

Parish report for Bungay & Wainford villages 8th March 2023

As the elections draw ever closer and the Pre-election period starts next week, this will be my last report until the end of May – and I may only be covering County matters then, who knows?

District:

I think one of the big successes during this four-year term has been the establishment of the Community Partnerships. As you know, I chair the Beccles Bungay Halesworth and surrounding villages Partnership and whilst we have a fluctuating membership, there have been some stalwarts and new people join us constantly. It is good to see a mixture of Councillors and volunteers across the patch. With our small grants' funding scheme and wider funding pot, we have been able to help some very worthwhile local causes in all of the towns and many of the villages. We have helped Bungay Guides with an activities day, the AShop in Beccles with a new awning, the Beccles Hub, Halesworth Volunteer Centre, Shadingfield PC with a new children's slide, the INK project, Swell Music, sponsored the Bungay 'Shoppa bus' as a trial, Bungay Community Support and many other small local projects such as Slipper Swap and a dental hygiene programme for year 6 students. During the time this has been running we have gained Sam as our Communities' officer, who hit the ground running and has been a huge support as well as very hardworking in his dedication to our towns and villages. Most of you I think have met him.

For the last year I have also been Assistant Cabinet Member with responsibility for Refugees, I have met many Ukrainian Nationals who have come to Ward members with queries, mostly about their accommodation. It has been a privilege to be able to help them in some small way and I have to say the ESC Housing team has been marvellous in their response.

I have tried hard over the last 4 years to distribute my Enabling Communities' budget as fairly as possible and have sponsored a variety of projects as follows: Bungay Town Council for Jubilee costs, a defibrillator, summer activities, a new bus stop, refurbishing of the skate park. Rumburgh Village Hall received Jubilee costs, the Friends of Bungay Library received funding for Sanitary items, jigsaws a storyteller's chair and so on. I seem to have helped fund many noticeboards and defibrillators. More detailed information on what David and I have supported in the last four years can be found on the ESC Website.

I am really pleased that with the help of the Co-op, Jo McCallum and Sam, a group of us is working towards making Bungay a 'dementia friendly town'. Training is ongoing. Once again, Bungay leads the way!

We have also started a Stakeholder Group, involving some of the organisations within Bungay in an effort to help support and promote a strong shared identity for Bungay. We have had a couple of meetings so far so it is early days yet.

Organisations, Parish Councils and community groups are invited to apply for a new grant scheme which will help provide affordable food to East Suffolk residents who are in need. This is part of a three-year programme supported by the UK Shared Prosperity fund which aims to fund the initial set up of community pantries across the District; people will be able to pay a subscription of £5 per week and receive fresh food to the value of £15. Grants of up to £4,500 are available and applications close on 15 March.

Applications are welcome – [here](#)

County:

Much of my time as ever is taken up with Highways issues. We are fortunate to have Wayne Saunders as our local Highways engineer and he attended a meeting with Peter Aldous and me in Barsham last month to discuss the extensive flooding there over New Year, I felt it was a really useful meeting. I have also had a meeting with Wayne and a Police Constable in Ellough to discuss the problems being caused by 'boy racers' on the verge of the Industrial estate. In an example of collaboration, I approached Cllrs Caroline Topping & Ash Lever from Beccles for joint funding towards a Traffic Regulation order so the Police have some powers to stop this.

SCC is waiving charges for road closures for Coronation celebrations, please look at www.suffolk.gov.uk/Kingscoronation To be allocated Traffic management staff to assist, applications need to be submitted by 2 April.

I continue to report instances of faded white lines, potholes and faulty lighting as I go about and would urge you to do the same, it is a really easy thing to do on the Suffolk Highways' portal: <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk> Recently along with many others I reported the large pothole which appeared in Wharton St and brought some pressure to bear when told the turnaround time was 8 weeks. I was pleased to see it fixed relatively quickly. Despite there being as yet no official Lorry Watch scheme in Bungay, I still report drivers of lorries which transgress the weight restriction to their companies and more often than not I receive an apology and reassurance the driver will be reminded.

On National Offer Day, 98% of Suffolk pupils were offered a place at their preferred school.

The Benjamin Foundation and SCC are working closely together to find hosts for Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking children, please contact the Benjamin Foundation 01603 886930 if you are interested in finding out more.

I also have a County Locality Budget and have helped other organisations with grants throughout the last year, I have helped with an Internet Safety project for Bungay High School, Shelving and bean bags at St Edmunds' printing of leaflets for the Warm Rooms project, repair of the Boardwalk at Flixton Aviation museum, repair of a bus shelter in Homersfield, Coronation tea party at Mutford, and a Defib at St Peter South Elmham church.

Peter Aldous and I held a 'drop in' at Bungay library on Saturday 4 March, we were very busy and hopefully between us we will be able to help the people who came to us.

Please do remind your residents about the new requirement to have ID with you when you vote on 4 May.

Judy Cloke

County Councillor for the Bungay Division

One of the District Councillors for the Bungay & Wainford Ward.