlife and all road-users than plastic bottles.

Richard Appleton *et al.*

Holton Women's Book Club Report 2024



Established 4 years ago, Holton Women's Book Club continues to meet on the first Thursday of every month. With a shared love of literature and a willingness to pursue new genres and authors, the book club provides the perfect opportunity to expand members' horizons and facilitate intellectual exploration. Bringing diverse viewpoints, unique individual life experiences as well as personal interpretations, the ensuing conversations around the chosen book of the month, are always lively and enjoyable. Members take turns to choose a book each month, secure in the knowledge that their choice is respected and they can feel at ease sharing their thoughts about the book.

During the past year we have continued to explore a variety of books including light hearted murder mysteries such as 'The Bullet That Missed' by Richard Osman; the fable type story of 'The President's Hat' by Antoine Laurain; and 'the story within a story' of 'Magpie Murders' by Anthony Horowitz.

'The Return' by Victoria Hislop provoked one of the most animated discussions in recent months. Combining family love and relationships, with a passion for flamenco dancing, the story sits against the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War. The atrocities committed, the political environment of the time not only in Spain but across Europe as well, became the focal point of the evening's discussion. We shared historic facts, personal anecdotes and made comparisons with the frailty of the current political agenda across the world.

Holton Women's Book Club is a friendly, informal group and no matter how serious our book discussions are, just getting together and chatting on a regular basis is great fun! Our book club is a place where 'words come alive, minds expand and hearts connect!'

If anyone would like to join Holton Women's Book Club, please contact Liz Norton on 07745607713

HOLTON ST MARY UNITED CHARITIES TRUST

Balance as 30 th November 2022	£4721.16
Interest accrued 31/5/23	£42.47
Interest accrued 30/11/23	£65.93
<u>Total as of 27/3/2024</u>	<u>£4829.56</u>

Capital (from sale of Charity Field)	£3931.75
Accrued rent and interest to 27/3/2024	£897.81

The sum of £897.81 is available for charitable works.

An application to access these funds can be made to the trustees via Paul Torrington.

No such application has been made in the last year.

Frances Torrington
27/3/2024

Trustees: Incumbent (Reverend Manette Crossman), Peter Cheng, Richard Noel, Sally Thurlow, Paul Torrington, Treasurer: Frances Torrington

HSM Annual Parish Meeting April 2024
Constable Country Medical Practice (CCMP) Patient Participation Group (PPG)
Report

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) has seven patient members. We meet every other month with the practice managers and a GP representative. The agenda is prepared by the PPG.

Management Staff

Mr Pete Keeble, Practice Manager retired in March this year. He has been replaced by Rachel Wilson who will be Business Manager. She has at least a decade of experience in malpractice managerial roles in Suffolk. Jack Ingram remains in post as Operations Manager.

Surgery Signage

Jack Ingram has worked closely with the PPG to introduce new signage within the surgeries. The signs are much improved on what went before and should make our orientation around the building easier.

Patient Information

Jack has also worked closely with PPG representatives to edit the new patient information pack. The thrust of this was to make it easier to understand, provide explanations and remove acronyms; to make it user friendly. One impact has been that after years of struggling to get new members to the PPG, we now have about 20 people interested! This is all because the name, role and function of the PPG was made clear in the pack.

Telephone System

Feedback about the 8 am telephone rush and queue has been consistent and not exclusive to CCMP. A new system has been installed and is now up and running. It means:

- You can have a sms message if you call from a mobile phone to book an appointment on e-consult.
- A call back option when demand is high - without losing your place in the queue.
- Clear options to speak to the right person.

I haven't experienced the new system yet so have not as yet formed a view on how it works in reality.

E-Consult

E consult remains an efficient option to get clinical advice for non urgent problems. It is now only available during surgery hours. This can be accessed via the website.

Extended Hours

The Surgeries are open 8am - 6.30pm. An extended hrs service (6.30-8pm weekdays, 9-5 on Saturdays) is provided in partnership with appointments provided at Hadleigh Surgery or Constable Country surgery (or sometimes another local surgery). Appointments can be booked via the reception team.

Jan Cheng

Annual Parish Meeting 10 April 2024 Reports

First Friday of the Month Lunch Club (9 years now)

We continue to run monthly lunches for anyone resident in Holton St Mary, together with friends of the village, former residents and family. One or two new attendees have become regulars this year, but there is room for more, and thanks to our lovely band of volunteers, we provide a light lunch (usually two courses) for £5 each. For the first time this year, we have spent our reserves on paying up front at the 2023 price for the hire of the Hall. It's a small but significant saving for a group that aims to break even and subsidise only the December lunch. We would like to thank our volunteers, without whom, we could not run this valuable community event that provides a chance for people to get together and have a chat over a home cooked meal. At a time when more people do more on their own at home, a bit of face-to-face interaction with people you might not otherwise see, is valuable and important in our community. Contact details are always in The Quartet and everyone is welcome.

Sally Thurlow & Frances Torrington coordinate it.

Holton St Mary Facebook Page

There are now 244 members of the village Facebook page and we continue to limit the number of times people can advertise things to once a month. We hope that this keeps the content a little more interesting and relevant to people. We receive tens of requests from people just wanting to advertise their businesses for free, who have no interest in the village or anything happening here, and we hope you agree that this is the right policy to maintain. Don't forget that if you need to find somebody, you can click on members and put their name in to see if they are in the group (and message them if they are, either via the group or by using the private message [messenger] link).

Sally Thurlow & Frances Torrington are the admins, and if you would like to be one or a moderator too, please message one of us.

Local History Recorder

This is my third year as the Local History Recorder in Holton St Mary and it is not an onerous role, requiring me to write an annual report for the Village (the APM written publication has been very helpful for this). The King's Coronation was the main event last year and I reported on the Social Event that the Social Club ran on the Millennium Green, along with a few day-to-day events, comings and goings.

Sally Thurlow

Slow Stitch Report

Slow Stitch is a drop-in group which has been growing steadily each year. We come together each month on the third Thursday at 2-4pm. Sometimes we work on our own projects and other times we work together on a community project. In May 2023 we decorated Church Square for the coronation of King Charles and then adapted the decorations for the Tour of England cycle race that followed soon after. We have also joined together to create a number of Christmas themed knitted items to raise funds for Marie Curie charity.

Our afternoons are relaxed and informal and always feature a cup of tea and plenty of conversation.

Jeanette Appleton

Green Gym Group: 2023-2024

The Green Gym and its dedicated and weather-beaten (not necessarily in the UK) 13 members have continued to sweep, dig, cut, prune, trim, mow and plant during 2023. We have worked at both ends and throughout the village, Church Square and the Millennium Green. As in 2022, and up to and including March 2024, only one month was lost through torrential rain. In most months we were blest with sunshine, although not always with its warmth... In view of the mild winter, the ground was rarely too hard to yield under our pressure. This included planting 200 daffodil bulbs with grateful donations from Alan Lester, as well as some very kind anonymous individuals. Maintaining our village's beauty will remain the responsibility of all (I repeat, all), its residents because for the foreseeable future, Babergh Council will understandably continue to address far more pressing demands on its shrinking budget. The Parish Council has kindly approved the replacement of the cracked tubs in Church Square and these will be baptised with beautiful blooms from June 2024 onwards. New members are always welcome to help maintain a beautiful village and to demonstrate to all road-users that many vulnerable people live on the busy B1070 and this should be respected. Finally, the Group are immensely grateful to all the thanks and encouragement we have received over the past year. Saying 'thankyou' is a wonderful fillip and de-stressor. Thank you ... for encouraging us!

Richard Appleton *et al.*