

WORTWELL PARISH COUNCIL
JANUARY MEETING 2025
DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT

It has been a slow start at the District Council as we came back from the winter break. However, the new year has begun with much enthusiasm as local groups and people drive forwards exiting initiatives. I am working with the Harleston and District Historical Society who are coordinating another community wide programme to take part in the national Heritage Open Days event in September. The 2024 version was a huge success involving many local groups and residents. Needham Parish Council decided to take part this year in a community event covering a wider area. Maybe Wortwell can also be involved.

I am also part of a volunteer group which includes some of the Harleston Town Councillors and residents to arrange a Harleston Pride event. This is a bold step and one which may prove controversial, but that does not mean that we should not try. Harleston now joins a collective of towns across the area to help eliminate prejudice and promote equality for all.

I have offered my support to the recent initiative of Harleston Town Council to set up a Youth Forum. Engagement with the younger people in our community is very important and something that has been on the wish list for some time. I recall a South Norfolk Youth Advisory Board presentation at the District Council last year when comments were made by children along the lines of 'nobody ever listens to me' and 'why should I say anything as no one cares about me'. It is great to see this now progressing to delivery.

Despite widespread local objections, plans for pylons to be erected across our countryside are still currently going ahead. There are always two sides to every argument, and most people would prefer the disturbance to not be in their back yard, but this one will have a major impact on our countryside with unknown impacts on wildlife. Even more reason for us all to support Community Nature Recovery. Small actions can collectively make a big statement. Progress has been slower than I would have liked but I hope to be able to make more announcements on this in the coming months.

You will probably have heard about plans for devolution and replacing the current two tier County and District Council structures with combined authorities. Norfolk County Council agreed to apply to be part of the Government's priority programme and are keen to engage with the District Councils to consider what the future shape of local government in Norfolk should look like. This change is something which will impact all of us. I will provide updates as they evolve.

I will hold my next surgery on 8 February at Harleston Information Plus on Exchange Street in Harleston between 10:00 and 11:00. It would be great to see you there.

Cllr Trevor Graham
Member for Harleston
South Norfolk Council