

Clerk's Report – March 2024

A Victoria plum tree has been planted on the grass at Clifton Wood – not sure who has planted this.

E.ON Next have not sent us an invoice since August 23. We were in credit at that point, but now owe £164.31. I have been in touch with them to see if we can negotiate a better deal. They are offering 1, 2 and 3 year fixed term contracts, the details of which will be circulated. They will confirm the prices they are offering on 15th March for Council to consider on 18th March.

We have received the latest edition of Suffolk Care Services Directory and I have given some copies to the Surgery, some to the Methodist Church and have left two in All Saints Church. I still have a couple left if anyone can think of another outlet.

Defibrillator training took place at The Freston Boot on Monday 26th March and was attended by members of Holbrook Parish Council, residents of Freston and staff of the Freston Boot. Cllr Holmes is regularly checking our defibrillator and she and I did a thorough check following the training to record on the Webnos site, which is a database of defibrillators ready for use. Have requested a spare set of defib pads, the price of which is covered under our support agreement.

We had notification on 3rd March that the defibrillator had been deployed. However, following a check by Cllr Holmes, a report was submitted to say it was all in place and it has been confirmed as ready again for use. I since had a request to confirm the serial number of our defibrillator and it may be that we have been wrongly notified. I haven't received confirmation of this yet. All, however, is currently in order.

A service was held to celebrate, our last Community Caretaker, Pat Goodchild's life on Tuesday 5th March at All Saints, which was attended by the Chairman and the Clerk. The Church was full. A donation to the East Anglian Air Ambulance Service is being made in memory of Mr. Goodchild.

50 more testing plates for E-Coli were purchased from the Locality grant awarded by Cllr Simon Harley. This will enable testing to take place on the River Stour and Orwell up until the end of September of this year. To continue next year, we may need to seek funding from other Parish Councils.

The clerk attended the Alton Water User Group meeting on 6th March – the minutes of the meeting are included with the supporting documents. There has been a change of personnel, as John Taylor has moved to another role. There are several activities already in place and more planned for the forthcoming months.

The thermal imaging camera has been collected and is available until the beginning of April. We have a short list of people who have applied to have their houses surveyed and a schedule will be drawn up to complete the surveys. If any councillor would like to help out with the surveys, please let me know.

The next meeting of the Parish Council Alliance (representing Brantham, Chelmondiston, Freston, Harkstead, Holbrook, Shotley, Tattingstone, Wherstead and Woolverstone) will take place on Tuesday 19th March at Chelmondiston Village Hall.

The Clerk and the Chairman met with the retiring editor of the Parish Papers to get a better idea of how to move forward with the Parish Papers. We are hoping to produce the next copy to keep the continuity going. Help with designing and creating artwork has been offered by Come Hither Gallery, but they haven't time to take on the editorial roll. Chris Sawyer has very kindly agreed to continue to take delivery of the magazines and send them to the volunteers to distribute.

A meeting was held with Holbrook Primary School re the parking issues which were discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 19th February.

The annual insurance premium for the pavilion is due on 1st April 2024, insured with Hiscox via Community Action Suffolk and has increased by approximately 27%. Hiscox specialise in village halls and community buildings.

The road sign for Heathfield Road is propped up on a wall rather than being fixed and this has been reported to Babergh.

Playquip came out to look at the site of the new slide a couple of weeks ago and also assessed both accessible gates. They have now returned and removed the sign from the gate by Enchantress Cottage and put it on the adjacent fence and added a new fitting to the gate at the Reade Road end.

Councillors will note from Cllr Simon Harley's report that there is a pot of money allocated to replace damaged or missing signs. These will need to be reported on the reporting tool and the reference number forward to Cllr Harley.