

Parish Council report to village 2022 - 24.

What the Parish Council does. We look after various village features and amenities, for example the playground, footpaths, ditches, street lighting, bus shelter; and we are consulted by the District Council planning dept on all applications in the village within the parish boundaries (which includes Edingthorpe Green and Stow Hill).

The Council receives its main funding through between 3 and 4% of residents' Council Tax (our "precept") and you can see from the accounts what that is spent on. We do need to keep our precept up because we are a small village and costs are the same regardless of the size of the village but are shared between fewer houses. However, having part of the gas terminal in our parish has helped greatly as the four terminal companies have over the years contributed to or in some cases even paid all of the cost of various projects., Examples are the playground, the traffic monitor, a bench by the pond, the poly-tunnel for plants for the stall, and most recently the roadside gates.

Website: The village website pastonvillage.org.uk as well as giving Paston information and history gives date place and time of each Parish Council meeting, agenda, minutes of previous meeting, yearly accounts and adopted policies.

Planning applications: We were consulted on several since the last report, our only objection being to a proposal by the Holiday Village to make a car park on previously undeveloped ground, which the Council turned down.

Playground: The playground continues to be popular with families not just from our village but from all around the area. It is monitored for safety by council members and inspected yearly, and some of the old equipment has been removed. A motion sensitive camera captures images to discourage anti social activity

The Sir William Paston Charity owns the alms-houses and some farmland. It is administered by trustees,, New trustees have recently taken over, Nick Bardswell and Robert Digby The Parish Council has no formal involvement other than appointing the trustees (as provided by the Charity Commission scheme which set it up), though we have in the past helped sort out problems.

Highways. The monitoring station has recorded that over 1,000 vehicles a day pass through Paston. We had been pushing for a 30 mph limit through the village centre, but we would have to contribute to the cost which would put up the precept to an unacceptable level. In fact when speeds were taken of vehicles coming from Mundesley passing the pond the average speed was 28 mph. That would be more at other stretches of road but the monitor also showed only a very small proportion exceeding the 40 mph limit, so a 30 mph limit might well make little difference.

In common with other local villages we now have roadside "gates" on each approach road with slow down notices,. There are two on the road from Bacton, one each on the road approaching from Mundesley and on Chapel Road – one gate only as in each case only one side of the road has a suitable bank for a gate.

Footpaths: Yarmouth Way and Sandy Loke (from Stow Hill to Knapton Road) are now on the County Council's definitive map. The County Council have signposted Sandy Loke and cut back protruding branches so it is now passable on foot, on bicycle and, now for the first time in many decades, on horseback..

Hemp Lane is the current footpath issue in the village. This led from the forge and branched out into a patchwork of small fields to which it gave access. It was ploughed up in the 1960;s when the hedges were removed and the multiple fields were turned into one big field by the then owner. An application by the Open Spaces Society to register the footpath was refused by the County Council on the grounds that it only led to fields for agricultural access, but that decision was been over-ruled by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal on the ground that it might have been a route to the clifftop and beach. The Parish Council and some individual residents have objected so it will be going back to the Planning Inspectorate. There are some complex legal technical issues. However the core objection is that there is no reliable evidence that Hemp Lane ever gave access to the clifftop – it stops well short of the cliff top and there is no way down that part of the cliffs The applicants' evidence contained factual errors which the Parish Council in particular have pointed out..

Windfarm cabling: Power from Norfolk Boreas and Norfolk Vanguard windfarm, when built, will be brought ashore at Happisburgh and be carried through cables to Necton, near Swaffham.. The route goes through the southern end of Paston Parish alongside and to the north of the North Walsham to Bacton road, Work is

due to start spring 2025. The contractors have agreed to keep us fully informed, and we have invited other neighbouring parishes affected to join with us.

St Margaret's Church – is part of our national heritage which is in our village and for which accordingly we have responsibility to preserve and make accessible. Work (funded by grants and donations) has now been completed to enable it to be used for functions and events by creating an open area at the back and installation of kitchen and toilets. The important medieval wall paintings have been restored so far as they can be and conserved. And the clock has now been reactivated. The striking is programmable and is set to strike on the hour from 7 am to 11 pm. Hopefully with the wind in the right direction it is being heard in the main village.

The Church now attracts many visitors not just local but from all over the country and from abroad. Many come having learned about and read the unique collection of letters written in the 1400's by the Paston family, and people want to come and see where they worshipped.

The Paston planting project: There are now about 500 trees around Paston that were not there before – may not be too obvious as they are well scattered, but they're there. And as to flowers the several hundred bulbs planted three to four years ago are now established and giving colour in the spring., while along the wall in Pond Road the plants have now matured and thickened out into a blaze of colour. As with most Paston amenity projects the planting was planned by Denise McKeough and Maggie Brett,

The Paston plant stall by the pond raises money for village projects. The plants sold are raised by Denise McKeough and Maggie Brett who now have a poly-tunnel (funded by the gas terminal companies) which has increased production..

The pond, since it was cleared by Pip Clabon and his team now really looks like a traditional village pond, and teems with wildlife. The raft is a recent addition, funded by the money raised from the sale of plants (see above) It is attached to an anchor to hold it in position and it provides a floating platform for the birds, particularly the ducks and moorhens.

Village amenities generally: The playground, trees and flowers are examples of initiatives carried out over recent years to improve the amenities and appearance of the village. But those efforts can be let down by what residents can do with their homes and gardens without breaking any law. We do have to rely on residents to keep them neat and tidy.

Accounts -Year to 31st March 2024

Receipts

Precept	7,264.00	
Grant for polytunnel	200.00	
Adjusting repayment of underpaid invoice	69.00	
HMRC VAT	140.44	
Interest on Deposit A/c	96.72	7,770.16

Payments:

Clerk – honorarium	2,791.41	
Clerk - share of office expenses	600.00	
Administration expenses	370.55	
Invoice underpaid - adjusted	69.00	
Insurance	347.89	
Village, sundry maintenance	2,393.22	
Towards churchyard maintenance	500.00	
Playground mowing and maintenance	1,743.50	
VAT	195.82	9,011.39

Payments in excess of income **-1,241.23**

Bank balance b/d at year start **11,052.09**

Bank balance c/f at year end **9,810.86**