



Burston and Shimpling Parish Council

Chair's Annual Report for Year Ending 31st March 2026

This year has been one of changes, not all welcome. Tuck's Mill is now operated by 2Agriculture, a much larger production organisation than ForFarmers, who also run the facility at Stoke Ferry near King's Lynn among others around the UK. The Parish Council has no powers to directly restrict or modify their licenced operations. Food security is a national issue and with global events (natural and human) impacting on our resources, all areas of agriculture and their suppliers are being encouraged to produce more within the UK. Therefore we meet regularly with local management to convey any and all concerns regarding the increased activities at the Mill and their impact on all of us.

It is noticeable that more traffic is using the road from the A140 through Shimpling and Burston to Diss, in addition to increased vehicles to the Mill. Unfortunately we do not reach the Government mandated criteria for reducing the speed limit on any of the routes through the villages. There have been relatively few reported incidents, along the route The Parish Council continues to press Highways to implement measures to encourage drivers of all vehicles to respect the speed limits that currently exist. One of the few options available is the installation of Village Gateway signs, which was completed at the end of July. The mobile SAM is relocated regularly and the data gathered sent to the police to inform any monitoring they can do. A Community Speed Watch team would also gather data about vehicle numbers and speeds. However, we need a few more volunteers to make this viable. If you can help please contact Anita Hughes who has offered to coordinate a team.

We continue to improve and maintain the Recreation Ground, with regular inspections, grass cutting and replacement of old or damaged play equipment. This has seen the Trim Trail repaired and a new Wobble Board installed. The meadow area, community orchard and trees are being managed to improve our natural environment. We were also successful in receiving a grant from our County Councillor, Catherine Rowett to add an Insect Hotel to the Orchard.

We responded to a request from the many people who enjoy walking in the wooded area and meadow behind Tuck's Mill (which they allow it is not a public open space), by providing a Dog Waste Bin on the corner of Common Road opposite the Mill.

Due to increasing complaints and pressure from off-road groups, Back Lane in Shimpling, a BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic) was reopened by having some of the bollards removed, and the path widened. This has had the direct result of damaging the Lane significantly and making it difficult or impassable for pedestrians. Norfolk County Council are monitoring the usage with counters and onsite visits for 6 months. We will be having a meeting with the officers at the first opportunity after the local elections, to press again for vehicles to be restricted.

The largest shake up will be how all our services will be managed when Norfolk changes to a unitary authority. The current County and District functions will be combined with Norfolk divided into 3 areas and we will become part of East Norfolk.

The Parish Council thanks all those who contribute to our community, Hadleigh, Nick, Clive and Phil for many varied services. The volunteers who deliver Parish Planet, and Phil for raising the flag on the war memorial.

Finally I would like to personally thank our Clerk, Fran, Keith my right hand man and all my fellow councillors for their help and support throughout the year.