

Annual Report from County Councillor Judy Cloke – Bungay and Wainford Division

May 2024

The last 12 months started as being rather unsettling for me with the loss of my seat at East Suffolk Council – I can only hope it was because of the national mood rather than residents feeling I had not worked hard enough for them. Politics can be a tough environment, even at a local level

However, this left me with some spare time, enabling other activities such as an increased involvement at the Community Centre where our hirers have increased hugely , both regular and one off and my new role volunteering at BACT , an organisation I supported even before becoming a Councillor.

There is no doubt Highways issues have taken the bulk of my correspondence this year. Not only was I part of a steering group to discuss and allocate some central Govt money for highways – which we prioritised to replacing signs on the A140 and A143 , also £3k was given to Councillors for their Divisions which Wayne and I are spending rapidly. The extreme weather has led to a more rapid deterioration of road surfaces than previously, which has caused a nightmare for Highways engineers. Also SCC Highways partners changed half way through the year from Kier to Milestone and that has created the odd hiccup in communication and bookings for work to be undertaken. There is little money available for repairs and resurfacing because the biggest service spends within the budget are Adult Social Care and Special Educational needs transport. Highways projects are expensive and our budgets are small (£24k for 4 years) so there is an expectation parishes will need to step up and help to fund the projects they want – and I understand this is not always easy when you do not wish to raise your precept. If you would like more information about the figures , do please get in touch as I don't have them to hand but can soon find out for you.

Over the past couple of months I have also had requests for bus shelters and bus stops to be installed and /or moved. Again , this can be costly and I have very little Highways budget left - we were given £24k for the 4 year term .

Can I continue to urge everyone to report all highways issues via the portal ? We are so very lucky to have a really proactive local Highways engineer in Wayne Saunders .

I continue to be a member of the Development and Regulation Committee, which is the county planning department , we look at waste and mineral sites, footpaths and school buildings . and often undertake site visits . Our most recent was the proposed Bio Digester site at Ellough on 19 April and at the subsequent meeting the following week, the application was refused .

I am also a member of the Fire Service Steering Group, the Suffolk wholly owned Companies Shareholder Group and I chair the Fire Service Pension Committee.

I have received many applications to my Locality budget this last year and have helped with :

The purchase of ipads for Ringsfield school,

The purchase of dictionaries for the Rotary Club to distribute in the Bungay High School catchment area

Equipment for Bungay First Responders
Footpath maps for the Three Saints Parishes
Refurbishment of the metal Tulips at Bungay Library.
Playground signs at Shadingfield
Room hire for Musical Lifelines
Resurfacing of the car park at St Margaret's Village Hall
Increased services in Bungay from Bact
Repair of Homersfield bus shelter
Room hire for Spud Club.

Can I urge you all to come to Bungay Garden Street Fair on Sunday 12 May where I will be selling plants to raise funds for the Community Centre and Bact . The following Saturday I will have a stall at the Butter Cross selling plants to raise funds for the library.