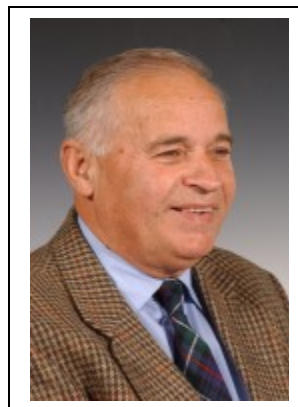


Parish Report January 2017

Councillor

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Compliments of the Season

Dear Residents, Here we are again at that point where we are facing a New Year of continued challenges and uncertainties of an ongoing restricted economy and the impact on Local Government Finance with yet further cuts to Budgets plus potential impact of Brexit which without doubt is likely to continue testing our financial resources and management plans for services. Over the year having visited on a regular basis the nine parishes of the Melford Division, I continue to be both amazed and proud of the valiant effort of volunteers in each of the Parishes who continually strive so determinedly to tackle the challenges placed upon communities by funding cuts from Government funds..

I am pleased to say I have again been able to support local projects with my Locality Budget and still have a small amount that has to be spent by March 2017. The other small budget is called a small Highways Budget and covers small works such as dropped kerbs and highway signage.

Melford Ward: The 'Ward' covers the Parishes of Long Melford, Glemsford, Boxted, Stanstead, Somerton, Hartest, Lawshall, Shimpling and Alpheton. There are approximately 7,600 voters and a population circa 10,000 residents. If you wish to contact me with any queries my telephone numbers are; 01787 377861 (office), 01787 378149 (home), or email richard.kemp@suffolk.gov.uk

Wishing you all a peaceful, prosperous and joyous New Year!

Suffolk Highways Ready for Winter

Suffolk Highways are well-prepared to keep the county's roads clear of ice and snow over the coming winter months.

The county's highways depots have once again been filled with more than 24,000 tonnes of salt. These stocks will remain topped up throughout the winter period, to ensure we are prepared for any prolonged periods of severe weather. Suffolk has eight highway depots spread across strategic locations in the region, in Ipswich, Brome, Halesworth, Lowestoft, Melton, Rougham, Depden and Mildenhall.

Suffolk Highways have 38 gritters and 3 mini-gritters which treat more than 1,200 miles of Suffolk's road network in under two and a half hours. During harsh conditions these gritters can be deployed to treat a further 850 miles of the network. Suffolk Highways also have around 100 approved winter service drivers supporting this service.

Highly skilled staff continuously monitor conditions from six weather stations across the county and have access to a further five neighbouring counties. This allows Suffolk Highways to plan for Winter weather and make the crucial decisions over when it is necessary to salt.

When ice or snow is forecast, salt is used to treat all A and B roads which provide access to the 24 hour Fire Stations, Accident and Emergency hospitals and main bus and rail stations. Details of the Councils gritting routes can be viewed at www.suffolk.gov.uk/gritting

Planning Officers urge Committee to reject plans for 71 new homes in Long Melford

Controversial plans to build 71 homes on the outskirts of a picturesque west Suffolk village should not go ahead, council planning officers have said.

An amended proposal by Hopkins Homes to build on an agricultural site in Bull Lane, Long Melford, has been met with fierce opposition, mainly due to concerns about road safety and possible 'over development' of the picturesque village. The proposal was the subject of a heated public meeting at the old school in Long Melford and the parish council subsequently rejected the proposals. The National Trust wrote two letters of objection outlining its "fundamental concerns" with the scheme. Meanwhile the Suffolk Preservation Society also sent two letters opposing the development.

Babergh District Council received around 200 objections to the scheme. And now despite the inclusion of 25 affordable properties in line with council planning policies promoting growth in core villages, the authority's planning officers have urged the committee to refuse the proposal when it meets next Wednesday to make a formal decision.

In her report, case officer Gemma Pannell cited the possible impact on the development of 24 Bull Lane, which would be "severed from its rural context" and "absorbed into the built up area of Long Melford".

Richard Kemp, a parish and county councillor said: "The developer says the public benefits of the scheme include Babergh collecting £640,000 in New Homes Bonus and Long Melford Parish Council getting around £97,000. These sums of money are certainly not enough to justify spoiling Long Melford in the way that is proposed."