

District Councillor Report – James Eddy

Please forgive me for this. I'm afraid to say that this may be a bit preachy but I hope you'll indulge me. So much that I've done in the last two and a half years as a district councillor has been built around the importance of community and service. From working to resolve disputes, to continuing to work to improve disabled access in and around the ward, the focus has been on improving things and making them better for as many people as possible.

Of course, this is not really about me. I'm just a cog in the larger machine of our community. I don't have all the answers and there have definitely been lessons learned the hard way in all of this. As councillors, working on a voluntary basis for the good of the community you represent, I suspect that this is something with which you can empathise. What I can say with a great deal of certainty is that a consistent factor in the positive things that have been achieved in our ward have always come from people working together to solve problems and find solutions. I have to say that in general the people of Harleston, Wortwell and Needham have been brilliant in this regard and I do believe that there is a strong sense of shared responsibility for our ward and the people in it.

At the same time, there have been some instances where that hasn't been the case. Both online and offline, I am aware of examples where disagreements have tipped over into something more abusive. This is both unnecessary and unjustified. We live in a time when there are so many different ways to communicate with each other and yet there are times when we all fail to listen. We react out of frustration, fear, or anger and we fail to understand others or appreciate the discomfort we can sometimes cause.

It is worth remembering that words and actions affect people in different ways and not thinking about that can sometimes escalate something that isn't a problem and turn it into one. There is so much to be proud of in our community but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't be aware of when we don't reach those standards. In fact, it is only by continuing to try to improve, to work constructively and kindly with others, that good and better things become possible. I think that is something worth taking a moment to recognise and remember in the chaos of these complex times that we find ourselves living through.

As I said, a little bit preachy but if you can forgive my indulgence this month and would like my help with any issues in the ward then feel free to email me at james.eddy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk or pop in to see me at my next councillor surgery at Harleston Information Plus on the last Saturday of every month between 10am and 12.

All the best,

James