

2012 Thurston Parish Council Annual Report

18 June 2012

This report summarises the activities of the Thurston Parish Council for the period 6 April 2011 to 5 April 2012. It was presented initially at the Annual Parish Meeting in Thurston on 11 April 2011 and is presented for publication now the annual accounts are completed.

Last year the Thurston Parish Council took the difficult decision to raise the parish precept (the part of the council tax that pays for street lighting, grit bins, bus shelters, seats, recreation grounds maintenance, litter bins in the village) to ensure we covered increases due to inflation. This meant we had to keep the donations we normally give to village organisations to the similar low level to that in 2011, we felt it was the right thing to do under the current economic climate. 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:

	Parish Council Account	Recreation Ground Account
Opening balance	£65,788.47	£ 734.64
Less unrepresented cheques	£ 340.90	£ 0.00
Plus receipts	£58,655.90	£4,905.00
Less payments	£60,419.30	£5287.68
Plus unrepresented cheques	£ 346.00	£ 370.47
Closing balance	£64,330.17	£ 722.43

Grants and donations made during the year 2011-2012 include the following :-

St Peter's Church	£500
New Green Community Trust	£1,500
Thurston Methodist Church	£100
East of England Ambulance trust	£200
St Peter's PCC Bell fund	£200
Thurston Carpet Bowls Club	£400
RBL Poppy Appeal	£30

The Council was forced to go slightly over-budget in its expenditure, due to the necessary replacement of the computer used by the Parish Clerk and legal fees incurred negotiating the new build lease with Suffolk County Council for the Thurston Preschool building on the Recreation Ground.

At the start of this year, Local Council elections were held and we had 5 new councillors elected to replace 5 outgoing councillors. They have brought new ideas to the council and we are grateful for their input. Alas, during the year Cllrs John Dolan and Barry Jefferson resigned from the Council, and

were replaced by Lisa Couper, who has experience working in other councils, and Robert Alston, a local Chartered Surveyor.

Achievements during the year:

- 1 Helping to ensuring the youth group momentum is maintained.
- 2 The planning group assessed almost 50 planning applications for buildings in and around Thurston.
- 3 Working with the Thurston Under Fives Group towards their new building on the Recreation Ground.
- 4 The Parish Council has been co-ordinating the discussions with several interested villagers to try to work out the best way forward for our village library. Several meetings have been held and we need as much input into this work from as many people as possible to ensure our submission to the SCC on the ongoing use and role of our library is an accurate reflection of the needs and wants of Thurston.
- 5 Our second annual village litter pick was held on April 14.
- 6 We have produced 4 editions of the quarterly Parish Council newsletter – the Thurston Voice which is available in all good locations in and around Thurston.

Looking ahead: we are finalising the detail of the lease agreement between ourselves and Suffolk County Council so that the Thurston Preschool Ltd can go ahead with their new building on the Recreation Ground. We finalised our work towards achieving Quality Council status – a list of best practise criteria that exists for Parish Councils that need to be complied with before this status can be conferred, and were successfully awarded Quality Status as a result. Further work on establishing a future for our village Library, including some improvements in cost control, will be completed and we intend to start the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Thurston.

List of Councillors for 2012 – 2013 and contact details :

Chairman—Cllr Stuart Campbell, Planche Croft, Church Road, IP31 3RH Tel : 270456

Vice Chairman—Cllr Peter Robinson, 18 Blackbird Close, IP31 3PF Tel : 232938

Councillors :-

Robert Alston, Bartonmere Farmhouse, IP31 2PH	Tel : 233444
Mrs Sarah Bullen, 21 Blackbird Close, IP31 3PF	Tel : 231841
Mrs Lisa Couper, Church Cottage, Church Road, IP31 3RU	Tel : 231098
Christopher Dashper, 11 Barleyfields, IP31 3TF	Tel : 234424
Richard Fawcett, Cedar House, Lodge Close, IP31 3RS	Tel : 231363
Mrs Teresa Harvey, The Garden House, Great Green, IP31 3SJ	Tel : 231747
Bryan Rainbow, 18 Birch Road, IP31 3SA	Tel : 231669
Mrs Jannette Service, 56 Heather Close, IP31 3PX	Tel : 230763
Ian Weeks, 22 The Hambros, IP31 3PS	Tel : 232203