

GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2024

Good evening to everyone. I will try my best to keep this Report Short and Sweet but no promises!!

Apologies that this comes across like the Oscars but there are lots of people to thank in the Village.

Firstly, thank you to the current Councillors who are, in no particular order: **Cllr Christopher Tranter, Cllr Jerry Mew** and **Cllr Sophie Alexander** for all their hard work. It is really appreciated.

Thank you to previous Councillors, **Ian Urwin** and **Lucinda Tacey** who recently stepped down. **Ian** has kindly agreed to assist with the updating of the Parish Council Facebook page and is still very involved with keeping residents updated on the **Bus Timetables** etc.

Gislingham Parish Council currently have **4 Parish Councillors**, but we still have **5 vacant places**.

THANKS YOUS

- **Stuart Wells** the Speed Indicator Device Co-ordinator, The Parish Council appreciate receiving the Vehicle Activity Report every month
- **Martyn Bryant** – Footpath Warden and we appreciate him taking on the Spring Litter Pick together with the Mendlesham Scouts
- **Emma Bryant** – Triangle Co-ordinator, her planting out always reflects the current season.
- **Steve Critchley**. Speedwatch co-ordinator together with all the Speedwatch Team who were the recipients of the Watson Bowl in 2021.
- The **Church Wardens** (Ann Cottee & Jackie Campbell) for ensuring St Mary's Church is looked after and open for Residents and Visitors to visit, in addition to organising coffee mornings in the Village Hall and fund raising for various Charities. Always a friendly wave from Ann when she is seen driving her car around the Village.
- **Jean Archdeacon** – our Historian. Jean previously did a Talk on Gislingham at the FOSM (Friends of St Mary's) AGM which was very interesting and informative.
- **FOSM** (Friends of St Mary's) Committee for organising the monthly Booksale and Coffee Morning. (A big thank you to **Chris Pitt**, the Chair and all his "Helpers").
- **Bell Ringers**, always makes me quicken my step on a Sunday morning.
- **GUC (Gislingham United Charity) Trustees**, who support those in need in the Village as well as supporting students wishing to take part in school trips and those entering University.
- I would like to give a special mention to **Elsbeth Tranter** who organises the August Bank Holiday Flower Festival in collaboration with **FOSM** and again her "Helpers" where would we be without Volunteers?
- You may have noticed that the **Footpath/Bridleway Map**, which is situated outside the Village Hall, has been replaced and updated by our very talented **Jo Clifford**. Thank you, Jo.

Last year the following Groups benefited from financial contributions from the Parish Council:

- **FOSM** – Organising the August Bank Holiday Flower Festival for 2024
- **Gislingham Variety Club** towards their April 2024 production
- **Gislingham Summer Fayre** the event is back after an absence of nearly 5 years to be held in July 2024. I know that the Committee are working extremely hard so please do support them.
- **PCC (St Mary's Church)** to assist with the upkeep of the Church
- Gislingham Parish Council would like to thank **The Messenger** (also a previous recipient of the Watson Bowl) for all the updates that residents receive in their publication and on-line and thank you to all the contributors and distributors.
- A big thank you goes to the **Village Hall Committee** for organising so many events for the Village. Quiz Nights are always popular and I still remember the Team I sit on "The Optimists" winning once!! Lovely wine was the prize, we all received a bottle each.

I would also like to thank the many Volunteers in the Village.

Jane Challis our Parish Clerk left in January of this year and I would like to thank our Responsible Financial Officer (**Sharlene Budd**) for stepping in to assist the Parish Council by taking on extra duties, which has included minute taking and also updating of the Website. Thank you.

Thank you to our **County Councillor Jessica Fleming** and **District Councillor Rowland Warboys** for their support and for keeping the **Parish Council** updated on what is happening at the County and District Councils. Councillors really appreciate them giving up their time to attend our **Parish Council Meetings**, sending through Reports and following up on any issues or concerns that residents have made the Parish Council aware of.

I would also like to thank **SALC** (Suffolk Association for Local Councils) for all their updates to Parish Clerks and Councillors on legislation etc.

Apologies if I have left anyone out.

Again, I have one last thank you which is to my "long suffering" husband Simon. Likewise, I would like to thank the spouses, partners and families of the **Parish Councillors** of Gislingham, as well as our **RFO**.

I am announcing this evening that I have decided to step down as **Chair and Parish Councillor** having served for 6 years and would like to add that I have very much enjoyed my time as a Councillor. For those with the "Rightmove Alert Notification" you will see that Simon and I are looking to move as we want to spend more time with our first Grandchild who was born in January.

Thank you.

Cllr Julie Bell,
Chair, Gislingham Parish Council,
20th May 2024