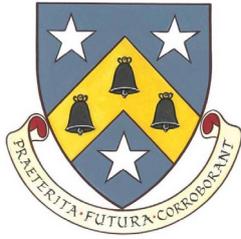


The Coat of Arms
of Lavenham



LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2017

IN BRIEF

- Adoption of Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Continued to welcome visitors with donations now covering the costs of the car parks and public toilets
- Engaged Sudbury Street Wardens to help control dog-fouling and address poor street parking
- Commented on 57 Planning applications
- Support for the Good Neighbours Scheme 'helping-hand'
- Launched our Emergency Plan
- Continued with the installation of new LED street lights
- Re-negotiated the lease for the Lavenham Railway Walk in preparation for taking it over
- Supported various local initiatives such as; the Pre-School development, Lavenham Art Festival, Carnival, Children's Book Festival, Cricket Club and others.'

THE PARISH COUNCIL -2016

2016 has been a milestone year with the public referendum and adoption of the Lavenham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016 – 2031.

On Thursday 8th September, the people of Lavenham approved in a referendum the Lavenham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016-2031.



Of the 537 people who voted some 91 per cent voted in favour of the adoption of the Plan. This was adopted by Babergh District Council to be made on the 20th September. They will now be required to follow this document in deciding planning applications in Lavenham. The culmination of four years work, engagement and consultation with the village and various external bodies carried out by the parish and district councils, lead to a review by an independent examiner.

The independent examiner remarked that-

This is an extremely well written neighbourhood development plan with clear explanation of objectives and logical justifiable explanation of many policies. Those involved in its production should feel proud of their achievement.

The biggest issue arising from the NDP was housing and local needs housing in particular. During the year outline planning permission was granted for 25 units behind the High Street, of which 8 will be affordable. Nearing completion for hand over to Babergh District Council in March are 12 one bed units at the end of Meadow close in Bears Lane. Early in 2017 planning permission was granted for the 18 affordable houses to be developed on the old County Highways site behind Harwood Place.

The perennial problems of traffic and street parking continue and we are grateful for the commitment of Will Shropshire and Jenny Antill our District and County Councillors in helping us to find workable solutions.

The Annual Parish Meeting, to which all residents are invited, will be held in The Guildhall at 7.30 p.m. on 13th April 2017

The Parish Council meets in public on the first Thursday of every month at 7.30 p.m. in the Guildhall. Minutes of our meetings are published in Lavenham Life and on our new website-

www. <http://lavenham.onesuffolk.net/>

Pete our street cleaner with Harriet the chariot



Sudbury Street Wardens

During the year we engaged the Sudbury Town Wardens to patrol the village. We asked them to look at two areas where they have the authority to take action. This authority is delegated from Suffolk Police.

The first is the issue of dog fouling. They can issue on the spot penalty notices to dog owners where they witness or have corroborative evidence of dog-fouling. It is unfortunate that we feel the need to resort to this, but needs must. First Meadow, for instance, whilst it is nice to think of this as a village amenity with its range of play equipment and open space being available for all users, the Parish Council regards it as unacceptable that there should be a few irresponsible dog owners that spoil things for the rest of us. Action may be necessary to close this space to dog owners.

The other area is street parking. We would ask residents to consider others and refrain from parking irresponsibly and often dangerously.



Church Gates



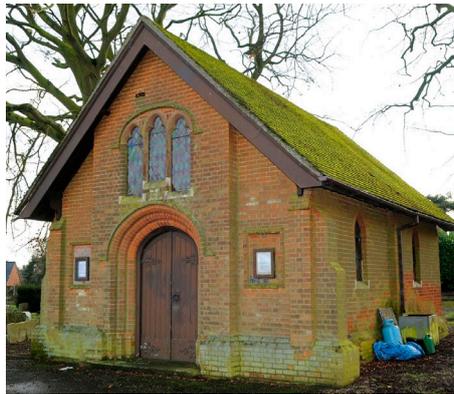
New gates to the Churchyard, in collaboration with the PCC

Precept

Lavenham Parish Council's Precept for 2017/18 is £69,000. A Band D taxpayer will pay £80.32, a decrease of 0.34% on 2016/17.

Cemetery Chapel

The Parish Council intends to refurbish the Chapel. As a first step over the weekend of 13/14th May, we are asking all users of the Chapel to help us clear out the space. Any items to be retained must be taken to a new location, and anything unwanted can be dumped in the skips that will be available. Anything unclaimed will be dumped in the skips.



Trees To assess the condition and safety of trees on land owned by the Parish Council a professional Arboricultural Report was commissioned early in 2016. It found that remedial works to trees for safety reasons were required on the 1st Meadow, Cemetery and Recreation Ground.

During 2016 this safety work was carried out by a local Tree Surgeon who also undertook hedge reduction on the Recreation Ground. Further maintenance work will take place this year.

Forest Schools: Fires, Trees and Mud

Facilitating holistic development, Forest School supports children to develop better concentration, perseverance and fine and gross motor skills. They learn to manage risks in a supported, enabling environment, which has the capacity to increase their self-esteem, fostering resilience and independence. Using natural materials children can develop creatively and can work on numeracy and literacy skills too, for example, creating a bird feeder from pine cones stuffed with berries, counting with sticks or acorns or scribing with charcoal sticks, natural paints or even mud if they choose!

Parish Councillor Emma Paris has taken a keen interest in this and is currently studying toward a Level 3 Forest School Practitioner qualification with the Green Light Trust in Lawshall and is looking to establish such a facility for the children of Lavenham.



Events During the year the village hosted many events including the Carnival, Art Festival, VW International, Children's Literary Festival, and the Christmas Street Fair. The weather was kinder to some than others, but a good time was had by all and their organisers are thanked for returning the village as they found it.

If you are planning an event in Lavenham it is suggested that you first consult with the Babergh Safety Advisory Group. As a guide any event likely to attract 500 or more members of the public need to consult with them at – <http://www.babergh.gov.uk/business/licensing/licensing-large-scale-temporary-events/>

TRAFFIC

A number of complaints have been made regarding speeding vehicles in and around the village and the frequent inconsiderate parking that occurs. Parish Councillors have met with our local police representative and have attended an open meeting with the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner. We have drawn attention to our concerns for the safety of road users in our community.



However, reductions in funding for the police coupled with increasing demands on them in respect of an increasing range of criminality, mean that we are some way down the list of priorities. We are exploring other possible means of addressing these problems.

Following these meetings, it has been decided that we should invest in a Vehicle Activated Sign that can be moved to various locations around the village. There are several types of these devices but what they all have in common is that they are activated by an approaching vehicle and flash up a warning to the driver that a 30mph speed limit is in force. There is no prosecution function associated with these signs. They are designed to concentrate the minds of errant drivers and have proved to be very effective in reducing the instances of speeding at numerous locations around the country.

The process of installing these signs is a partnership between the Parish Council and Suffolk County Highways Department. They will be responsible for preparing the sites where the sign is to be used, to a strictly defined set of criteria. We then purchase the sign and trained volunteers will move the device from site to site. We have proposed sites on each of the approach roads into the village and the highways department agents will consider these as to their suitability. Once the agreed sites have been installed and the volunteers have been trained, we will be able to begin operation.

Discussions are ongoing with Suffolk Highways Department on how best to

address the issue of large vehicles using the village as a through route. These include a proposal to introduce a 7.5 tonne weight limit (except for loading) on some roads within the village and other measures to reduce speed and put personal safety first. We are pushing for some early progress on this.



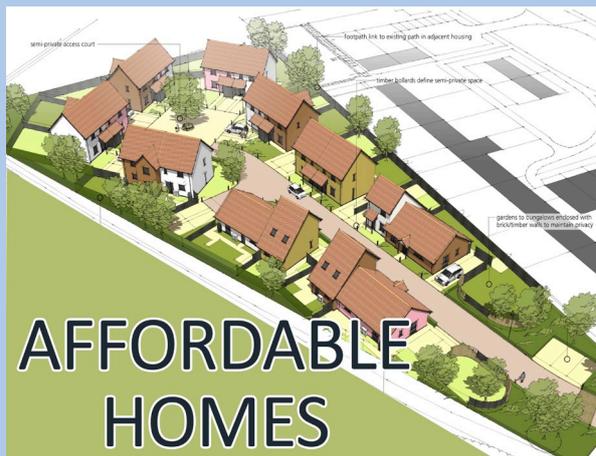
Parking by visitors to the Christmas Fair has been a matter of concern and inconvenience in past years. During the last year the Church Street Car Park was reconfigured to provide more parking spaces, plastic matting was installed and the access improved at First Meadow to allow for more reliable parking availability for events and a detailed traffic management plan was devised by the Christmas Fair Committee. These initiatives led to much improved parking and traffic flow during the Christmas Fair. Parking issues continue to be kept under review.



The Lavenham Community Land Trust (the CLT) has now obtained planning permission to erect 18 houses for local people. These will be a mix of one, two and three bedroomed houses and bungalows available to people with a local connection and/or, who work in the village.

Funding for the scheme is now in hand. Many of you will know the site, which is off the Melford Road on the old County Council Highways site, behind Harwood Place.

Some properties will be for rent and others for shared ownership.



AFFORDABLE HOMES

STOP PRESS

Pre-school gets grant to commence building in March, to open its doors in September!

PLANNING

The Parish Council is invited to comment on planning applications received by Babergh District Council. Some 57 were considered with 3 site visits in 2016. Many of these are relatively minor matters. Some however, such as the

development of 25 dwellings behind the High Street and the 18 local needs units off the Melford Road, require very careful consideration and public consultation and engagement. In the case of the 25 dwellings this included a public forum and discussion.

Some 2017 dates

- Hidden Gardens 11th June
- Lavenham Rare Breeds Motor Show 28th August
- Open Gardens supporting St. Nicholas Hospice 10th September
- Literary Festival 17/18/19 November
- Christmas Fair 1st/2nd/3rd December



Last year Lavenham Parish Council completed a community emergency plan which has been accepted and registered with the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit.

A leaflet, detailing the plan, was distributed to every household in Lavenham towards the end of last year. With this leaflet was a form allowing residents to register their interest in helping in an emergency and what skills and

equipment they could provide. The form also enabled vulnerable residents to register with the local group so that their needs can be given priority in an emergency.

If you have not seen or received either the leaflet or the form, or would like further copies, they are available from:

The Village Hall, or
Phone 07944 838426 or
e-mail
lavenhamemergencyplan@gmail.com

We are pleased with the initial response to the forms but we would like to hear from more residents who are in a position to help or wish to register themselves as vulnerable.

Good Neighbours

The Good Neighbours scheme goes from strength to strength and has now completed over 400 'missions' since its formation. If you would like to help as a volunteer (particularly if you are a driver) please contact Doreen Twitchett on 01787 247987, or if you would like some temporary help in or around the home then the number to ring is 079220850082



Your Parish Councillors:-

Carroll Reeve – Chairman

Roy Whitworth –

Vice Chairman

Joy Baker

Doreen Twitchett

Gail Banks

Emma Paris

Philip Gibson

Bryan Panton

Tony Sheppard

John O'Mahony

Andrew Searle

Any of the Parish Councillors

can be contacted via the

Clerk to the Council

Jane Bellward on

01787 247041 or

lavenhampc@yahoo.co.uk

We said goodbye during the year to Carole Holland, Mike Beech and Merriel Gardiner and thank them for their contributions to our work.

Whilst it would be too grand to describe individual Parish Council members as 'Portfolio Holders' there are nevertheless some areas of our work in which members take a particular interest. These are:-

- Planning Matters – Philip Gibson
- Good Neighbours Group – Doreen Twitchett
- Christmas lights – Gail Banks
- First Meadow play equipment – Emma Paris
- Traffic Matters – Tony Sheppard & John O'Mahony
- Emergency Plan – Bryan Panton
- Open spaces & cemetery – Roy Whitworth, Philip Gibson & Andrew Searle
- Love Lavenham & Chapel – Andrew Searle
- Library – Joy Baker
- Web site – Roy Whitworth
- Tourism – Roy Whitworth
- Housing and environment – Carroll Reeve

We are helped enormously by our Clerk Jane Bellward with her continued support and hard work in keeping our finances and administration in order.