

Annual Report for KIRTON WARD which includes: Kirton and Falkenham, Levington and Stratton Hall, Bucklesham, Newbourne, Hemley and Waldringfield by Susan Harvey, District Cllr.

This has been an incredibly busy year, thank you for your help and support whilst I have been in new territory. I apologise for not getting to all your parish council meetings, unfortunately they clash with other Council engagements. I do always send a report. Under the new boundaries each District Councillor has the responsibility of around 2,400 people, an increase of 700. I have also been Chairman of SCDC and attended well over 100 official engagements. My Chairman's Challenge to visit all 118 communities as the public face of SCDC has been completed and very rewarding. I would like to thank all those who volunteer in their communities. In the words of the High Sheriff 'you are the glue which holds society together'.

Planning. The new document showing preferred sites for building has been thoroughly consulted on and been through Scrutiny, Cabinet and went to full Council on 24th March and will now proceed to the inspector. We do now have a 5 year land supply. The Council's record on defending appeals remains good.

Planning Applications. I have never seen so many planning applications. The new Scheme of Delegation appears to be working although there are still a few problems which need ironing out. Please make Cllr Tony Fryatt aware of problems you are having and suggestions as to what could be improved as this system is being reviewed shortly. I always visit contentious application sites and talk to local people about them. This takes quite a lot of my time but I find it is time well spent and I am also getting to know all the villages better.

Speed watch. I have supported this with my Community enabling Budget as has Suffolk County Council. Volunteers have come forward from several of the villages. This should be up and running in the next few months and should help to make our villages safer places. I am very grateful to Waldringfield for taking the lead on this.

My Community Enabling Budget has contributed to:

Tables for Levington and Bucklesham village halls. A new driveway for Newbourne Village Hall. A new double glazed window for Kirton Church Hall. A wet weather tent for Kirton and District Guides. Waldringfield Speed Watch camera, equipment and training. Office furniture for CAB Felixstowe to enable a new telephone service to be installed. Cooking equipment for Sail East at Levington. The remaining fund went to the Rural Coffee Caravan towards a new van which I believe they have now ordered. I hope I have spread a little happiness in all the Kirton Ward villages. There should be a new fund available for the next financial year so please keep your requests coming in.

Rural Transport. I had said I would work with partners to try to get this improved. I have spoken to Private Bus companies who say the routes are unviable as they are only

reimbursed by 40% of the concession fares. Buses do, of course, come under Suffolk County Council as opposed to the District. Some areas have a bookable mini bus service which could be investigated.

Joining Forces with Waveney District Council. The present situation is that we have joint officers but still maintain our individuality. This gives good financial savings.

New Offices. The buildings should be finished and handed over for fitting out by the end of May. The final move should take place in the Autumn. Everything is running to time at present. The officers and staff are looking forward to working in the new premises which will be a great improvement on Melton Hill. The new offices will be better insulated and more efficiently heated and the right size for the reduced staffing levels.