



### Let There Be Light!

It seems like we've had a long wait, but the lights alongside the new path to the Community Building are now in place. And what a difference they make!

They are controlled by a single key at the car park end of the new path. For any meeting or event, the keyholder (one of the Councillors) will turn them on on their way to the Building and turn them off again at the end of the meeting or event. So nobody has to make their way to or from the Building in the dark.

The lights are LED and therefore highly energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly. They will only be switched on when there is a meeting or event in the Community Building so as not to incur unnecessary expense or undue light pollution.

Why not pop along to the next quiz or Parish Council Meeting and see them for yourselves? A big thank you to Wensum Valley Electrical for an excellent job.

### Parish Council Contact Details

**Gail Robinson (Parish Clerk)** can be contacted on: 07594 410101 or emailed at [parishcouncil@weasenham.org](mailto:parishcouncil@weasenham.org)

**Martin Romanovsky (Chairman)** can be contacted on: 07913 031333 or emailed at [mrweasenhampc@gmail.com](mailto:mrweasenhampc@gmail.com)

**Tom McClenaghan (Vice-chairman)** can be contacted on: 07809 375942 or emailed at [tmweasenhampc@gmail.com](mailto:tmweasenhampc@gmail.com)

**Jackie Hargreaves** can be contacted on: 07887 653424 or emailed at [jhweasenhampc@gmail.com](mailto:jhweasenhampc@gmail.com)

Visit the Parish Council's website at: [www.weasenhamparishcouncil.org](http://www.weasenhamparishcouncil.org)



**W**elcome to the third edition of our Quarterly Newsletter. As always, it's been a very busy period for the Council.

December and January are the months when the budget is set for the forthcoming financial year. This is a huge responsibility for any Council as it's very important to strike the right balance between income and anticipated expenditure. We hope that we have achieved that. One brilliant piece of news is that our new path to the Community Building now has new lights alongside it. See the detail on back page.

### Upcoming Meetings

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Tuesday 19 March at 7pm. This will be preceded at 6.15pm by a short meeting of the Former Highways Surveyor's Land Charity.

Then on Tuesday 21 May we will have the Annual Parish Meeting immediately followed by Annual Parish Council Meeting.

The Annual Parish Meeting, unlike Parish Council Meetings, is *your* meeting. A chance to bring forward and discuss any relevant issues that concern the village.

The Annual Parish Council Meeting is a Councillor-led meeting and is where the Chair and Vice-chair are elected.

The meetings will commence at 6.30 pm.

# Parish Council

Quarterly

# Newsletter

Edition 3  
February 2024

### We Need More Councillors!

Following our previous co-option process, we swelled the number of Parish Councillors to five.

Unfortunately, we are now back at three, having lost two colleagues to resignation for personal reasons.

There is a lot of work to be done in the village if we are to continue to move forward in a positive way, but it's very difficult to achieve all that we want to achieve with only three out of a possible seven Councillors.

Continuing as we are may be unsustainable.

Please have a read of the enclosed leaflet and give some serious consideration to joining us.

We need enthusiastic people with diverse backgrounds and life skills.

The opportunity is open to the young and the not so young. The main thing is that you are able and willing to devote some time and energy to serving your community.

### **Potholes or other problems ...**

If you see a pothole, a damaged road sign or any other issue within the village, you can report it online at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/report-a-problem](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/report-a-problem). This is the quickest way to have the problem rectified. Of course, if you are unable to do this, your Parish Councillors will be able to help you. Just give any of them a call or send them an email.

### **Thank you ...**

Litcham school were parting with some furniture recently and we managed to get 34 plastic chairs for free for the village. They're stored in the container on the Recreation Field and will be useful for larger events in the Community Building or on the field. A big thank you to Emma Cunningham at Litcham School. The chairs will be added to our asset register.

### **Coffee Morning ...**

A coffee morning was held in the Community Building on Wednesday 7 February. This was open to all and it was free. The event was run by Debra Kruse and such was the turnout and positive feedback that she's organised another for Wednesday 6 March. Everybody is welcome so please come along, and have a free tea or coffee, and a good chat with neighbours and friends. Watch the village Facebook page for more information.

### **Community Building ...**

Please remember that the Community Building can be hired for almost any event. It's warm and comfortable and, in the sunnier weather, the kids can be playing outside in the field. There's a small charge to help cover energy and insurance costs. If you are interested in booking it, please contact Cllr Tom McClenaghan and he'll get you booked in.

### **Flooding in the Village**

We have all witnessed recently the ridiculous amount of water that bubbles up from the drains on Massingham Road, flows down Lambert's Lane and then makes its way along the ditches before cascading into Low Street by the ford. Rougham End, despite work having been carried out there some time back, is also still prone to flooding. The PC has been working on your behalf to try and get the problems resolved. Numerous emails have been written to our County Councillor, Mark Kiddle-Morris and our MP, George Freeman. We have tried to organise meetings of engineers and local residents, but to no avail at this stage. As we write, work is scheduled in Low Street between 4 and 10 March. The plan is to pipe the ditch to the north of the ford. Time will tell if this will resolve the problem there.

### **Parish Clerk**

The Parish Councillors are delighted to report that our previously locum clerk, Mrs Gail Robinson, has now accepted the position of substantive Parish Clerk. Gail came to us highly recommended by the Norfolk Association of Local Councils. She is very experienced having been a Clerk for over 20 years and is very well qualified for the position. We extend a very warm welcome to her.

### **The Budget and Grass Cutting**

Your Parish Council spent many hours debating the budget for the financial year 2024-25. We were very conscious of the ever increasing cost of living and were keen to avoid an unnecessary increase in the parishioners tax burden, i.e. the precept. We finally arrived at what we believed to be a fair budget that covers all anticipated expenses for the year ahead, sets aside funding for future improvements within the village and builds in a reserve pot to protect our financial situation from the 'unknowns'. It also allowed us to set a precept for the year that is only slightly above what it was in 2023-24, but still marginally less than it was in the three years previous to that. The budget and precept were formally proposed and accepted at the Parish Council Meeting on 30 January. All that said, there is one area of the budget that the Council wants to address and that is the grass cutting costs. We are very fortunate in Weasenham to have lots of green areas and two lovely churchyards, but it all comes at a price. If we set aside for the moment the issue of mole catching, the current grass cutting agreement amounts to almost 32% of the total precept. This isn't too great a burden whilst we are in receipt of annual funding for the Solar Farm, but that isn't guaranteed, so we must identify ways of reducing the costs and safeguarding the village when that funding finally disappears.

The Council will shortly be undertaking a process whereby contractors will be asked to provide quotations for a grass cutting contract, but before finalising such a contract, we want you, the Parishioners, to have your say. To help you articulate your view, we have included a short questionnaire with this Newsletter. Please take a few moments to let us know what you think. You can scan the completed leaflet and email it to any of the Councillors, hand it back to any of the Councillors or drop it in the temporary letterbox that has been placed by the door of the Community Building.

Also, on the reverse of the leaflet, you will find some further space to let us know what you would like to see in the village in the coming years.

This is your chance to tell us what **you** want, please take it.

### **So what next?**

We've got the Community Building and a nice new, well lit path to it. So what is the next project? Obviously, the Council will listen to the community to see what you want. If suggestions are well supported, practical and affordable, we will definitely consider them. In the meantime, our thoughts are that the car park at the Recreation Field would benefit from being levelled out and made less prone to flooding. A floodlight, working in conjunction with the new bollard lights, and lighting up the car park, is also worthy of consideration. What do *you* think?