

APPENDIX 1

Little Bealings Parish Council: Chairman's Report 2025-2026

Introduction

I took over the reins as chairman of the Parish Council (PC) from Ian Ransome in May 2025. As the end of the 2025/26 year draws to a close, I would start by thanking him, our vice-chair Helen Saagi, and my other fellow councillors (Cllrs Wilson, Price, Garnham and Carr) for their commitment to the role and what has been collectively achieved this year. I would also like to recognise the hard work of our Clerk, Wendy Cook and congratulate her on good progress made to securing a Certificate in Local Government Administration qualification.

In addition to the six scheduled parish council meetings, there have been no additional meetings this year and delegated powers to the Clerk have been used on rare occasions to deal with some planning issues where it has not been practical or necessary to convene a meeting.

In the sections that follow I highlight some of the main things that the Parish Council has done or decided during this past year.

Planning

This is a regular item on meeting agendas and one of the core activities that the Parish Council. Over the past year the Council has provided carefully considered comments to East Suffolk Council (or where relevant Suffolk County Council) on many planning applications that are of relevance to Little Bealings, so that the District (or County) Council may take these views into account when reaching their decisions on applications.

Donations and grants

We had £9382.00 Community Infrastructure Funds (CIL) money left to spend at the start of the financial year and no new CIL money was received. This is our share of the levy paid to ESC following development in the parish.

The PC spent £1362 ACH floor, £518.25 on the replacement Noticeboard Beacon Lane, £1640 on Blinds for the Bealings Village Hall and £316.68 on a dog waste bin. Leaving £5545.07 CIL still to spend

The PC supported The Bealings Village Hall and Playing Field and the Angela Cobbold Hall with donations this year of £750 and £250 respectively.

Also £350 was donated to help fund the Fynn Lark News. This magazine celebrates its 10th Birthday in May of this year and I would like to thank Norman Porter and his team for the work they do to continue this important source of news and information for our village (and the surrounding villages).

Other small donations were also made, including to the British Legion (and as is customary the Parish Council Chairman laid a wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday).

Budget for coming year

The PC is mindful of the need to control costs but given rising costs, in particular Employers National Insurance, has requested that the Precept is increased for the coming year by £500 to £14,250.

Road safety

The Parish Council continues to support the Safer Village Driving Initiative and Little Bealings has a Speed Indicating Device (SID) that is employed within the 20mph area of The Street and used in Playford Road and Martlesham Road. My thanks to Cllr Garnham for managing this on behalf of the Parish Council.

Sinks Pit Community Liaison Group

The Parish Council is represented in meetings of this Group run by our County Councillor Ellaine Bryce and brings together residents' representatives, ESC, the Environment Agency and ESC and others. The PC received and published a case study by the Sinks Valley Environmental Protection Group (SVEPG) on "Mitigating Pollution from Sinks Pit" which is a case study of their 10-year campaign. While good progress has been made on the issues of concern to residents, it remains an ongoing topic for the Parish Council.

Neighbourhood Plan

Development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Little Bealings has continued through the year with help of a dedicated Group of Parish Councillors and Residents and an external expert consultant. Helen Saagi and her team have done an outstanding job to manage drafting, consultation and development of the plan and it has now been submitted to East Suffolk Council to go on to the final stages of consultation and eventual adoption. The Plan will be important to help shape the future development of the village and once adopted will mean that the Parish Council will receive a greater portion of CIL receipts to spend on infrastructure improvements and facilities in the village.

Emergency Plan

The Parish Council has drafted an Emergency Plan for the village which will be published shortly. We have an agreement with the Rapid Response Team, a national charity with local volunteers to call on them for assistance in instances where they can add to what local volunteers and Emergency services / District/County Council and other bodies can provide.

Devolution

The Parish Council has followed the Government initiative on reorganisation of local Government and has contributed to the Consultation on the proposals received from Suffolk County Council (One Suffolk) and from the group of District Councils. The PC is particularly concerned to ensure that the interests of our rural village community remain aligned with similar rural communities and represented appropriately in any new local Governance structure.

ESC Community Partnership

The Parish Council remains a member of ESC Community Partnership, Suffolk Association of Local Councils, Community Action Suffolk and the Suffolk Preservation Society.

Other matters

Our thanks to Colin Hedgley, one of our two District Councillors for his attendance, advice and guidance and to Elaine Bryce our elected county councillor. Their support is invaluable.

Thanks to the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church who kindly funded and installed a replacement notice board in the Street.

The Parish Council organised a successful meeting in November for residents to meet our MP, Partick Spencer.

Our thanks also to Jenny Shaw our webmaster and Francis Mutimer and John Wittgreffe, our footpath wardens, Colin Hopkins Tree Warden and their band of willing volunteers.

Chris Cheeseman