

Kersey Parish Council - Chair's Annual Report 2019-2020

This is my seventh annual report as Chair.

The Parish Council is the first tier of government. We aim to represent the best interests of our 360 residents, as detailed in the Kersey Parish Council website. Residents are encouraged to raise matters of concern either with individual Councillors or by attendance at Parish Council Meetings.

The current Councillors were elected in a contested election held on 2 May 2019. They are Penny Calnan, David Finch, Pascoe Gibbons, Philippa Harris, Kevin Pratt, Andrew Rogers, the Vice Chair and me. Contact details are shown below and are on the website. I thank them all for their contributions and support during the year. New Councillors attended training on their duties and planning matters, with further guidance from the Clerk when needed.

Robert Lindsay, Suffolk County Councillor and Leigh Jamieson, Babergh District Councillor regularly attend our meetings and I thank them for their advice and for taking up matters on our behalf.

Your Parish Council is financially strong with reserves well within the required range of annual expenditure. Finances are reviewed at every meeting and detailed in the minutes. We look at income and expenditure against budget, bank reconciliations, balances, expenditure approval and cheques are signed by approved signatories. Finances are audited regularly.

During the year, Kersey Parish Council considered 18 Planning Applications. We supported 11 which were approved by Babergh District Council. Two not supported were refused by Babergh. Of the remaining five, three were objected to and two supported and their outcome is awaiting decision by Babergh.

The Kersey Emergency Plan has now been approved for implementation. This initiative provides for action in the event of a serious incident in the community, with named volunteers and sites to support emergency and other services.

The Kersey Volunteer Group (KVG), was formally launched at a briefing at The Bell on 29 February 2020. The purpose is to enhance our environment by collecting litter, reporting potholes to Suffolk County Council and problems to the relevant utility provider. Sixteen volunteers were allocated specific parts of the Parish to monitor, issued with hi-vis vests and litter picks and given safety advice.

The Parish Council implemented a revised risk assessment programme which takes into account severity and likelihood and approved mitigation actions.

Proposals to carry out a Neighbourhood Plan and a Housing Needs Survey were discussed by the Council and not supported. The decisions were made because of cost, difficulty of completion and concerns that they may stimulate planning applications in sensitive or unwanted sites.

Work is underway led by the Vice Chair to finalise the Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan to back up applications for grants from the Babergh CIL.

A grant has been secured for the Emergency Telephone System; it is hoped to progress work on setting this up shortly.

The Parish Council has expressed concerns to Suffolk County Council over safety, following accidents at the road junction on the A1141 north of Kersey Mill. Some minor improvements have been made to visibility but it is still dangerous. Complaints about speeding in Wickerstreet Green and Church Hill resulted in traffic speed monitoring. These showed the average speed was below the speed limit but Councillors will continue to monitor the situation.

The COVID-19 virus has prompted significant changes in our lives and the Parish Council has reacted in three main ways.

First, for the foreseeable future, meetings will be held on-line, using Zoom. This has proved very satisfactory in the two meetings held so far but may be difficult if large numbers wish to participate.

Second, the Parish Council, using the KVG as the model, set up a group of volunteers to assist with shopping, prescriptions, mail, urgent deliveries and telephone contact. I sent a letter on 17 March to every household in the Parish giving details and contact telephone numbers.

We are all grateful for the rapid and generous support offered by the 24 Volunteers.

Third, the Clerk is liaising with SALC, Babergh, Community Action Suffolk and other bodies to share information and good practice.

Finally, our Clerk, Sarah Partridge has worked in excess of her contractual hours on Data Protection matters, seeking legal advice and arranging extra meetings. She has also been key in introducing the Zoom meetings. We are fortunate to have such an experienced and efficient Clerk and I thank her for her contribution to our community.

John W Hume
Chair, Kersey Parish Council
21 May 2020

Kersey Parish Council Contacts

Parish Councillors:

John Hume (Chair)	Ayres End, The Green, Kersey IP7 6EB	01473 810098
Andrew Rogers (Vice Chair)	The Gables, Wickerstreet Green, Kersey IP7 6EY	01787 212242
Mrs Penny Calnan	Wickerstreet House, Wickerstreet Green, Kersey IP7 6EY	01787 210459
David Finch	1 Row Cottage, Priory Hill, Kersey IP7 6DX	07769 612933
Pascoe Gibbons	Kedges End, Kedges Lane, Kersey IP7 6RY	01473 822815
Mrs Philippa Harris	4 Ancient Houses, The Street, Kersey IP7 6EA	01473 827079
Kevin Pratt	Green Gables, The Green, Kersey IP7 6EB	01473 823028

Clerk & RFO:

Mrs Sarah Partridge	Bridges Farm, The Tye, Kersey, IP7 6HB	01787 210859
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kerseypc@gmail.com

Kersey Parish Council publishes on the Kersey website past minutes, financial information, ordinary meetings dates for the year and contact information. There is also a wealth of other useful information on the Kersey website.

Kersey Website: www.kersey.suffolk.gov.uk

Kersey Parish Council Budget and Precept

Parish Council	Budget/ Precept 2019/2020	Budget/ Precept 2020/2021
Post/Tel/Stationery/copier cartridge	£135.00	£135.00
Clerk's working from home exp	£208.00	£208.00
Hall Hire: Parish Council 12 @ £5	£60.00	£60.00
Annual Parish Assembly @ £10	£10.00	£10.00
SALC subscription	£180.00	£185.00
External Audit	£100.00	£0.00
Data Protection	£35.00	£40.00
Website hosting	£100.00	£110.00
Sub total for Admin	£828.00	£748.00
Clerk's Salary & Staff Costs	£4,905.00	£5,400.00
Training/External Meetings	£250.00	£250.00
Street Lighting	£240.00	£275.00
Parish Council Insurance	£340.00	£370.00
Glebe Insurance	£50.00	£50.00
Hedge Cut - The Glebe	£80.00	£80.00
Playground Safety Inspection	£87.00	£90.00
Dog Litter Bin emptying charge	£45.00	£48.00
St Mary's Church	£420.00	£420.00
Defibrillator & Village Emergency Tel	£215.00	£215.00
Chairman's Allowance	£0.00	£0.00
Election costs	£25.00	£165.00
Church Walk future maintenance	£130.00	£130.00
Footpath Map printing reserve	£75.00	£75.00
Mowing The Glebe	£100.00	£100.00
Contingencies	£300.00	£300.00
Precept	£7,990.00	£8,716.00
<i>Other PC income</i>	£64.54	
PC Income	£8,054.54	
Agreed spending from PC reserves: From the defibrillator and VETS reserve	£100.00	£100.00
	£8,154.54	£8,816.00
		Total Budget

The Precept for 2019/20 was £7,990

For a band D property the council tax was £44.83

The Precept for 2020/21 is £8,716

For a band D property the council tax is £47.88