

# **WORTWELL PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MARCH MEETING 2024**

### **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

The Help Hub team have a brand-new outreach vehicle, specifically built to take into our communities to deliver support services across South Norfolk and Broadland. The van is entirely mobile and converts into an open space where a range of support services can be delivered – as well as presentations, activities, and small meetings. The Help Hub team are keen to hear if you feel that your parish needs a particular support service.

South Norfolk Council raised awareness of District Direct, a service provided across the entire catchment area of the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. It focuses on expediting discharge from hospital and preventing unnecessary admissions. The provision ensures that South Norfolk residents are availed of the greatest opportunity to gain and maintain independence. The team deals with around 340 referrals a month. The hospital believes that a referral to District Direct abbreviates admission by seven days. In this financial year District Direct will have dealt with 3,600 referrals saving 25,200 bed days. This is the equivalent of two wards for a year and represents a bed day saving equating to over twenty million pounds.

Demand for money from Pride in Place far exceeded available funds. In the three rounds of application, the Council have been able to give out 86 grants totaling over £700,000. Funding was approved for the Wortwell Village Hall solar installation and Harleston Leisure Centre Feasibility Study. Also, the River Waveney Trust to facilitate increased engagement with the Waveney Valley community, the river, and its catchment.

Use of the Clean Up and Bloom awards are being reported. Langley with Hardley held an event day which included: litter picking along designated routes, with a fun competition for the biggest bag of rubbish collected; families with young ones exploring the play area, planning where to place bug boxes, hedgehog shelters, and bat nesting boxes; and planting bulbs on the village green, ensuring beautiful flowers come summer. I look forwards to seeing a report highlighting the good work of Wortwell Parish Council.

Remaining on the theme of the environment, South Norfolk Council's Big Litter Pick 2024 launched on 1 March and will run to 31 May. This asks local schools, Parish councils and community groups to help keep the district looking tidy. The Council will provide posters to help publicise community litter picks and provide advice and equipment. When the event is finished, the Council will arrange to collect the litter if required. There are twenty £200 prizes up for grabs across South Norfolk and every group that takes part will be given a £20 voucher to spend on their group, charity or local community.

I applaud proposals by the 'Nature Recovery in Needham' community group, supported by their parish council, to run an Open Wildlife Friendly Gardens event, and interest within Harleston for a similar event. Maybe Wortwell could join in open gardens throughout the entire ward to enhance our preeminence on this very important topic.

South Norfolk Council are promoting 'Play Street Grants'. Play streets (or 'playing out' sessions) are resident-led and organised, short road closures, creating a safe space for children to play freely together on their doorstep. Any street is eligible provided it is not on an active bus route. Play streets typically allow children to play freely, without organised games or activities. In practice, this means children cycle, scoot, skate, chalk, skip, hopscotch, kick a ball around and make up games. This model was first developed by parents on one street in Bristol in 2009 and has now been taken up by hundreds of street communities all over the UK.

James and I took part in a Question Time style event at the Secondary Phase of the Sancroft Academy. There were wide ranging questions from ending the war in Palestine, censorship on social media, and funding university education to trust in politicians, legalising cannabis, and whether GCSEs assess intelligence. We were not aware of the questions in advance and put us all under some pressure.

While there was a wide spectrum of political allegiance of Labour, Lib Dem, Green, Reform, and Conservative, it was reassuring that on many topics there was a general consensus. Images of Politian's taking cheap shots at each other in parliament was a long way from the reality of this civilised debate. A panelist, who was not party aligned said that in his experience most people in Councils and MPs are decent people who are generally trying to help their communities. That is a sentiment that will hopefully resonate.

I have offered to hold surgeries in Needham and would welcome the opportunity to hold similar sessions at Wortwell. Until then, I will hold my next surgery on 13 April at Harleston Information Plus on Exchange Street in Harleston between 10:00 and 11:00. I hope to see you there.

Cllr Trevor Graham  
South Norfolk Council  
Member for Harleston