

CODDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER©
SPRING/SUMMER 2021

coddenhampc.org.uk

Welcome to the 46th Edition of your Council's Newsletter

At this time of the year we comment on our finances. We deal in depth with our budget but I cannot pass by without repeating our appreciation of the anonymous donation that enables us to reduce the precept to all homes in the parish.

As I write, the move out of COVID-19 restrictions is being widely debated. Centred around return to normality. I wonder if we should be preparing for a 'new normality'. As a Parish what is going to be the effects of the constant presence on our roads of retailer's vans delivering their wares? What will be the knock on effects of bread winners spending more of their time at home?

During the lockdown, Council has held its meetings virtually. We have found it to be a very effective medium but we appreciate the lack of personal interaction. To conclude these arrangements, Council has decided to host the Annual Parish meeting at 7.00pm on the 6th May, followed by the Annual Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm, concluding with the regular Council immediately afterwards. All transacted by Zoom and full details will be posted on our website.

Over the last year, our website expanded and contains a variety of features. Our Parish is extensive and stretches from the top of Spring Lane, across to Coddenham Green, over the A140 to Beacon Hill roundabout with its Roadside Nature Reserves, over the A14 to the River Gipping. It then goes to Baylham Rare Breeds and up through Shrubland Park. All details can be seen on coddenhampc.org.com/council/parishboundary.

I extend my thanks to fellow Councillors, our Clerk and all of our volunteers who enable the Council to fulfil its commitments in what has been a challenging and eventful year. Stay safe and keep well.

Councillor Allan Fowler, Chair

Coddenham Parish Council Budget 2021-22

The Parish Council has set the budget for the 2021-22 financial year, and the good news is that it is dropping by 14% compared to last year. In 2020-21 the total "precept" budget was £37,810, which is shared by all our homes. This meant that a 'Band D' home would have paid £136 to the Parish Council as part of the total annual Council Tax bill. For 2021-22, we have been able to reduce this to £32,227, which means a 'Band D' home will now be paying £117.

What makes this even more significant is that the precept was expected to increase to £50,000 this year (equating to £200 per 'Band D' home). This increase would have been for two main reasons: 1) the Day Foundation, who had kindly funded the annual loan payment for the original costs of building the Community Centre for the past three years, were unable to continue their support, and 2) we received an unexpected historic business rates demand from Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC). The great news though is that instead of a £50,000 precept, we have been able to set the precept at 36% less than expected, and 14% less than the previous year. This has been achieved by:

1. **Community Centre Loan Payments**: we recently shared the good news that thanks to a response to our last Newsletter, benefactors from within the parish have offered to pay the loan payments for the next two years (£26,000 split between 21/22 and 22/23). On behalf of all parishioners, the Parish Council have expressed our thanks for this act of extreme generosity.
2. **Business Rates Payments**: we have been in negotiation with MSDC and have agreed to spread the cost of a surprise Business Rate Demand of £9,892 over three years. In parallel, we continue to challenge the demand for payment. The challenge will take time to conclude, but we are hopeful of a reduction, or complete withdrawal, of the demand for payment from MSDC.
3. **Careful Financial Management**: the Parish Council, including our RFO (Responsible Financial Officer) Sue Frankis, have scrutinised all elements of the budget and made savings in a number of areas whilst still preserving services and supporting the Community Centre.

Councillor Neil Scoresby and RFO Sue Frankis. More details available at: coddenhampc.org.uk/current-issues#Finance

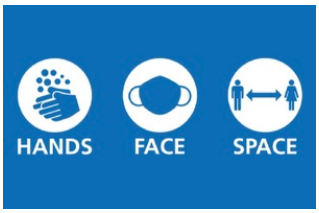
Coddenham Parish Council 2020-21 Budget/Actual and 2021-22 Budget Report

	2020-21	2021-22
INCOME		
Precept	£37,810	£32,227
Allotments	£146	£150
Bank Interest	£8	£15
SCC Footpath Cutting	£239	£239
PWLB (Day Foundation Donation)	£13,152	
PWLB (Parishioner Donation)		£13,000
TOTAL INCOME	**£51,355**	**£45,631**

	Budget / Precept*	Actual Spend	Budget / Precept
PRECEPT EXPENDITURE			
Professional Fees	£580	£580	£610
Insurance	£367	£367	£400
Power of Competence	£425	£322	£200
Bank Charges	£72	£72	£72
Clerk's Salary	£6,079	£6,079	£6,500
Clerk's Mileage	£9	£9	£100
Postage, telecoms etc	£140	£120	£150
Subscriptions	£450	£260	£450
Consumables	£200	£100	£173
Software Licences	£234	£234	£127
Training	£300	£180	£500
Web fees	£215	£215	£120
Newsletter	£254	£133	£400
Data Protection	£40	£35	£40
Grounds Maintenance	£273	£140	£500
Footpath Assistant	£97	£97	£360
Equipment repair/maintenance	£900	£733	£400
Waste management	£410	£410	£450
Street Lighting	£699	£699	£650
Tree Surgery	£1,000	£680	£1,000
Info Box	£241	£241	£50
Memorial Statue	£175	£175	
Grant to Community Centre CIO	£15,286	£15,286	£13,135
Payment to PWLB Contingency Fund	£7,000	£7,000	
PWLB Loan (funded from Precept)			£152
MSDC Business Rates			£3,892
Payment to General Reserve Fund	£2,386	£2,386	£1,000
Allotments and Wayleave	-£52	£0	
Churchyard Maintenance	£30	£30	£1,000
MSDC Grant			-£204
TOTAL PRECEPT EXPENDITURE	**£37,810**	**£36,582**	**£32,227**
NON-PRECEPT EXPENDITURE			
PWLB (Community Centre Loan)	£13,152	£13,152	£13,000
SCC Funded Footpath Assistant	£239	£239	£239
TOTAL NON-PRECEPT EXPENDITURE	**£13,391**	**£13,391**	**£13,239**
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**£51,201**	**£49,973**	**£45,466**
RESERVE FUNDS			
General Reserve	£8,892		£10,880
2020/21 General Fund to be allocated			£1,227
Allotments	£128		£273
CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)	£348		£321
PWLB 2021/22 donation			£13,000
PWLB 2022/23 donation			£13,000
PWLB Reserve			£7,000
TOTAL RESERVE FUNDS	**£9,368**		**£45,702**

Note: * 2020-21 Budget/Precept individual budget headings have been adjusted by virement. Totals have not changed.

COVID-19 Update



Our District and County Councils continue to provide a wide range of help and support. For the very latest information please visit: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/ or the Parish Council website.

If you are worried about your bills, your job or your home, call the Suffolk Advice and Support Service free on 0800 068 3131 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. If you are self-isolating, call the Home, But Not Alone helpline for support free on 0800 876 6926 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

Planning Update

The Dukes Head



The future of The Dukes Head has been rumbling on for years. After years of seeking to protect the building through opposition to plans for conversion to solely residential use, and by supporting designation of the property as an Asset of Community Value, we reluctantly raised no objections to a formal application and the planning authority, Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) granted permission in October 2020 for the change of use of the building to form a single dwelling.

A series of applications proposing various residential schemes on land to the rear of the main building, including proposed access via the unmade track from Mill Lane, were all the subject of significant objections from the Parish Council. All applications were rejected by MSDC, most recently the last application for a single dwelling at the rear.

In the meantime, faced with a deteriorating building and unsightly overgrown site, we have been constantly seeking to persuade MSDC to take urgent action to require the site owners to at least tidy up their property. Unfortunately, for as yet unexplained reasons, and since at least October 2019, no action under the provisions of the Planning Act have been taken. We will continue to seek to exert pressure on MSDC to exercise their powers to bring about some relief to the present wholly unsatisfactory situation in the heart of the Coddenham Conservation Area.

Pipps Ford



On the 4th March, we held a Planning Meeting which was attended by many of the parishioners directly affected by this application. We agreed unanimously to object in the strongest terms. The primary grounds for objection were that this is a rural residential area and particularly unsuitable for commercial development (it is designated as “an area of Special Landscape Interest”), serious concerns about the traffic levels entering and exiting the Pipps Ford road onto the busy A140/A14 roundabout, lack of input from SCC Highways and noise and disruption. We await the outcome from MSDC for this application. Keep up to date on our website for latest news.

Councillor John Peecock. More details available at: coddenhampc.org.uk/current-issues#Planning

Traffic and Highway Safety

Traffic and highway matters are principally the responsibility of Suffolk County Council (SCC), the Police, and, with certain powers, Mid Suffolk District Council. The Parish Council can only seek to influence decision making to effect change and have been involved in a range of ongoing topics affecting all of the above organisations to try and bring about improvements. Last December, we met with SCC Leader Matthew Hicks and a range of improvements are now under consideration by SCC Highways. Key priorities are:

1. **HGV 7.5t Weight Restriction**. Coddenham residents have recorded many instances of apparent breaches and have passed on details to the Lorrywatch scheme (run by SCC Trading Standards). There are constant cases of jams often caused by HGV’s meeting similar traffic coming up the High Street. Recently two Police cars “on blue lights“, finding the road blocked, had to turn round and find an alternative route. This could have been a life threatening incident and was unfortunately not the first of its kind. Intervention by the Parish Council following several incidents involving military vehicles has significantly eased problems.
2. **Safety**. Suffolk County Council has been requested to investigate whether measures can be put into place to help to protect buildings from lorry strikes, for increased pedestrian safety especially in areas around Crown Corner and where footways are virtually non-existent. Discussion’s on possible solutions are ongoing with SCC.
3. **Designated Lorry Route, (DLR)**. The B1078 through Coddenham has for some while been part of the Suffolk DLR scheme. The DLR network is due to be reviewed and the Parish Council will seek to influence the outcome to benefit the village.

4. **Speeding.** The Day Foundation has provided the Council with a speed indicator device which you can see on School Road. Many thanks to Colin Hardy for managing the speed indicator device. The most recent data from traffic in both directions along School Road shows that 60% of traffic are at, or below, the 20mph limit, and 98% are at, or below, 30mph. The Parish Council is in discussion with MSDC Councillor, and Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore, on a range of speed reduction measures. As a result, Coddenham will be one of the villages to benefit from the recently announced purchase of ten automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras by SCC and Suffolk Police.



An ANPR camera

Councillors John Peecock and Roy Groom. More details available at: coddenhampc.org.uk/current-issues#Traffic

Village Amenities… a very busy year

Three Cocked Hat: regular inspections of this prominent area are carried out, especially after storm events. One lime tree was recently felled and two more, with extensive rot, are due to be removed for safety reasons. Surprisingly, the trunk of the tree already felled mysteriously disappeared overnight! Replacement lime trees will be planted at an appropriate time.

Broomhill: we are extremely grateful to Ian Jefferies for his extraordinary efforts in hedge trimming and subsequent stack falling from an oak tree, a tree consultant removed other deadwood overhanging the footpath.

Mill Hill: Parts of the western end of the site are owned by the parish. Again, we are grateful that the area has been under the watchful and attentive care of Colin Hardy. Amongst other things, the footpath is kept in good order and undergrowth trimmed were necessary.

The Churchyard: The closed churchyard is generally maintained by the Parish Council and volunteers. Recently, a dead elm blown over in a gale has been removed and disposed of, hedges have had a winter trim in advance of interest by nesting birds and primroses and cowslips are gradually appearing. The lower gates have had repairs carried out by Councillor Roy Groom and the mowed areas will shortly be due a first trim this year, one of many such cuts carried out by Councillor John Peecock at no cost to the parish. The annual cut of the remainder of the wildflower area by contractors will take place as usual in late August or early September. The Parish Council will also need to secure parts of the churchyard flint wall along the B1078. Small areas of stone are now detached and efforts will be made to carry out necessary repairs.

Public footpaths: Whilst the responsibility for maintenance of most paths rests with landowners, the Parish Council act for Suffolk County Council in organising the clearance of some specific areas identified by them. The County give a small grant to cover the costs of this exercise. We are grateful to Andrew Soanes, Donald Burton and other volunteers for their help.

Councillors John Peecock and Roy Groom

"Tommy" Statue

The Parish Council has recently purchased a "Tommy" statue for the parish from the Royal British Legion. The statue is made by veterans and is personalised with the words "Coddenham Remembers".

Pictured with the statue are Churchwarden, Ian Galbraith, and Parish Council Chair, Allan Fowler. "Tommy" will be on display near the war memorial in St Marys churchyard for VE Day on the 8th May, as well as Remembrance Day in November and other commerative events.

Councillor Neil Scoresby



Keeping Coddenham Tidy

Whilst the majority of the residents in Coddenham are very mindful of the cleanliness of the village and pick up litter, the village still looks untidy in some places. We recently picked up eleven bags of litter along the B1078 (Vicarage Farm to the boundary with Hemingstone) and we have requested the responsible local authorities to pick up rubbish along the old Norwich Road and the A140 by the roundabout to the junction with the B1078.

Councillor Roy Groom

Join The Council

The Parish Coucil has vacancies and it would be great to hear from anyone interested in joining. The Council meets every two months so it is not a big commitment on your time but does get you involved in a range of local issues. If you are interested, please contact our Clerk, Sue Frankis on 07548 152181 or clerk.coddenhampc@gmail.com

Editor: Cllr Neil Scoresby. All information correct at time of going to print. Enquiries regarding this newsletter and future newsletters should be made to the Clerk to the Parish at: clerk.coddenhampc@gmail.com