

GRUNDISBURGH & CULPHO PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
1st APRIL 2017 - 31st MARCH 2018

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Meetings The Council met bi-monthly and two Extraordinary Meeting was held. The Council's Finance, Roads & Transport, Planning and Footpaths & Environment Sub Committees also met during the year. The Annual Parish Meeting was held in the Village Hall on the 2nd May 2017 where reports were given by village organisations and an update on the new village hall project.

Web Site The Parish Council's web site <http://grundisburgh.suffolk.cloud> has expanded considerably over the years and is a valuable tool in keeping the villages informed of council activities and providing information. Information includes the minutes of council and committee meetings and sections on Planning, Housing, Environment, Local History and lots more. It also has many useful links. Please give it a look.

Welcome Pack There is always a danger that newcomers can feel isolated and lost when they arrive in the villages. Welcome Packs compiled and delivered by Sally Grahn help enormously to help them feel at home and are greatly appreciated. These packs are full of valuable information to help those new to the area to help them settle in. If you know of anyone who has been missed please let Sally know 01473-738219.

Planning The parish council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications in Grundisburgh and Culpho which means that the council receive details of all applications in the parishes and invited to submit comments to the Planning Authority. Planning is a very contentious subject and people can get very agitated about it but please remember that anyone can object to, or support, applications. Planning permissions are granted, or refused, by Suffolk Coastal District Council NOT Parish Councils. The Parish Council has established a policy which directs how it deals with the diverse types of applications and these can be viewed on the council's web site or a hard copy can be obtained from the Parish Clerk.

Roads & Transport The Parish Council receives more complaints about the condition of local roads than anything else. The County Council, like all principal authorities, have suffered swinging cuts in the funding they receive from central government. From 2010/2011 to 2018/2019 there will be a 40% reduction in revenue funding, that's funding used for routine maintenance, emergency repairs, grass cutting and energy costs for street lighting and signals. Examples of how this affects local roads is that the annual budget for the replacement of missing signs to sign cleaning is £112,000. There are 102,000 signs in Suffolk, so the budget equates to little more than £1 per sign. This may explain why many non-mandatory signs are not replaced if damaged and why many signs have remained uncleaned for many years. Road re-lining is only carried out when roads are re-surfaced. This explains why many road marking lines are practically worn completely away. When the Parish Council receives complaints, it encourages villagers to report road and traffic problems directly to the County Council using the reporting tool on their web site. <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads-pavements-and-verges/potholes/report-a-pothole/> Complaints from the people directly affected by the problem are more likely to be listened too.

p.t.o...

Footpaths & Environment The Footpaths & Environment Committee, led by Chair Sally Grahn, has been very active throughout the year. It looks after the over-all appearance of the village. It carries out cleaning of street signs and made sure all were sparkling clean before the Cycling Tour of Great Brittan travelled though the villages on the 8th September. All the 13 benches in Grundisburgh have been inspected and many will be stained, and some have slats replaced in 2018. A new bench in Memory of our late County Councillor Peter Bellfield will be erected on Lyttleton Meadow.

The Sunday walks have again been very popular leaving the Village Green at 2.00pm on the second Sunday in the month. This is a fantastic way to discover routes you are not familiar with and enjoy the beautiful countryside surrounding the village in good company. The walks last about 2 hours. The walk on the 12th March was combined with a litter pick. 16 villagers took part. One of the most enjoyable walks is the Annual Christmas Torch Lit Walk on the 18th December from the Village Green to Mr & Mrs.Hill's home in Hasketon where 17 walkers were welcomed by mulled wine, fruit juices and festive fare.

The Millennium Meadow, a rare area of wet grass land, which was conceived by the Parish Council as a conservation area to celebrate the Millennium and made possible by the generosity of Lord Cranworth in granting us a 100-year lease. Whatever the time of year it is always in immaculate condition thanks to the regular work party which meets there on the second Saturday of the month 10.00am – 12.30pm. Please contact the warden John Dunnett on 01473-735515 if you can help. John and his helpers would make you very welcome.

The late John Batchelor The incredibly generous bequests to village organisations in the will of the late John Batchelor will make a tremendous improvement to Grundisburgh's infrastructure. St. Mary's Church and the Scouts and Guides have worked hard for many years in creating plans and raising funds for an extension to the Church and a new Headquarters for the Scouts and Guides. Despite the enormity of the task and the daunting amounts of money needed to fulfil their plans they have never given up hope and now with the help of this bequest their dreams will now be fulfilled. The Baptist Church will also receive a bequest to advance their work in the village and the Gurdon Trust will receive Mr. Batchelor's home in Meeting Lane which will be rented to a local family. All these organisations will tell us at the Annual Parish Meeting on the 24th April how their plans are progressing.