

Parish Council Chairman's Report – Annual Parish Meeting 1st April 2025

It's been another busy year! Several projects have been progressed and some satisfactorily completed.

The Parish Council has continued to support the delivery of the dualling of the A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham. The project is now progressing well and contractors Galliford Try have continued to keep us updated and have been keen to interact with the local community.

Aside from the 'roadworks', the most common complaint we hear from parishioners relate to cars speeding through the village and dog fouling. These are both difficult problems to solve but we continue to try with the use of a Speed Awareness Monitor which we move around the village to cover several problem areas and we've invested in both Keep Britain Tidy and County Council signage to increase awareness and enforce positive messages.

We continue to work closely with the Village Hall and have been happy to offer advice and support as the Hall Committee continue to operate and develop an excellent facility in the village. We are still working with them to install Electric Vehicle Charging Points in the Village Hall car park in conjunction with Norfolk County Council. We hope to soon be able to offer re-charging to residents and visitors at reasonable rates.

Jenny and I have been representing the Parish at local cluster meetings and it was great to use the combined pressure of seven local Parish Councils to lobby for the continued operation of the Postwick Park and Ride bus service. A new contract has recently been agreed and gives parishioners more options to get into the City and avoid the expensive car parking charges. The

Cluster Group has grown considerably this year as more Parishes have joined and it's interesting to hear of their work and learn from them.

We have continued to work with local charity Heart to Heart to install and maintain a strong network of defibrillators throughout the Parish. Following the installation in North Burlingham we continue to try to add a further unit at the station to cover the North side of Lingwood in case of emergency.

This year we agreed a deal with the Community Payback Workforce and we benefitted from free labour to clear overgrown vegetation all around the Millenium Green. They also removed the excess growth, which has over the years, reduced the width of the path. This rather pain-staking work, has made quite a significant improvement, particularly for wheelchair users and buggy and pram pushers. The team also completed a full clearance of the footpath leading south from Norwich Road and have done various tasks to help the volunteers at the Village Hall.

Also on the Green, the play equipment has been repaired and upgraded as required, including a full replacement of the zip wire. The canopies of the trees along the Avenue of Remembrance will also soon be uplifted and the wildflower area replanted. We continue to support the Lingwood Gardening Group who have already completed some excellent work to tidy up various public spaces and bring some flowering beauty to the Village.

The Parish Council owned, maintained and act as Trustees of the Lingwood and Strumpshaw Reading Room, but this year we finally managed to resolve various legal issues and sold the property. We have been trying to find a good use for it for many years. Since the building of the new Village Hall it has been used scarcely and not at all in the last three or four years. It was entered into an auction in December and although it didn't quite reach the reserve price on the date of the auction, three interested parties subsequently made fresh offers and it was sold to the highest bidder at significantly more than the reserve price that had been recommended by valuers. The Trustees will fulfil their obligations by using the funds acquired towards projects which benefit the local community. We have already had applications from the Buckenham Ancient Woodland Trust and the Lingwood Village Hall, but we invite other suggestions and will consider each case in the coming months.

Finally, my thanks go to my fantastic group of councillors, we've developed into a friendly and proactive team, and with Sonya's expert guidance, we have delivered many improvements around the village and continue to provide the best service we can for our parishioners in Lingwood and Burlingham.