

Snape Parish Council (SPC) Annual Parish Meeting (APM) Report 2021

CHAIRMANS REPORT – Cllr Tim Beach

We had no Annual Parish Meeting last year (2020), due to the Coronavirus restrictions on meetings so my report this year is an attempt to cover the more important issues over the last two years.

As a PC we did adapt to the legislation that allowed online meetings and through much of last year we met on a more regular basis in an effort to support the various initiatives in our own community which I will cover later. I will also expand later in the report but in my personal view two of our local initiatives that we put in place as a community pre pandemic helped us through this most difficult year; they are the Snape Good Neighbour Scheme and the revamped website. So particular thanks to Maria Norman and all on her team, and to Steve Stocks the village webmaster for their commitment over the last year. There are many other individuals I could name but won't as it would be a long list and some of whom contributed a great deal and others who specifically asked not to be mentioned. You know who you are and so do the people who received help and support. Over the last year in particular many individuals, organisations and local businesses have played a very significant role in supporting the community and each other through the pandemic and in particular some of our most vulnerable residents. I don't think it an over statement to reflect that at times in Spring and into the Summer 2020 some of our community had concerns about access to food, medicine and general care and through the Good Neighbour Scheme and the generosity of spirit of individuals generally, we as a community have managed to sustain high levels of support for more than a year. Long may that generosity and concern for each be maintained.

I would like to thank all those on the PC for their respective contributions over the last two years and in particular the last 14 months and specifically the Clerk Marie Backhouse and the supporting finance group for their work in ensuring that our financial and governance reporting was carried out professionally and with all due diligence despite all the difficulties.

Mike Hill retired as a Councillor after more than ten years work including an extended period as Chair and I am sure all of us would want to record our thanks to him for all that hard dedicated work that includes the initial work to create Pryor Close and supporting the development of the school . He will be greatly missed. Charles Manning also left the PC as he moved away. He had only been a member for a short time but made a great contribution to both the work on traffic calming and CSW and is similarly missed.

The ongoing work relating to the village plan was maintained albeit more slowly than we would have liked and continues. I will cover some of that later in the report.

Thanks also to the many individuals who are active in managing the village hall, the village school, Green Snape, the playing field, the allotments group, Community Speed Watch and as I have already mentioned Snape Good Neighbour Scheme. That work is reflected in the individual reports that have been received from those groups and it reflects an active and engaged village and we can hopefully continue to build on that with many of the new initiatives.

Last but not least I also record my thanks to both our County and District Councillors for their support for the various projects undertaken over that last two years.

UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE PLAN

The full Village Plan has been available in full on the village website for some months now. Below are some specific areas of work.

TRAFFIC

This remains a very significant issue for many people - including speed, noise, dangerous junctions, road maintenance and HGV traffic and driver behaviour. These concerns are shared by many other neighbouring communities.

***Action:** SCC has recently agreed to fund the feasibility study of the traffic calming plan that has been submitted to SCC Highways so that work is ongoing at this time. This work has been impacted by the pandemic but remains important.*

Three roads in Snape were formally designated as Quiet Lanes in March 2021 as part of an initial pilot for the whole County after what seemed like a tortuous journey.

The PC created a Community Speed Watch Group which began working in 2019 and from feedback from the police is one of the most active groups in Suffolk. There is a separate and more detailed report from CSW but I would like to make a plea for more volunteers to support that work.

HOUSING

The PC in conjunction with Community Action Suffolk (CAS) carried out a housing needs survey in late 2019 and the short Executive summary was published in 2020. That identified local housing need within the village.

Action: *The PC has carried out work over the last year to identify a number of small potential sites for development of community owned and managed housing units. We are in consultation with both East Suffolk Council and Housing Associations currently about taking that work forward. This work was also impacted by the pandemic.*

SNAPE GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

The scheme has now been in existence since the summer of 2019 and as a village our timing was excellent as by the time the pandemic hit and demand was very significant the processes and volunteers were well practiced so adapted quickly to the huge increase in requests for support. SGNS also instigated regular coffee morning meetings every Monday morning, Meet up Monday (MUM) hosted by the Golden Key. These had to be stopped due to the restrictions but we are planning to start again from the 10th May.

Action: *The PC continues to support the work of SGNS and throughout last year and into 2021 we produced a number of joint information leaflets that were delivered by volunteers to every household in the village.*

SNAPE SCHOOL

The School has provided a detailed separate report which outlines the work over the last two years and in particular the decision to fully explore joining an academy chain. The school has continued to expand the number of pupils and has now opened after many years of planning a nursery provision in a purpose built building. The school was fundamental to supporting the Village Larder through last year which helped many residents as well as pupils and families.

Action: *The PC will work with governors and staff to continue supporting the school. The school and village together can make a legitimate claim to organising school meal support for pupils well before it became a national issue. I think we got there before Marcus Rashford.*

ENVIRONMENT

The PC has continued to recognise the importance of the environment and maintaining green rural spaces was reflected by many residents.

Action: *Snapc PC has worked to plan and manage the local amenity and public space in conjunction with SCC and ESC to the benefit of the community in conjunction with local residents and groups. Currently together with Green Snapc we are working on completing plans for the village green near the Crown including planting of trees and*

access to water, work has also been carried out in Priory Wood as well as early discussion locally and with SCC about work on Snape Common adjacent to Priory Road. The PC also accessed funding in early 2021 from ESC to increase the planting along Church Road into the village, another project that is now underway with the support of Green Snape.

Work has been carried out to enhance the look of the allotments and last year funding was found for creating access to water on site through a grant from the AONB.

Snape PC responded to Sizewell and SPR Development Consent Orders (DCOs) over the last year and worked with many other town and parish councils in making clear our concerns about the scale and impact of the projects. At this point both DCOs continue which creates huge pressures for our and other councils but we continue to try to protect the interests of the village and the surrounding area.

Despite the pandemic the playing field committee has continued to work and with a substantial grant from ESC new equipment is being installed in the children's play area in May. The tennis court has been used regularly when permitted and hopefully its use will continue to grow.

Thanks to Georgina Lock for organising the litter pick which again managed many bags of roadside rubbish. Also thanks to the individuals who constantly carry on litter picking through the year. It is appreciated.

There is a separate report from Green Snape but thanks to their work Snape was recognised as Suffolk's "greenest community" in 2019, and as there was no competition in 2020 I assume we retain that title.

THE PARISH COUNCIL

Many people felt when surveyed in 2018 that they do not know enough about the PC's work and responsibilities and we have tried to raise the profile of the PC in the last two years.

Action: *The PC has continued to work on communications generally, via the independent village website www.snapevillage.info*

We will continue to keep residents informed about progress on the Parish Plan. We hope that the website, the newsletters and the online meetings have helped people keep in touch with the work of the PC over the last year.