

CORPUSTY & SAXTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Norfolk

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Chairs report

Annual report of the Parish Council of Corpusty and Saxthorpe. May 14th 2025

The elected Councillors are Guy Hodgson, Imogen Waterson, Stephen Fenny, Lesley Last, Caroline Randell, Marty Jacobs, Peter Jones and John Birchall

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MAY 2025

It has been a busy year for the parish council. Last year I reported that it was a year of new policies. This year has seen some refreshed and added, but nothing like the number we had last year. These are all available to view on the PC's website.

The main developments over the last year have been:

1. Little London allotments

With a few notable exceptions, these had become overgrown and not fit for their purpose. So, the parish council decided that they should be cleared and once again made available for their intended purpose.

A plan was hatched, led by Lesley Last and John Birchall, to clear and then reconfigure the site. The clearance has taken place, with some tidying-up to do. The roadside hedge, which was substantially overgrown, has been replanted, and further work will follow with a view to making the currently unoccupied allotments available for the 2026 growing season.

2. Village sign

The village sign under the plough crumbled and partially collapsed. It has been replaced and plans are afoot to restore the plough to its former glory this summer.

3. Restoration of the phone box

The phone box opposite the pub was looking tired and neglected, so we arranged for it to be restored to its original condition. I think that you will agree that it is looking far better. Many thanks to John Bailey for the work that he generously carried out.

This coincided with the Spar shop's need to re-locate the defibrillator so that the In Post boxes could be sited there. The phone box therefore became the new home for the defibrillator.

4. Playground repairs

The trees having been cut back from overhanging the playground, we next turned to the wood repairs required to the apparatus, which were carried out for us by Justin Prior, and which have given the playground a new lease of life.

5. Picnic tables

The picnic tables by the playground had similarly seen better days. These have been replaced.

6. Fencing by the playground

Following representations about the safety of children using the playground, a metal railing fence will be restored to its former location at the edge of the green between Bloomfield

House and the western end of the common, if that has not already occurred. There will be gates by Bloomfield House and where the public footpath enters the common. Installation date 10th June.

7. Grass cutting

As contractors has been less than reliable over recent years, a specification of the parish's requirements was prepared and the contract put out to tender.

The specification shows the areas to be cut, which are the green, St Peter's churchyard and St Andrew's entrance and car park. On the green a section is being left uncut until August to enable wildflowers to flourish.

I hope that you will agree that the new contractors are doing a good job.

8. Footpath shingle

The footpath behind the mill had become muddy after rain, the shingle having been lost in years of leaf fall. It has therefore been re-shingled and is again easily passable in all conditions.

9. Footpath audit

About 5 years ago the parish council first carried out an audit as to footpath signage and condition. The audit has been updated after parish councillors put in the 'hard yards' by walking all of the footpaths, bridleways and restricted by-ways in our parish.

The completed audit has been submitted to the footpath officer at the Highways agency to assist them when carrying out routine maintenance.

10. Highways matters

A number of initiatives are in play with Highways. These include the need to calm speed of traffic approaching our villages generally, but especially from the directions of Holt and Matlaske and the installation of village gates, that were paid for years ago but have yet to materialise. We are being assisted here by our MP, Steff Aquarone, and district councillors Callum Ringer and Andrew Brown. I am hopeful that we shall soon see some progress.

It remains for me to thank you for coming to this meeting, which but for this summary of the past year, looks forward to the future.

Report from Cllr Caroline Randell (Village Hall)

The village hall committee, helped by a growing number of volunteers, has continued to have a very busy time raising funds to keep the Village Hall afloat, care for the grounds, and welcome the Community to a wide range of events.

We are also continuing renovations on the Station building which we hope will open shortly. We need to complete the painting, replace some guttering and down pipes and give the parquet floor some TLC.

Currently our outgoings are more than our income which comes from Hall hire, allotments, films, Synergy and fund raising events.

There has been no response from Synergy since the meeting with them, attended by Maureen Kimbley, Guy and myself in March.

We are working towards lowering our carbon footprint and have undertaken a decarbonisation plan with Groundwork East. A grant for solar panels has been applied for and an EV charging point installed. We will be upgrading our lighting too, to make it more energy efficient.