



# MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Louise Hyde Vice Chairman: Stephen Mouser



## REPORT FOR MERTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Although we still have obstacles ahead, matters will gradually come back to normal particularly as our scientists have found an all-important vaccine. Almost 70% of people aged over 16 in Norfolk and Waveney have received their first dose and nearly 20% have also received their second dose. That puts Norfolk & Waveney 5<sup>th</sup> out of the 42 health and care systems in England. People aged 40 or over are now able to book their Covid-19 vaccine.

The Parish Council has had to adapt rapidly in response to the Covid pandemic with undertaking its business virtually. Whilst some of us struggle with internet connections at times we have managed to successfully hold meetings via Zoom for the past year. It is interesting how quickly we have adapted to this way of communication.

We are always pleased to welcome residents to the meetings. We have welcomed 57 residents in total over the last 8 meetings, from January 2020 to end March 2021, 7 of these meetings being held virtually on zoom. It is pleasing to see that the number of residents accessing the meetings on zoom is very similar to when we held face to face meetings.

Since the election in May 2019 we have seen a number of changes within the parish council. Vicky joined us in September 2019 as Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer bringing her knowledge and experience to the team including the suggestion of parish council email addresses for each councillor which keeps council and private emails separate and easier to locate and manage. Madge resigned as a councillor in January 2020 with Steve being co-opted in May 2020. This year has seen the resignation of the Chairman, Martin. We thank both Madge and Martin for the time and dedication to the parish council during their time with us. We also had to say goodbye to Vicky our clerk and thank her for the excellent help and support she gave to the parish council and the residents. We were pleased to recruit Claire as Clerk & RFO who joined us at the beginning of April and at the time of writing we are still looking for a councillor to give us a full complement. We have a strong team of councillors at Merton who all share the same ideology to represent the best interests of the residents and thank the current councillors for their efforts and enthusiasm through some challenging times.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Fabian Eagle, Cllr Sarah Suggitt and Cllr Philip Cowen to whom we are grateful for all the work they do in our community and particularly for the help and support they give to the parish council.

Thank you to Joan Matthews for arranging the litter picks in the village in conjunction with Thompson who generously loan us some of their equipment and arrange to have the rubbish disposed of. Thompson are arranging an additional litter pick on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June to show support for the Great British Spring Clean/Keep Britain Tidy campaign.

The monthly Waylander magazine, the magazine of local news for the Wayland group of parishes, contains a raft of information including news from the parish council and is important that we continue to keep residents up to date with council activities through this publication as it is delivered to every household in the village.



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The Parish Council exists to serve the community of Merton, so your interest and support is extremely important.

We look forward to seeing you all in person again at next year's Annual Parish Meeting and sooner for the Parish Council meetings. Any parishioner can come along to a Parish Council meeting and they can speak during the public session, on whatever they wish to bring to our notice. Minutes of the Parish Council meetings are available to all parishioners who would like to see what is discussed and what decisions are reached. These are available on the village notice board and parish council website.

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Asymptomatic testing is in Watton for the next two weeks with a mobile bus unit set up in the car park at Tesco's.

The mobile polling station will be in the village hall car park Thursday for elections of a councillor to Norfolk County Council (The Brecks Division) and also for a new Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk police area. Advice is to take your own pen or pencil where possible.