

Report to 14 September 2013

Hopefully you will have received the Parish and Town Council News letter for September 2013 so I will not reiterate those contents and hope you put it on your website for all parishioners to see.

As I mentioned in my last report I am looking to take forward issues relating to Housing for young people. It will come as no surprise that a housing needs survey was top of the list and all Parish Councils will be receiving communication regarding the importance of these surveys in the not too distant future from the District Council.

Planning. Those of you who have applications in will know there has been considerable delay in dealing with them. I have been 'tracking' applications when asked to do so and so far have had some success in getting them through without too much delay. Members are working with the Council to try to reduce the strain on an already creaking department. It is a great worry and much is being done to try to sort this out. I think it is fair to say there are huge pressures on those officers trying to keep the final wheel from falling off. I am not making excuses but please be patient with the officers.

Informally I have heard that the two councils, Babergh and Mid Suffolk must find £8.7million over the next three years by way of 'savings' I fear there aren't 'savings' to be had and cuts in services are inevitable. I will keep you informed.

Licensing. I attended a very informative training session given by Philip Colvin who is a top Barrister specialising in licensing law. Licensing includes a multitude of licences all aimed at protecting the community but still allowing events to take place within appropriate guidelines and law.

Cycling. There has been a huge upsurge of cyclists on the roads and country lanes and this is commendable. Although I didn't don a Lycra outfit I cycled into Debenham to post a letter on the first day of the change in the weather. (My car was in the garage) Crocs, shorts, a waterproof and my hair stuck to my head from the rain, a frightening sight! I didn't think anyone would recognise me! How wrong I was. Which brings me on to my plea.

Can cyclists please remember our horse riders. Horses are a fright and flight animal and have a keen peripheral vision. They catch the brightly coloured outfits of cyclists and legs and wheels spinning round (they can't work out, what is to them, a frightening sight) and hear a slight whoosh noise andthey are off! A lady in the midlands was killed when her horse bolted as a cyclist approached from the rear and the horse ran straight into a car. Even if you are approaching from the front can you please slow right down, call out a 'good morning or hello or whatever' and just let the rider get into a safe position. Often all it takes is hearing a human voice and it will settle the horse. There are a lot of horse riders in the Winston, Debenham and Aspall area. Thank you for your time

Kathie Guthrie
District councillor