

Report from Syleham Parish Council

Chairman: Malcolm Flounders

A big thank you to all our residents who have helped their neighbours get through this difficult time of Covid-19. Also, our thanks to the Suffolk Community Foundation who granted us the funds to offer free transport to the vaccination centres. An offer we can now extend to all adults in the village for the remainder of the vaccination programme.

During this enforced lockdown, the Council has taken a serious review of financing investment in Syleham. Recent improvements such as the new noticeboard, grit bins, speed sign and website have all been funded by grants from third parties. Sources that will be more difficult to access in the future.

Our own income comes from the Precept, an annual payment of just £1,600. It no longer covers the cost of administration and statutory payments for insurance and professional fees.

This income has hardly changed for ten years and has fallen to just 33% of precept levels charged by neighbouring parishes. We have had to take action to correct this imbalance as you will see in your Council Tax statement for 2021/22. This increased funding will not only ensure financial viability but also help us support the innovations planned for the new financial year.

The village was not only hit by Covid but also flooding in January. A disaster that Syleham and the District Council was clearly unprepared.

A group of qualified residents led by Leslie Hastie has offered to prepare a Flood Prevention Plan for the village and want to present this at the Annual Parish meeting. The Council wants to support this initiative.

Recent planning decisions have demonstrated the importance of our network of footpaths in protecting the character of our village. To strengthen this defence, we intend to refurbish the signage and encourage all residents to enjoy walking the paths.

Finally, we have the first data from the speed sign for the period August, 2020 to January, 2021. It measured 16,500 vehicle movements through the village. 30% of which were travelling at over 35mph, fast enough for an endorsement.

Drive carefully and keep safe.

Covid restrictions willing, we plan to have a “virtual” Parish Council meeting on March 26th (details to be posted on the noticeboard and website) and a “normal” Annual Meeting on May 26th.