

# *Fremington Parish Council*



## *Annual Report 2015-2016*

## **Chairman's Annual Report - Cllr Mrs Sue Kingdom**

We have reached that time of year when we need to look back at what has happened before we look forward to the coming year.

In May, Cllrs Brian Hockin, David Harris, Brian Clifton, Cliff Bell and Chris Turner moved on to pastures new after many years of serving the community. We take this opportunity to thank them for their years of service.

As these Councillors departed we welcomed Cllrs David Chalmers, Graham Turner, Kelvin Groves, Alan Rennles and Mrs Jayne Dyson who are serving their respective areas of the community.

Earlier in the year we finally opened the car park extension at Fremington Quay, which we hope will make life easier for visitors. A defibrillator has recently been installed at Fremington Quay and is in addition to the one installed at Fremington Parish Hall.

Throughout the year we have had a number of planning applications where we have expressed major concerns, which have subsequently been approved by the Planning Inspectorate after going to appeal, for example, Mead Park and West Yelland are just two. We continue to monitor all applications and express the concerns of the local population.

Properties on the former Army Camp site are now being occupied and this has led to the highlighting of the access issues, which are still ongoing.

We have been successful in renewing the lease for the Muddlebridge Allotment site. We are always keen to learn of any land in the Parish which would be available for use as allotments.

Shortly before Christmas we started the process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This will take some time and will involve the whole community. This means looking at all aspects of the Parish in regard to Highways, Health, Education, Employment and Sports Provision. The Steering Group has held successful consultation events with lots of interesting suggestions received, I would urge everyone in the parish to put your comments forward and get involved this plan will shape the future of the Parish and once adopted will carry full statutory weight as part of the Development Plan for the area and due regard must be given to the plan when making planning decisions.

If you would like to be involved please contact the Parish Clerk, Mrs Victoria Woodhouse, on 01271 321063 or e-mail [clerk@fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk) for details. You can also keep up to date with progress via the Parish Council's website [www.fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk) or the Neighbourhood Plan's Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/fremingtonparishnp/> .

Now moving on to the future, news has come through that a new school could be built in Tews Lane. It was felt that with the Larkbear development the new primary school would be built there but it has become apparent that Tews Lane is being considered as well. As those in the community are well aware the traffic issues through Fremington, Bickington and Roundswell can be very difficult so it is very concerning that Tews Lane is being considered again. We continue to lobby for a resolution to the traffic issues.

Devon County Council is planning a footpath and cycle path extension over the A39 from Roundswell. There are also plans to lobby for funding to make Fremington Quay more accessible and to look at opportunities such as ferries between Instow and Barnstaple.

**Cllr Susan Kingdom  
Chairman**

**This Annual Report is available on the Council's website at [www.fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk) and in a Large Print version.**

**If you would like a Large Print copy please contact the Parish Council Offices on 01271 321063, or email [clerk@fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)**

## **Tews Lane Committee - Cllr Rodney Cann**

The sports field continues to enjoy success as a facility for all users and the general public.

The football pitches are some of the most heavily used in North Devon with something like 14 teams using the facility.

The pitches are generally in good condition and well maintained by our contractor. A combination of exceptional rain, heavy use and the clay subsoil has led to cancellation of some football matches recently and discussions are ongoing as to how best improve the situation.

The increasing number of dog walkers using the facility is a matter of concern to the football clubs and many local residents. In a move to encourage dog walkers to use nearby public footpaths as an alternative to the sports field a new access and pedestrian gate has provided access to footpath No.17 which runs parallel to the sports field.

The cost of maintaining the complex is relatively high and your committee has for some time been exploring measures to reduce expenditure with the users groups, this work is ongoing.

The two District Councillors for Roundswell-Bickington have used their locality funds to provide a high quality rubbish bin and are currently funding an enhanced planting scheme at the entrance to the site.

Negotiations are ongoing to agree developer Section 106 contributions to fund the completion of the community building, improve parking facilities and surface water dispersal.

We have recently received notice that South West Water intend to exercise their right to lay a drainage pipe across the field parallel to and in close proximity to Tews Lane for nearby development. We are in discussions to establish if we can use this as an opportunity to improve land drainage across this section of the site.

All in all a successful year with the prospect of a bright future if all our plans come to successful fruition.

**Cllr Rodney Cann**  
**Chairman Tews Lane Committee**

## **Footpaths Committee - Cllr James Bell**

Once again, the general clearance and maintenance of footpaths, bridleways and byways in the Parish has been carried out this year mainly by local contractors, the vast majority of works involving vegetation clearance.

The seasons first cut of footpaths/bridleways was carried out in accordance with the specifications. This had the effect of making the maintenance and upkeep of our footpaths, bridleways and byways easier to control and, as always, has improved access for members of the Parish and general public, together with organised groups with environmental interests.

Thanks must go to Mrs Liz Steer, who again carried out surveying of all the footpaths/bridleways network; we are pleased to report that all passed. However, due to Devon County Council's continuing financial constraints, we were again unable to pay her for this service and many of the surveys were carried out in her own time; as last year, the agreement of the Parish Clerk, she has been able to carry out the remainder in work time, with a mileage claim only from the P3 budget . At the present time this arrangement is proving satisfactory but may prove difficult to implement in the future.

Housing development planning applications continue to be submitted in the parish, such as the Allenstyle development which has resulted in a diversion of Footpath 41. We have therefore again this year not submitted Specific Bids for works to the footpaths network for the coming year in view of the applications pending.

A P3 Grant in the sum of £400.00 has been awarded for 2016/2017 and will again be spent on maintenance work on the Parish's extensive footpath, bridleway and byway network as required.

Finally, thanks must go to members of staff for their support and assistance in maintaining our footpaths network.

**Cllr James Bell**  
**Chairman Footpaths Committee**

**Mrs Eileen Badcock**  
**Joint P3 Co-ordinator**

## **Parks and Playing Fields Committee - Cllr Tony Wood**

This year has been a very busy year for the Parks and Playing Fields Committee, however, the workload has been reduce by the introduction of the Fremington Quay Management Committee which has allowed us to focus on our open spaces. I am very pleased to report that the replacement of the Beechfield Centre is growing ever closer with a decision on the planning application imminent. The project has been included in Section 160 agreements to gain the funding required. I hope this project can progress with speed and the tired looking portacbin can be removed and replaced with a purpose built permanent building. As part of the project we will also be looking to tarmac and line the car park which will provide a better surface all year round. The replacement of the Centre has been in discussion for over nine years and finally it looks as though it will be completed in the near future.

The Parish Council has been able to secure the renewal of the lease for the land at Muddlebridge which provides 37 allotment plots. This is a popular site and the Parish Council is pleased to have been able to secure the lease for another four years.

As I am sure you are aware last year Devon County Council changed its Urban Highway Grass Cutting policy which meant the Parish Council received a reduced contribution. The Parish Council understands the importance of the highway verge cutting to the community and felt the reduction in service was not acceptable, therefore the Parish Council has agreed to fund the deficit to enable all of the highway verges to be cut 8 times a year and not just visibility splays 4 times a year. I would like to thank the Grass Cutting Contractor for his commitment to the Parish.

The Committee was pleased to be able to support the Community Group's proposals to enhance the Village Green. Although owned by the Parish Council the Community Group identified a need to enhance the Green to hopefully encourage further community use. The plans include a stage, new seating area and pathway and I look forward to seeing the completion of the project.

The Committee was approached to allow native reptiles to be relocated from a development site in Bideford to the Nature Reserve next to Griggs Field. The Committee was happy to agree the request and we look forward to welcoming our new residents in the future.

Throughout the year we have continued to replace and repair play equipment throughout the play sites. Swallowfield, one of the older sites, was part of an upgrade programme, old and damaged equipment was replaced and several pieces renewed. The play area at Mulberry Way has seen additional equipment installed and a new fence has been erected at Ellerslie play area to prevent the conflict of dog fouling and children playing.

It has been brought to our attention that the green open space at the back of Merrythorn Road, which is owned and maintained by the North Devon Council, lacks somewhere for parents to sit when children and using the open space and we are investigating the possibility of placing a bench on the site.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Staff and Committee for their help and support over the last year.

**Cllr Tony Wood**  
**Chairman Parks and Playing Fields Committee**

## **Fremington Quay Management Committee - Cllr Frank Biederman**

I have enjoyed being Chairman of this Committee, which has had a busy year and have appreciated the open relationship and input at meetings that the Committee has built with residents and tenants.

Fremington Quay and the Cafe continue to be very popular with local people as well as a very popular stop off for tourists using the Tarka Trail.

The main workload this year has involved the Cafe & Tenants accommodation which is showing wear and tear, particularly with air circulation causing damp around the Tenants accommodation. The Working Group has worked hard to find solutions to this and is currently looking at replacing all the wooden windows in the Wardens accommodation.

Arrangements were made for the Water Tower and Well to be cleared of ivy and weeds and it is now looking great. The Committee is considering repair to the Water Tower roof, so hopefully some use can be made of it. The Parish Council has arranged for a defibrillator to be sited at the Heritage Centre.

The BOAT Road continues to cause concern at times, especially cars being parked in passing bays. I feel that providing a wider road will only encourage more traffic to the Quay and we do not have the parking to accommodate them; more cars also discourages the use of the BOAT road by cyclists and pedestrians.

On the Committee's behalf and in my capacity as Devon County Councillor a scheme was arranged with the probation service where the Community Pay Back gangs cleared many footpaths in the area and used the soil collected to fill in the sides of the BOAT Road to try and avoid cars dropping off the side and they did a very good job.

DCC is undertaking major bridge repairs to the old iron bridge, which is causing short term problems. It is disappointing the work has taken so long. Unfortunately, working in this location through the winter has caused many problems but we look forward to it opening in the summer. Clearly this is important work and will ensure the continued use of the Tarka Trail for generations to come.



Fremington & District Community Group repaired the benches near the memorial, this again is much appreciated by the Committee. The overflow car park has been a success but had to be closed through the winter months in order to protect the surface; however, it has now dried out and has recovered.

The Committee would like to thank our Handyperson and the grass cutting contractor for the hard work in keeping the quayside as litter free as possible; I believe our grass cutting is as good as any you will see in such a large public area in North Devon.

Finally, I would like to thank the Committee and the Clerk for their support over the last 12 months.

**Cllr Frank Biederman**  
**Chairman Fremington Quay Management Committee**

## **Finance and Personnel Committee - Cllr David Chalmers**

This has been yet another challenging year for the Parish Council and for many residents of the Parish, trying to balance outgoings with income. Our parish has had to deal with reduced income from government grants whilst still trying to maintain its commitment and keep our Parish looking good for the people who live here and its many visitors. Judging from local feedback we would hope that we are doing a reasonable job. However one of our most difficult decisions this year was to raise the precept for a Band D property by £3.20 per year which resulted in a contribution of £34.75 a year from the Council Tax (based on a Band D Property).

Following a change in Devon County Council's policy, the Parish Council has agreed to fund the highway grass cutting. Last year we were able to transfer funds from an EMR and the County Councillor kindly approved funding from his Locality Budget. This year we have had no choice but to include the cost in our Precept but we feel this is a valuable service to the community.

The Parish Council has continued to invest available funds to maximise the return whilst being mindful of the security of an investment. Being prudent £100,000 is now invested in a second 3 month fixed deposit account.

The Parish Council's insurance cover came up for renewal and it was decided to renew its policy through Came and Company and enter into a three year agreement with Hiscox, as the policy offered comprehensive cover and was regarded as best suited to the insurance needs of the Council. It was also noted that Came and Company is supported by SLCC and has provided a very professional and helpful service to the Parish Council over the last three years.

Following Risk Assessments & Water Hygiene Reports it was resolved to adopt a Legionella Management Policy and a three year contract was entered into with quarterly and six monthly inspections to be carried.

The Parish Council is pleased to be able to continue to support local groups and organisations and has this year awarded grants totalling £2,400 which have been distributed to local groups serving the community. The Council is regretful that it cannot financially support all organisations but has a limited budget and priority has to be given to those groups not in a position to generate enough income.

The Parish Council has applied to the Local Council Award Scheme at Foundation level as it was felt that being accredited under the scheme would give people confidence in the Council and in the future may enable the Council to take on more responsibility from Central Government. It was seen to be a good investment.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Clerk and staff for their support this year and also to congratulate the Deputy Services Officer in successfully completing the Introduction to Local Council Management, in line with the Parish Council policy to encourage staff training.

**Cllr David Chalmers**  
**Chairman Finance & Personnel Committee**

(Last) Year Ended  
31st. March 2015

**Fremington Parish Council  
Income & Expenditure Account  
1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016**

(Current) Year  
Ended  
31st. March 2016

**Income**

548.43	Administration	1,119.42
17,157.01	Parks & Playing Fields	21,373.67
9,204.60	106 Funding from NDC	10,605.81
5,783.00	Cemetery	8,945.00
18,024.89	Fremington Quay	21,373.67
0.00	Salaries & Inland Revenue	0.00
2,875.00	Insurance	0.00
400.00	Parish Paths	400.00
13,213.00	TAP Fund	5,626.19
118,106.73	Precept	118,823.13
170.68	Dog Bins	134.84
41,847.61	Grants	40,578.90
0.00	Restated	0.00
<b>226,573.17</b>		<b>218,861.73</b>

**Expenditure**

21,485.23	Administration	19,406.75
31,877.51	Parks & Playing Fields	30,552.35
8,140.00	106 Funding NDC	0.00
3,397.17	Cemetery	4,118.33
7,870.85	Fremington Quay	8,468.51
72,184.15	Salaries	75,688.91
5,977.60	TAP Fund	1,851.60
290.09	Parish Paths	193.37
4,282.62	Loans	4,282.62
8,507.93	Insurance	5,638.08
26.40	Parish Enhancements	84.67
5,628.05	Dog Bins	5,927.40
28,197.10	Grants	34,359.81
0.00	Election Costs	0.00
19,383.91	Earmarked Reserves	9,552.43
<b>217,248.61</b>		<b>200,124.83</b>

**General Fund**

<b>102,122.31</b>	Balance at 1st April 2015	<b>98,988.87</b>
226,573.17	ADD Total Income	218,861.73
328,695.48		317,850.60
217,248.61	Deduct Total Expenditure	200,124.83
111,446.87		117,725.77
12,500	Transfer to/from reserves	-18,395.00
<b>98,946.87</b>	Balance at 31st March 2016	<b>136,120.77</b>

## Parish Councillors

Cllr Mr James Bell  
The Conifers, 38 West Yelland  
01271 860989

Cllr Mrs Susan Kingdom  
37 Park Avenue, Sticklepath  
01271 326914

Cllr Mr Frank Biederman  
8 Broadway, Fremington  
07595 988704

Cllr Mrs Carol McCormack-Hole  
The Plough Inn, 7 The Hill,  
Bickington, 01271 343176

Cllr Mr Des Brailey MBE  
31 Maple Grove, Roundswell  
01271 329796

Cllr Mr Alan Rennles  
4 Linden Gardens, Sticklepath  
01271 376335

Cllr Mr Rodney Cann  
Kimberley, Bickington Road,  
Bickington 01271 372998

Cllr Ms Myka Scott  
3 Byeways Close, Fremington  
01271 859003

Cllr Mr David Chalmers  
6 Mead Park Close, Bickington  
07909 497487

Cllr Mr. Bill Sherborne  
5 Woodville Close, Sticklepath  
01271 344816

Cllr Mrs Jacqueline Flynn  
7 Elmfield Road, Bickington  
01271 370546

Cllr Mr Graham Turner  
127 Meadowbrook, Roundswell  
01271 314851

Cllr Mr Kelvin Groves  
10 Merrythorn Road, Fremington  
01271 327557

Cllr Mr Tony Wood  
1 Griggs Garden, Fremington  
01271 321424

Cllr Mrs Jayne Dyson  
5A West Yelland Road, Yelland  
01271 860665

## Parish Council Officers

Mrs Victoria Woodhouse  
Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Mrs Eileen Badcock  
Services Officer

Mrs Liz Steer  
Deputy Services Officer



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