

Thurston Parish Council Annual Report 2013/14

June 2014

This report summarises the activities of the Thurston Parish Council for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. It was presented initially at the Annual Parish Meeting in Thurston on 9 April 2014 and is presented for publication now the annual accounts are completed.

The Council has 2 bank accounts, one for the general running of its business and one for the Recreation Ground. The annual reconciliations for these accounts are:

	General Account	Recreation Ground Account
Opening balance	£63,960.23	£ 906.80
Plus receipts	£61,079.47	£4,627.89
Less payments	£63,081.44	£3,999.70
Closing balance	£61,958.26	£1,534.99

The expenditure for the year was very close to the budgeted expenditure despite some unexpected costs. These were mainly legal fees relating to the Thurston Preschool Lease agreement and having to pay for two clerks.

Over the past year, one councillor has resigned for personal reasons. I would like to thank Teresa Harvey for her humour and contributions to the work of this council. We also welcomed David Ames and very recently Mark Wallace to the council this year both of whom have fitted in and contributed well.

Kathryn Savage, our clerk, has been on long term sick leave since August last year and we wish her well in her recovery. We have in place an interim Clerk, Vicky Waples who has assisted us in improving the way we work, keeps us all in order and gives valuable advice where necessary.

We are well supported by our Suffolk County Councillor Penny Otton and our Mid Suffolk District Councillors Derrick Haley and Sam Powell who attend most of our monthly meetings and are always ready to help with advice, support, sometimes some money, contacts and info on their and our activities.

The Parish Council office is open every Tuesday and Friday where residents can raise queries or obtain information on council activities. Our monthly Parish Council meeting is held on the first Wednesday of every month in the Parish Council Office Meeting Room. Anyone can attend the Parish Council meetings and raise a matter in our open forum.

As a statutory consultee, the PC Planning Committee meets regularly to discuss every planning application and makes recommendations to the Parish Council for onward submission to Mid Suffolk. Over the past 12 months, the Parish Council has assessed just under 40 planning applications for building in and around Thurston.

Our fifth annual village litter pick was held on 5th April 2014.

During the year, it became apparent that the village website needed to be upgraded. Working with Penny Kelly who maintains the current website, we sent out several requests for tenders and worked with 3 of these vendors to select the best solution and best value for money for our needs. Around the end of April the new Thurston Village website was up and running. This now incorporates the Village Website along with the Parish Council website.

The project for the forthcoming year will be the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Thurston. A lively public meeting was held last May in the New Green Community Centre and following a delay due to other commitments and a lack of Parish Council resources a steering group has been set up to develop a vision and a plan to get information from the village via a questionnaire and another in a series of public meetings – the first to be held in June.

Grants made during the year include the following:-

New Green Community Trust	£1,500.00
Thurston Library	£2,956.00
St Peter's Church	£1,280.00

List of Councillors and phone numbers:

CHAIRMAN, Cllr Stuart Campbell	270456
VICE CHAIRMAN Cllr Christopher Dashper	234424
Cllr Robert Alston	233444
Cllr David Ames	233420
Cllr Richard Fawcett	231363
Cllr Anne O'Connell	231680
Cllr Peter Robinson	232938
Cllr Bryan Rainbow	231669
Cllr Jannette Service	230763
Cllr Mike Thomas	270191
Cllr Mark Wallace	231084