



LAXFIELD
ANNUAL
PARISH MEETING

Monday 22 May 2023

At 7 30 pm

in Laxfield Village Hall

This booklet contains all the reports from across the parish submitted for the annual parish meeting. If you have any questions resulting from the information contained within, please don't hesitate to contact the clerk, Karen Gregory on laxfieldparishclerk@gmail.com or 07719 988668 or the relevant contact from the report.

After the Annual Parish meeting, this report will be available on the website – www.laxfield.online

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

David Alchin
Sally Clarke
Ollie Hackett
Sue Innes
Debbie Martindale
Lisa Sharman
Rob Sutton
Sally Sutton

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Due to the size of the report, it is not possible to include it within this booklet. It is available on the parish website, www.laxfield.online.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

Due to Mid Suffolk District elections held on 4 May, no district councillor report is available for the meeting. The Parish Council would like to thank Julie Flatman for all her work during the last eight years and welcome Anders Linder as the new district councillor.

LAXFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - CHAIR'S REPORT

Another year has flown by! I find it difficult to believe that twelve months have passed since I last wrote a report for this meeting. It's been quite a momentous year in many ways, and we've seen some great community events celebrating these milestones: the fantastic Platinum Jubilee celebrations last June, for example, and the street party to celebrate the coronation only recently. It was great to see so many people joining in, including people who were on holiday in the area.

We've had a busy year at the Parish Council too, although we haven't yet been able to implement as many of the projects as we would like to. It's great that three new Parish Councillors have joined us this year, but there's no doubt that we could still really do with more support to deliver some of our plans, so please do get in touch if you'd like to know more: you don't necessarily need to join the Parish Council to do so, if you'd rather not. We do always try to keep our meetings short and focused, and there are also practical things that people can do if they don't like attending meetings!

We do have plans for some quite substantial development within the Parish, and a key focus is on improving the facilities for health and wellbeing. Some of these are based around the playing field and the pavilion, which could become a much better resource for people in and around the parish; we'd like to improve the children's play area, too. We'd like to seek the views of people who might use it: what would you and your like to see there?

The same thing is true for all of the projects we would like to implement: the more input we have from people who live in Laxfield, the more we can achieve for everyone who lives here.

We are in the process of reviewing the [*Neighbourhood Plan*](#) to ensure that it remains relevant, both in terms of what we want it to deliver and in relation to changes in legislation and planning requirements. Whilst our Plan is about much more than just planning, that still has to remain a key reason for its existence.

We also have plans for the new cemetery, including making it easier for wheelchair and mobility aid users to gain access by improving the path surface. We will also create a new path along the edge of the cemetery near

the road, so people have a safe route through to the public footpath to the Tank Pond and beyond. We have some trees to plant, and plans for a wildflower meadow in parts of the cemetery which are unconsecrated ground, as well as a contemplation area for everyone who'd like to use it.

So, to sum up: a busy year has gone by, but we still have much more to deliver that residents have said they'd like to see happen: an exciting year to come, we hope!

Sue Innes – Chair, Laxfield Parish Council

LAXFIELD PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE

The Parish Council ended the financial year with bank balances as follows:

Current account:	£ 1 054.83
Saver account:	£ 75 827.52
Reserve account:	£ 48 997.60
TOTAL:	£125 879.95

This indicates a very healthy bank balance; however much of this is reserved (CIL money) or earmarked to fund a number of projects during 2023 – 24 as identified in the PIIP (Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan). Please note that all financial information including audit reports for the Parish Council is shown on the website (www.laxfield.online) and updated monthly.

The precept is the main income source and the precept demand remained at the same level as the previous year, £46 357.00 which actually meant a reduction for households within the parish. CIL monies exceeded budget predictions and amounted to £52 738.61 for 2022 – 2023.

Cllr Flatman had given a substantial amount of her locality award to support the jubilee celebrations at the end of 2021 – 2022 and gave another £1 510 in 2022 – 2023. The jubilee celebrations were a fantastic achievement and people came from far and wide to enjoy the four day event in Laxfield. The costs came out of Section 137 monies and monies raised from advertising and the sale of jubilee mugs.

The rebate from the Rix oil syndicate enabled the Parish Council to support Laxfield pre-school's request for an outside canopy.

Heveningham Hall County Fair awarded £1 590.00 for the purchase of a second defibrillator for the parish and a grant for the next stages of the neighbourhood plan was received earlier than anticipated and amounted to £8 461.00.

The Parish also supported a number of projects and events during the year including:

- Laxitude festival
- Hire of the village hall for the Kids' club activities
- Hire of the village hall for fundraiser event for the foodbank
- Litfest
- Donations made to CAB, FOALs and Headway Suffolk
- New oak bench
- New playground equipment

See page after next for Parish Council accounts summary for 2022 - 2023. If further detail is needed, please contact Karen Gregory, the Parish Clerk. Please note however that, because the council uses a receipts and payments system the overspends in the payments section are not 'true' as they are offset by the receipts. For example Section 137 monies are overpsent but this is offset by the grants received!

SNOOK BEQUEST

This is a fund held by the parish council in a separate account. Its objective is to help the needs of the older members of the community. The balance at 31 March 2023 was £13 802.83. If anyone has any projects that could potentially tap into this fund, please let Karen Gregory, the parish clerk, know.

LAXFIELD PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

This is a registered charity that has the parish council as its custodian trustee. All its expenses are met by the precept so the only figure supplied to the Charities Commission is a cost. During the 2022 – 2023 financial year the expenditure was £10 836.96.

BANK ACCOUNTS YEAR BEGINNING APRIL 2022			
Current	£	7,665.33	31/03/2022
Saver	£	41,580.38	31/03/2022
Reserve	£	48,582.53	31/03/2022
Opening Balance Total	£	97,828.24	31/03/2022

RECEIPTS	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE	% v Bud
	2022-2023	2022-2023		
Cemetery Fees	£ 1,000.00	£ 442.00	-£ 558.00	44.20%
Grants	£ 5,000.00	£ 2,498.00	-£ 2,502.00	49.96%
Groundworks Nbhd Plan	£ -	£ 8,461.00	£ 8,461.00	#DIV/0!
MSDC CIL	£ 15,000.00	£ 52,738.61	£ 37,738.61	351.59%
Miscellaneous	£ 1,443.00	£ 3,300.11	£ 1,857.11	228.70%
Bank Interest	£ 10.00	£ 209.16	£ 199.16	2091.60%
Precept	£ 46,357.00	£ 46,357.00	£ -	100.00%
VAT Reclaim	£ 1,400.00	£ 3,482.06	£ 2,082.06	248.72%
Transfer from Reserves	£ 80,000.00	£ -	-£ 80,000.00	0.00%
Total	£ 150,210.00	£ 117,487.94	-£ 32,722.06	78.22%

PAYMENTS	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE	% V Bud
Clerk's Salary	£ 11,700.00	£ 11,950.58	£ 250.58	102.14%
Expenses/Stationery	£ 500.00	£ 646.84	£ 146.84	129.37%
Chair's Allowance	£ 500.00	£ 479.57	-£ 20.43	95.91%
Parish Room Cleaner	£ 340.00	£ 309.00	-£ 31.00	90.88%
Street Lighting	£ 3,000.00	£ 2,616.73	-£ 383.27	87.22%
Pond/Vill Hall/Paths	£ 34,000.00	£ 1,609.34	-£ 32,390.66	4.73%
Street Cleaning	£ 1,030.00	£ 932.00	-£ 98.00	90.49%
Parish Room Lighting	£ 350.00	£ 244.51	-£ 105.49	69.86%
PWLB	£ 11,290.00	£ 11,289.18	-£ 0.82	99.99%
Neighbourhood Plan	£ 2,000.00	£ 5,936.40	£ 3,936.40	296.82%
Cemetery Caretaker	£ 1,100.00	£ 1,060.00	-£ 40.00	96.36%
Subscriptions	£ 2,500.00	£ 1,026.91	-£ 1,473.09	41.08%
Insurance	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,142.60	£ 142.60	107.13%
Churchyard/War Mem	£ 2,000.00	£ 641.11	-£ 1,358.89	32.06%
Section 137	£ 10,000.00	£ 15,686.32	£ 5,686.32	156.86%
Bin emptying	£ 900.00	£ 729.40	-£ 170.60	81.04%
Rental fees	£ 350.00	£ 705.00	£ 355.00	201.43%
Training	£ 600.00	£ 261.60	-£ 338.40	43.60%
Cemetery Expenses	£ 30,000.00	£ 12,903.04	-£ 17,096.96	43.01%
Repairs & Maintenance	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,797.04	-£ 202.96	89.85%
Playing Field	£ 30,000.00	£ 10,836.96	-£ 19,163.04	36.12%
Village Hall	£ 400.00	£ 2,546.92	£ 2,146.92	636.73%
Church clock	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ -	100.00%
Miscellaneous	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,066.78	£ 66.78	103.34%
Audit	£ 800.00	£ 710.40	-£ 89.60	88.80%
PAYE	£ 150.00	£ 108.00	-£ 42.00	72.00%
Election	£ 500.00	£ -	-£ 500.00	0.00%
Total	£ 150,210.00	£ 89,436.23	-£ 60,773.77	59.54%

BANK ACCOUNT TO END March 2023	
Current	£ 1,054.83
Saver	£ 75,827.52
Reserve	£ 48,997.60
Total	£ 125,879.95

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH REPORT - CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

We said goodbye in April to Rev'd David Burrell and his wife Sue with a large benefice service and lunch held in Laxfield Church. They were missed very much, but we are very grateful to the hard working and committed team of self-supporting ministers who served us so well during the vacancy. It was a relief to hear at the end of 2022 that Rev'd Enid Pow would be moving in March 2023 from the Diocese of the Arctic to Laxfield to work in the Four Rivers Benefice. Rev'd Enid and her dog Bobby have been given a warm Laxfield welcome!

The link with All Saints Primary School is very significant for the church. The church also acts as host for end of term assemblies, and for the annual Christingle Service in December.

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia in March shocked the nation. For much of the year, Laxfield Church flew a Ukrainian flag in solidarity with the Ukrainian visitors staying in the village with several hosts. A fund-raising lunch to support the visitors was held in the church in May.

Laxfield church played a part in the village celebrations for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, with a special joint service with the Baptist Church. The church was decorated with red, white and blue flower arrangements, and an exhibition of interviews with seventy people and couples who were nominated for their significance in the village. Her Majesty's sad death in September was marked by special services, and many people signed a Book of Condolence that was placed in the church during the period of official mourning.

With Covid restrictions behind us, it is very good to be able to say that 2022 was a year when we were able to worship and to use the church as usual. With a full rota of services, a full calendar of social activities and Community Markets, and eight Friday lunchtime concerts, the church has been busy. 2022 ended with over 300 people at a Christmas Eve Carol Service, while the church tower blazed with lights that were visible from a couple of miles away.

The mediaeval building always requires attention, and subsidence at the east end of the church is causing concern. The east window has been supported

to prevent further damage, and to prevent the stained-glass window from collapsing. The PCC is also actively exploring ways of reordering the back of the church to improve the socialising area.

We are very blessed to have such a large band of people who help and contribute to the life of the church in a huge variety of ways. Thank you to everyone who works so hard to look after the building - to clean it, to decorate it with flowers and to organise and support our fund-raising. We could not maintain and run the church without all this help, and the PCC is very grateful.

Liz Hammond, Churchwarden

LAXFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH

Laxfield Baptist Church continues to meet each Sunday morning and evening for worship as well as for a host of other events and activities.

The coffee morning on Thursday each week proves very popular as do our newly introduced, quarterly, Friends and Neighbours lunches to which all are invited.

We have a good number of children (and adults) coming along on a Friday for our toddler, children's and youth groups. As well as a number of children and young people coming along to our Sunday School.

We are making good use of the fairly recently refurbished hall and wonderful new kitchen, holding regular church meals.

The best news is that we have recently had two baptisms of people demonstrating their love for the Lord Jesus.

If you don't know what the inside of the Chapel looks like then come have a look on Sundays 10:30am or 6pm - we would love to see you.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

Tim Mawson – Pastor, Laxfield Baptist Church

LAXFIELD AND DISTRICT MUSEUM

(Museum opening times: we will be open on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays from 2-5 until the end of October. Also open on Market Days 10-1pm)

The biggest event of last year has to be the celebration of the Guildhall's 500 years and the Museum's 50 years over the weekend of 10th & 11th October. The main attraction of the weekend was the Company of Merrie Folke, who entertained and educated us Tudor-style. So many people from Laxfield and beyond helped to prepare for and run this event – they gave freely of their time and expertise and the Museum is very grateful. Overall, all the participants and visitors seemed to enjoy the experience. Posts on Nextdoor give a flavour of the reactions: It was a wonderful weekend of fun and merriment... something for everyone. And ...such an original and interesting event enjoyed by so many of us in the village and further afield.

The Queen's Jubilee exhibition proved to be very popular in June and that weekend the Museum broke all records by hosting 245+ visitors.

Colin Emeny and a group of committee members hosted a class from Laxfield Primary School and their teachers. We have also had renewed interest from two local schools in our loan boxes, whereby artifacts and information are loaned to schools to support their projects. Colin is working hard to build on our relationships with the local primaries.

The ceilidh on Saturday 22nd October was a great success, with many positive comments. Those who had helped the Museum last year were invited as guests. The event raised over £450 for the Museum. The band has been booked for a return visit this year on November 11th.

The cake stall at the October Community Market raised over £200. The donation jars did quite well last year but we are becoming a 'cashless society' so we now have a Sumup machine for sale goods and donations.

The Museum's opening event last year was in April in the Village Hall. Catherine and her troupe, yet again devised and performed an historical play based on Museum archives etc – this time it was about Henry Cable. Laxfield's Henry, was not only a popular fundraiser for the Museum, but the

group was asked to perform it at Wingfield Barns and also at Folk East. The Museum is very privileged to have such generous and talented support.

Our first fund raiser this year was Paul Taylor's brilliant presentation of the wildlife captured on still and movie cameras on his local farm. The evening was very well attended and proved to be a great success.

The Committee has been very pleased to welcome a new member, Sheila Fyfe. Catherine Cawood has been supporting Elaine's work with the costume collection. Together they have cleaned and re packaged all the hanging garments.

The Committee, with much appreciated help from stewards such as Catherine Cawood, Mary Jones, Rob Woolward and Will Webb and other friends of the museum, has worked hard to get the museum and the new exhibitions ready for this season. We have a display of natural dyes and inks; white clothes; handmade items; farming implements, recently brought down from their long stay in the loft. The first tabletop display has royal memorabilia to reflect the Coronation but afterwards there will be a display of local hobbies and crafts. This was suggested by one of our stewards, who has some wonderful cardboard models to display.

The museum is very grateful for everyone's efforts.

Some comments from the visitors' book 2022 were very encouraging:

- Beautiful and educational
- Lovely museum, very interactive for the children
- A local and national treasure
- It's nice to see what it was like before I was born
- Beautifully curated! Wonderful
- Interesting – always learn something new
- Fascinating – great to learn more about local history
- Wonderful and well worth a return visit
- Brilliant, not dumb downed, please keep it going
- Comment overheard by a steward: Way better than history at school

All the kind and generous support from Trustees, volunteers and local people keeps the Museum alive.

Thank you from the Museum Committee

LAXFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Laxfield Village Hall, The Link, Laxfield, IP13 8DY
Charity No. 304781



Laxfield Village Hall

Laxfield Village Hall Management Committee:

The current management committee members are Bill Shuttle (Chair), Becky Winn (Secretary and Marketing), Caroline Emeny (Bookings and Treasurer), Colin Hamilton (bar stock purchasing and management), Colin Emeny (Building maintenance) and Monica Wilkins (fund raising).

Activities at the hall:

Activities offered at the hall have returned to normal now that pandemic-related restrictions have been lifted. Nevertheless the attendance at events is only gradually returning to pre-pandemic levels. Regular activities at the hall included:

- Table tennis and Carpet Bowls
- Kids games club
- Zumba, Pilates and Yoga
- Film nights
- One-off events organised by the management committee included:
- Music nights and poetry performances
- Wine quiz
- Music quiz
- Christmas dance with local bands
- Touring theatre productions
- The hall has been booked for a range of other events:
- Horticultural show
- Joy's Rummage sale
- Celebratory events such as birthday party, baby shower and wedding reception
- Pre-school fundraising Bingo night
- Ceilidh night

There has been a range of new events funded by a National Lottery Community Fund grant. This covered the cost of running these events, including the cost of electricity, caretaking, utilities and BT:

- Healthy Eating on a budget
- Basic IT skills
- Laxfield Young Players
- Dance classes
- Art classes
- Wellness Day
- Extend exercise classes suitable for the older person and those with mobility issues
- Yoga classes

Hall maintenance and plans for upgrades

Routine maintenance and checking of fire safety equipment and heating/air-conditioning system has been carried out. Repair and repainting of the exterior woodwork has been completed by local contractors. Plans are in place to upgrade the kitchen and make it more suitable for preparing food for large groups

Finance

The hall's finances are stable.

Laxfield Village Hall Management Committee

ALL SAINTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

A family. Uniquely made and loved by God.

This was our ethos and vision, created by children, staff, governors and parents four years ago. When we first created it, I was beginning my time in school as Head of School, and we were looking to create stability, consistency and excellence throughout our school. Despite staffing changes and COVID, our wonderful village school continues to reflect that ethos and strive towards being the best that it can be for all children and staff.

We currently have 108 children on roll and 17 staff (8 full time). We have a new Executive Head: Mr Daryl Jones, starting with us in the summer term to

allow for Mrs Barrow to focus solely on her role as CEO of the All Saints Trust. He will be executive head of three schools: All Saints, Stradbroke and Thorndon and we are excited to develop this new partnership within the Trust.

As part of the All Saints Trust we regularly meet with other teachers and leaders to ensure our standards of teaching and learning remain high. We have welcomed Head Teachers from other schools to come and observe lessons and conduct 'Deep Dives' on specific subjects to assess the quality of teaching, learning, the curriculum and provision for all children. These have been very successful and we have had some wonderfully positive comments about the education we provide for all of our pupils.

As well as being our Executive Head, Mrs Barrow was also our SENDCO. This vital position has now been filled by Mrs Zoe Clancy who comes to us a day a week. She has a wealth of knowledge and has already led staff meetings, met with children and parents and introduced systems which will ensure our children with SEND have the very best education we can give them.

This academic year we have continued to work hard on our curriculum and staff development. Staff have attended training in many areas including maths, RE and art. All Teaching Assistants attended Trust led training at Wingfield Barns and many have been attending training based on dyslexia and autism.

Due to a very generous donation from Heveningham Hall we are looking to develop part of our playground into a soft surface area so we can offer the children even more adventurous activity during playtimes. We continue to develop the library and classroom libraries by keeping up to date with quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry book releases.

Academic excellence is something we aim to achieve throughout the school but we are very aware that this can only be achieved when children feel safe and happy. Many children across the country are struggling with poor mental health and lack of access to professionals to help them. We have conducted a well-being survey of every child in the school to ascertain who needs help with their mental health. Mr Millican (Yr 5 teacher) is currently training to be a mental health lead teacher and Mrs Sparrow (TA) has just finalised her

training in Emotional Literacy Support. These, combined with the many smaller, daily activities and interventions we use will enable children to feel that their voices are heard and that we take our ethos of 'family' very seriously. Attendance is an issue for us as it is in many schools at the moment. We hope that these interventions and supports, along with continuous discussion with parents will mean our attendance figures improve.

We continue to consider how we can ensure that our rural location does not prevent our children from exploring the wider world and developing their cultural capital. We have had/or are planning to have trips to London, Framlingham castle, Norwich, Time and Tide museum and Charlotte's Wood. We have watched theatre productions, sung on national television for Children in Need, visited churches, sent letters to Kenya, been to a farm, sat in a 'Wonderdome' to learn about space, had police cars, tractors and Scouts leaders visit us and enjoyed Christmas, Harvest and Easter celebrations with parents and family members. We have clubs run by children for children. Musical Theatre, Chess, art and library club are all run by year 5 and 6 who give up their own time to plan and lead these fantastic activities. Collective Worship is led by our junior Ethos group and our School Council have chosen charities and activities that the whole school can be involved in.

We continue to be supported by FOALS (Friends of All Saints) parents and the wider community. Our links to both churches as well as the Dolphin Academy in Kenya continues, and we are looking forward to developing these further. I recently asked our year 6 children to tell me what makes our school special. The following comments show that the daily effort by all staff and governors is positively impacting the children's lives and creating the school we want: Our trips, our staff, multiple interesting books in the library, we are a family, the macaroni cheese, we believe in forgiveness, everyone is valued and precious, we accept each other for who we are.

As we approach the final term in the school year, it is wonderful to know that our children enjoy school so much and to see the results of their hard work. I am excited for what the future holds.

Katharine Minns, Head of School

LAXFIELD COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (LCLT)



The District Council, who own the freehold, have now had a valuation on the Bickers Hill “prefab” site. They are in principle prepared to sell to another party but to facilitate development for housing the planning department will need to be convinced that the site qualifies as a Rural Exception Site (RES). The LCLT have approached Hastoe Housing Association with a view to developing the site for the provision of affordable rented accommodation for persons with local connections in line with the LCLT stated objectives.

The District Council are in agreement with this approach but there remains the hurdle of convincing the planning department that this need exists. The Local Plan should be published this Summer and this may influence the decision, as may the local elections, and so we have been told to await publication.

The LCLT remain committed to the provision of affordable rented accommodation for persons with local connections.

David Alchin on behalf of LCLT

FRESSINGFIELD SCOUT GROUP



The 1st Fressingfield Scouts provides wonderful opportunities for young people of all ages to contribute to their communities, gain confidence, and learn new skills. But we can't do this without input from our friends and supporters for which we are very grateful.

This year has seen an enthusiastic return to post COVID activity especially camping with 9 camps, ranging from a Group Camp with 63 camping and 18 Beavers visiting for the day to a 4 person overnight camp as part of an Expedition Challenge Hike. In between these we had a 6 night Scout and Explorer Summer Camp, attendance at the Norfolk County Scouts organised Water Activities Weekend, Beaver, Cub and Scout 1 and 2 night camps and a Patrol Leader Team "Middle of Nowhere" 2 night Camp a mile from the nearest road or tap.

Our members and friends were busy over the Jubilee weekend. A party of Scouts, Explorers and Leaders attended the Norfolk Scouts Water Activities Weekend four day Camp at Decoy Broad and had a fantastic time although the last day was rather wet! We had a Beacon Lighting Ceremony on Thursday at our Headquarters with bar, barbeque and tree planting work carried out. Thank you to Cowham's Car and Commercial for providing the tower for the beacon. On Friday we ran a barbeque at the very successful Hoxne Playing Field Jubilee Family Fun Day and on Saturday provided First Aid cover and a couple of side shows at the Fressingfield event. Unfortunately, because of the weather, the organisers had to cancel our barbeque at the Stradbroke event on the Sunday.

The Sections' main focus for the end of the year were their contributions for our first Gang Show since 2019 which was in Hoxne Village Hall. The evening went very well with a close to capacity audience, all Sections contributed and most members either performed on stage, helped behind the scenes, or ran craft and refreshment stalls.

We have recently completed our annual membership return to the Scout Association, this has revealed that we have grown by 25 youth members in the year. This is spread across all sections but around half the increase is the

new 4 and 5 year old Squirrel Section and is around an overall 15% increase which is very pleasing but results in an increasing strain on our Leader Team.

Work continues to improve our Headquarters site. At the moment we are constructing a cart lodge to house our mountain bikes, pioneering gear, marquee trailer and kayaks. This has only been possible with significant amounts of volunteer labour and a generous discount from the builder. Partial grant funding was provided by Mid Suffolk District Council.

Scouting is fun, rewarding and challenging not only for the young people from our communities but also for the dozens of adult volunteer Leaders and helpers that support the Scout Group. Subject to the necessary safeguarding checks and some training and support, we are also seeking to expand the number of adults that volunteer with us. Opportunities in a number of roles exist for anyone aged between 18 and, well, anything really! Get in touch through our website, Facebook, twitter or Instagram pages or speak to any Leader. You can also email Andrew the Group Scout Leader at andrew.aaldersdunthorne@talk21.com

Michael Knights - Assistant Group Scout Leader, 1st Fressingfield Scout Group

LAXFIELD COMMUNITY MARKET



The colourful and well supported Laxfield Community Market really continues to grow from strength to strength, helping to support local organisations raise much needed funds. It also provides the opportunity for local and non-local stall holders to sell their produce and enables people from all areas to come and spend a morning visiting Laxfield, enjoying the market and other attractions such as the Church tower tours, the museum, tea, coffee and cakes inside the church and the Royal Oak which opens at 9:30am on market days.

We have to thank all the stall holders who have continued to support the Market. This year, for most months we had over 30 stalls either on the Church Plain, inside the Church or on the Church grounds. From me and the team, thank you all for your loyalty. We must also thank all the visitors who also continue to support the market and the other attractions on offer on Market day. Lastly we must also thank all the bakers who helped all the Homebake stalls to raise much needed funds for all the different groups and charities who had the stalls. The Homebake stalls raised approximately £3000 between them – great job by all involved.

The Laxfield Community Market this year started to run the Charity Stall – so thank you to all the local suppliers who support this stall and all that purchase from it. All money raised goes to charity and this year raised £1000, most going to our charity Waveney Foodbank.

The market continues to employ 3 young people to assist in erecting and dismantling the market equipment, helping stall holders setup and take down their equipment and stock, help on the bacon stall, take refreshment orders and help out where needed. If any youngsters 15 years or over would like to join the team and earn some extra pocket money, please email chair@laxfieldmarket.co.uk

We have a great committee of about 12 people and I would like to personally thank them all for their hard work for this year BUT we are always looking for additional helpers, so if anyone would like to join the committee or just help out on market days please get in touch. The more people we have the better and easier it is to run the Market.

The market improves every year as we continue to 'RUN THE MARKET BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY'.

Adrian Heard, Chair - Laxfield Community Market

ALLOTMENT SOCIETY OF LAXFIELD

Heat and drought last summer made working allotment plots quite challenging and, for many, crops were disappointing.

* Despite drought the meadows flowered and flourished, full of bees, butterflies, moths, a variety of birds, some summer visitors and barn owls have returned. Other wildlife observed were great crested newts in the ditches and small mammals, including hedgehogs, in the woodpiles.

* The eleven fruit trees, provided by the Parish Council, survived the drought and are flourishing, thanks to our team of waterers.

* Hedge planting has been completed, with new or existing hedges now covering the entire perimeter of allotment land, providing a continuous wildlife corridor, whilst offering shelter and home for birds, insects and mammals. Our thanks to Suffolk Environmental Projects who provided hedging and materials and our team of volunteers who planted nearly 2500 hedge and tree whips.

* The Jubilee English Oak Tree, donated by the Parish Council, has been planted in the area near the benches, which are much used and enjoyed by all ages.

* All existing allotment plots are rented. New plots could be made available in the autumn.

Wendy Thomas, Secretary, Allotment Society of Laxfield

HIGHWAYS WORKING GROUP

We are a small, very active group of three and have been in existence for over three years. Highways matters are important to everyone in the parish and the group wanted to ensure you know that, although it may not appear that matters are resolved quickly, the group actively follow up issues raised constantly with the relevant authority! A spreadsheet of actions is maintained so that nothing is lost in the ether! If you'd like to be involved, please let Karen Gregory, the clerk know, you'll be very welcome to join us. We meet informally every four/five weeks for an hour!

Here are some of the achievements over the last year:

- Reintroduction of a speed camera within the parish. Bill Shuttle and his valiant group of volunteers have undergone training to use the equipment and now regularly check speeds on entry points to the village
- The mobile speed indicator device (SID) is in constant use around various points in the parish and a new pole is in place on Bickers Hill. The information is collected and can make for disturbing reading particularly around the Vicarage Road area. Work will take place to apply to the parish council for a permanent SID to be positioned here. The possibility of an additional SID pole at the cemetery is currently being investigated
- Gorams Mill Lane flood kit – last year a number of residents completed training to enable them to use the flood kit, should it ever be required
- A number of pavement issues, trip hazards, church plain tegulas, pot holes and other defects have been reported and resolved. However, some defects, always reported to Highways, fail to meet the criteria for repair
- A number of traffic cones have been purchased for use where necessary
- Through the Parish Council, purchased two 'no parking' signs for use outside the primary school
- Resolved the drop kerb issue at Church Plain
- Resolved two issues regarding ironworks at The Links
- Having introduced Quiet Lanes within the parish, supported other parishes with information

- Resolved a number of footpath sign issues, thanks to Rob Sutton, volunteer footpath warden

Parking by vehicles with their wheels on the footway, obstructing passage by pedestrians, continues unfortunately. Drivers are asked to be considerate to others and follow the example of most drivers by keeping their vehicles on their drive or on the carriageway.

The Highways Group

GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

The Parish Infrastructure investment plan (PIIP) identifies many improvement and development areas, many of them in Laxfield's green spaces. Over two years ago a green spaces group was formed to progress these issues. The group comprising seven residents and meets regularly. Due to external pressures, some of the projects have not progressed as much as we would have wished during this year. However, several things have been achieved through the group:

- Rob Sutton continues doing a great job as the volunteer footpath warden. Rob produces a footpath status report every month and issues continue to be fed via the SCC reporting tool with some success!
- Since the beginning of 2023, Rik Fox has become the parish's volunteer tree warden and we are benefitting greatly from his knowledge and experience
- the Sicon Fondation have been very generous in providing hedging for the perimeter of the allotments at Bickers Hill
- MSDC have also been very generous in providing free native hedging for the front of the Station Road allotments and the old cemetery. In addition, they have provided trees for the new cemetery and wild flower seeds
- plans to conduct a survey of hedgerows has started and thanks must be given to Mike Turton and the great band of volunteers. This work is now on hold until the winter

- Despite best endeavours, the conveyancing of the tank pond is unlikely to be progressed. There is nothing this group or the Parish Council can do regarding this situation
- Community litter picks are now held approximately twice per year and are both valuable and good fun! They also supplement the great work done by Edwin Warne throughout the year.

The group is always looking for new members so if you are interested, do get in contact with Karen, the clerk. There are a number of exciting ideas we wish to progress this year including a contemplation area for the new cemetery, making the path through the new cemetery to the garden of remembrance wheelchair friendly and developing the community nursery.

The Green Spaces Group

