

Hildersham Parish Council - Chairman's Annual Report Year – 2023 to 2024

This year the Parish Council has met as usual every two months. We were sad to lose the services of Billie Chapman this year, her enthusiasm and no-nonsense style will be missed. However, we are pleased to welcome a new Councillor, Tom Barton-Owens to our group.

Recreation Ground and Field Garden Trusts

The 2 trusts are now properly established and meet after the Parish Council meeting.

Linton and Hildersham Neighbourhood Plan

Joint consultation events were held on the proposed plan which were attended by several hundred people across Hildersham and Linton. The plan is now being updated post the feedback from the events and input received directly during the consultation period. As a reminder the Local Plan enables the Parish Council to have more say on matters like planning.

A1307/Cycle path

The work is now complete on the cycle way and A1307 crossing. South Holding has now been returned to the Parish Council.

Village safety

We were unsuccessful in our application for a Local Highways grant to improve the road safety of the back road crossing from Hildersham to Balsham, but we intend to apply again in the 2024 round. We were also unsuccessful in our application for a 20mph speed limit through the village. Our application remains on file but it is near the bottom of Highways list of priorities so is unlikely to make the cut in 2024. We also looked at the option of an additional street light near the end of Blench Lane. Based on feedback received in our consultation with those living near the light and the very high cost we agreed not to proceed.

Village Maintenance

We continue to get the paths swept, benches to be maintained and organise for the gullies to be cleared each year and the trees cut when needed. We have appointed a new grass cutting contractor and received proposals from the team behind the Hildersham Nature Recovery Plan on improvements we can make to the natural environment. A new Christmas tree was planted opposite the village hall. A new fence by the village hall was erected after being knocked down by a lorry trying to turn by the hall when the A1307 was closed for cycle way works.

Acknowledgements

The Council is very grateful to Councillors John Batchelor and Henry Batchelor, for their continued contributions and support at our Parish meetings.

On a personal note, I wish to record my sincere thanks to my fellow councillors for their unfailing support in what is sometimes a thankless task; their commitment to local democracy in Hildersham has been exemplary.

No Parish Council can function without the support and guidance of its Clerk, and we in Hildersham are fortunate enough to retain the services of Paula Harper, who unfailingly and effectively continues to guide and support us. I am sure that all my fellow councillors, and past councillors, would wish to join with me in recording our gratitude and appreciation to Paula.

I would also like to record the councils thanks to Jean Kelly who supports us in many ways, organising our website, providing input on the neighbourhood plan and championing the cause of our local nature.

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