

**MINUTES OF KERSEY ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD ON
MONDAY 9 APRIL 2018 AT 7.30PM IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Chair – John Hume, 4 Parish Councillors, 11 members of public and the Clerk - Sarah Partridge. Suffolk County Councillor - Robert Lindsay and Babergh District Councillor - Alan Ferguson attended for part of the meeting.

APA 1/18 APOLOGIES were received from Yvonne Martin and Iqbal Alam. Robert Lindsay and Alan Ferguson both sent apologies that they will be arriving late.

APA 2/18 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH MEETING held on 3 April 2017 were signed as correct.

APA 3/18 CORRESPONDENCE - None

APA 4/18 REPORTS

Full Reports are all appended to these minutes.

Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council reports were received later in the meeting, once the Councillors had arrived.

Kersey Parish Council, John Hume gave his report.

Kersey Parish Council Working Groups:

Footpath Working Group, Giles Hollingworth gave his report.

KCPC Working Group, Jonathan Marsh gave his report.

Forget-Me-Nots, Veronica Partridge gave her report.

Franey, Rand and Pest House Charities, Rachael Rogers gave her report.

Friends of the Fabric & Bells of St Mary's Church, Neville Whittell gave his report.

Grays Trust, Joan Hattrick gave her report.

Kersey CEVCP School, Linda Newbigging read a report from head teacher Liz Donaldson.

Kersey Playing Field Association, Ian Hattrick gave his report.

Kersey Society, Ian Hattrick gave his report.

Lewis Mowles Trust, Norah Orriss gave her report.

Alan Ferguson arrived at the meeting.

Babergh District Council, Alan Ferguson gave his report and answered questions. There was a long discussion about planning and development. There were concerns about the impact the lack of a 5-year land supply is having on planning application decisions and the lack of communication between the district councils and the county council regarding infrastructure when large planning applications are approved. A lack of funding is also having an impact on infrastructure improvements. A question was asked about the use of the old Hadleigh swimming pool site once the new pool is built.

There were also concerns raised that the proposed new Hadleigh swimming pool will only be 1.2m deep, which seems too shallow. Alan will make some enquiries and respond to these questions.

Robert Lindsay arrived at the meeting.

Suffolk County Council, Robert Lindsay gave his report and answered questions. There were several questions regarding highways and the poor state of the roads in the county.

Alan Ferguson and Robert Lindsay gave their apologies and left the meeting.

Millennium Book Fund, Sarah Partridge gave a report.

Neighbourhood Watch, there was no report. Ann Baker who had taken on the role of Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator last year has decided, due to personal circumstances, that she cannot continue in the role. The Parish Council is now looking for somebody in the Parish who would like to take on this role.

Nightingale Trust, Natalie Blyth gave her report.

St Mary's Church PCC, Linda Newbigging gave her report.

Table Tennis Club, a report was read from Adrian Blyth.

Tuesday Club, Rachel Wells gave her report.

The Tuesday Club welcomes everyone to their events. The topics and speakers for the monthly meetings are advertised in the newsletter. It was commented that the speakers are excellent and always very interesting.

Village Hall, Veronica Partridge gave her report. It was commented that the new clock at the back of the village hall was purchased last year in memory of Paul Ryde who had been chairman of the Village Hall Committee for many years.

Village Produce Association, Rachel Wells gave her report.

APA 5/18 PARISH ACTION PLAN UP-DATE

An updated copy of the Parish Action Plan is attached to the minutes of this meeting and is also published on the website. There has been some progress on action points during the last year. One of the bigger decisions made by the Parish Council was not to work on a Neighbourhood Plan. It was felt this was too large a project, would be costly and there were no guarantees that the planning authority would take any notice of the plan when making planning decisions. The Parish Council may need to revisit the idea of creating a Neighbourhood Plan in the future.

APA 6/18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk asked all the village organisations to look at the Kersey website and confirm that they are happy with the content.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.27pm.

There are 25 pages appended to these minutes.

KERSEY ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY - 9 APRIL 2018

Chair's report

This is my fifth Annual Report as Chair of Kersey Parish Council.

I thank my fellow Councillors and Clerk Sarah Partridge for another year of valued contribution to our community. I also thank the many members of our Parish who provide service to others by supporting their neighbours through individual initiatives, membership of formal and informal groups, societies, social networks and local charities. This work goes on largely behind the scenes but is highly valued and appreciated.

We are a small parish but there are over 25 businesses, voluntary groups, societies and local charities in Kersey. I am delighted with the continued success of our local school and grateful to the local farming community, Kersey Mill and The Bell for their contribution to our community. Kersey is a special place in which to live and visit and I will continue to encourage younger and newer residents to take a more active role in village life.

Kersey Parish Council is the first tier of government. We aim to represent the interests of Kersey's 360 residents, enhancing well-being and security throughout the Parish. All Parishioners are encouraged to raise matters of concern either with individual Councillors or by attendance at Parish Council Meetings. The Parish Council would welcome more attendance and participation at our regular meetings.

Existing Councillors are Iqbal Alam, Giles Hollingworth, Yvonne Martin (Vice-Chair), Veronica Partridge, Kevin Pratt, Andrew Rogers and me. Contact details are attached to this report and are on the Kersey Parish website. Those interested in serving the community by being a Councillor are invited to contact me or the Clerk. I thank Ian Fidell and John Maltby who both resigned this year. John Maltby has a long record of service to the Parish Council, including as Chair and we are grateful for his stewardship and advice over the years.

Robert Lindsay, Suffolk County Councillor and Alan Ferguson, Babergh District Councillor regularly attended Parish Council Meetings and we thank them for their advice and for taking up issues on our behalf.

During the year, the Parish Council received 11 planning applications. 9 were supported, some with additional comments where heritage assets were involved. The two proposals not supported were for 8, Vale Lane, which was refused by Babergh District Council and 1-6 The Cottages which is now the subject of a legal challenge following the decision of Babergh's Planning Committee in November. The Parish Council's main objections to this latter application included harm to heritage and environment, precedent, safety, lack of housing needs assessment and the belief that more suitable sites are available within the parish and district.

Councillors attend training on planning and new Councillors are required to take part in courses to learn about their new responsibilities.

The Parish Plan actions have been implemented.

An Emergency Plan will be submitted to Babergh and Suffolk County Council for implementation shortly.

The Clerk liaised with Suffolk County Council on requests for pot hole repairs. Parishioners are encouraged to use the Suffolk Highways Department on-line reporting system to report damage to roads and signs.

Fly tipping and general litter continues to be a problem. Anglian Water have installed gates at the water treatment plant to dissuade fly tipping. I am pleased to report that 13 residents volunteered for the annual litter collection in early March. Although delayed by bad weather, we were able to clear up all the lanes in the Kersey area and even ventured further into local Parishes. A proposal to provide more regular litter collection and pot hole reporting by local residents will be considered by the Parish Council at the following meeting. I thank all those public-spirited residents who regularly collect litter and rubbish.

A Village Emergency Telephone System will be set up in the next few months.

Ann Baker has taken on the role of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. Kersey remains a safe and pleasant place in which to live.

Finances are monitored at every meeting. Your Parish Council remains financially strong with funds in the bank of just over £20,000. Expenditure in the year was within budget. The Precept for 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 was £7,340.00. The four-year Council Tax Support Grant has ceased. The Transparency Grant is £311.04 and will not be available next year. The Precept for 2018/19 will be £7,953.00 and Council Tax for a Band D property will increase to £43.94. The Precept has increased because of a change in the tax base and expenses. Staff hours were increased to ensure compliance with new data protection legislation.

Finally, I thank all of you who have contributed by providing service to others. Kersey is a vibrant, flourishing, safe and generous community. This will be maintained with more engagement and contribution from younger residents.

John W. Hume - Chair, Kersey Parish Council.
3 April 2018

Financial information and Councillor contact details below

Kersey Parish Council Budget and Precept

	2017/18	2018/19
	Budget/ Precept 2017/2018	Budget/ Precept 2018/2019
Parish Council		
Post/Tel/Stationery/copier cartridge	£135.00	£135.00
Clerk's working from home exp	£208.00	£208.00
Hall Hire:Parish Council 11 @ £5	£50.00	£55.00
Annual Parish Assembly @ £10	£10.00	£10.00
SALC subscription	£172.98	£180.00
External Audit	£100.00	£100.00
Data Protection	£35.00	£188.00
Website hosting	£100.00	£100.00
Sub total for Admin	£810.98	£976.00
Clerk's Salary & Staff Costs	£4,150.00	£4,915.00
Training/External Meetings	£250.00	£250.00
Street Lighting	£210.00	£225.00
Parish Council Insurance	£500.00	£340.00
Glebe Insurance	£50.00	£50.00
Hedge Cut - The Glebe	£83.00	£80.00
Playground Safety Inspection	£85.00	£87.00
Dog Litter Bin emptying charge	£45.00	£45.00
St Mary's Church	£400.00	£420.00
Defibrillator & Village Emergency Tel	£226.00	£135.00
Chairman's Allowance	£0.00	£0.00
Election costs	£25.00	£25.00
Church Walk future maintenance	£130.00	£130.00
Footpath Map printing reserve	£75.00	£75.00
Contingencies	£300.00	£200.00
Adjustment to round precept	£0.02	
Precept	£7,340.00	£7,953.00
<i>Transparency Fund Grant</i>	£311.04	
<i>Other PC income</i>	£552.98	
PC Income	£8,204.02	
Agreed spending from PC reserves:		£100.00
	£8,204.02	£8,053.00

£50 filming donation
£500 Kersey Mill
donation, added to the
Defib & VETS reserve)

from Defib & VETS
reserve

The precept for 2017/18 was £7,340.

For a band D property the council tax was £40.00

The precept for 2018/19 will be £7,953

For a band D property the council tax will be £43.94

KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL CONTACTS

Parish Councillors:

John Hume (Chair)	Ayres End, The Green, Kersey IP7 6EB	01473 810098
Mrs Yvonne Martin (Vice Chair)	Row View, The Street, Kersey IP7 6DY	01473 828361
Mrs Veronica Partridge	Chestnuts, Kersey, IP7 6EL	01473 823188
Giles Hollingworth	Chapel House, Church Hill, Kersey IP7 6DZ	01473 824663
Iqbal Alam	4 Ancient Houses, The Street, Kersey IP7 6EA	01473 827079
Andrew Rogers	The Gables, Wickerstreet Green, Kersey IP7 6EY	01787 212242
Kevin Pratt	Green Gables, The Green, Kersey IP7 6EB	01473 823028

Clerk:

Mrs Sarah Partridge	Bridges Farm, The Tye, Kersey, IP7 6HB	01787 210859
	Email: kerseypc@gmail.com	

Kersey Parish Council publishes on the Kersey website past minutes, financial information, ordinary meetings dates for the year and contact information. There is also a wealth of other useful information on the Kersey website.

Kersey Website: www.kersey.suffolk.gov.uk

Footpath Working Group Annual Report

Throughout the past year the volunteers have continued to work hard to maintain the numerous footpaths we are fortunate to have around Kersey, Wickerstreet Green and Kersey Tye.

We currently have sixteen volunteers looking after twenty-four paths, the remaining paths being maintained by the farmers whose land they cross.

In 2017 we invested in a new, self-propelled mower/strimmer, had one of the existing machines fully overhauled and serviced, and sold off the oldest machine. All our equipment is now fully operational and raring to go. We are very grateful to John Maltby for storing the equipment. I am looking into an alternative location to relieve John of this burden.

Within the last year John Maltby, Ian Hattrick, Bob Wheeler and Ian Fidell have decided to resign from the volunteer group whilst Alan and Jill Line have moved away from the village. I would like to thank them all for their whole-hearted commitment and effort in maintaining the footpaths over many years.

As you will be aware, we are paid to maintain some of the paths by Suffolk County Council and in recent weeks Sarah Partridge has managed to persuade them to add a couple of additional paths to the list. We currently have £1,736.75 in our account which is more than adequate to cover any anticipated expenses over the next twelve months.

One task for the coming year is to consider the adequacy and condition of the many sign posts and direction indicators within our area. Assistance from regular walkers by reporting problems would be very helpful.

Finally, I would like to thank all our volunteers for their commitment and effort over the past year.

Giles Hollingworth
Chair of the Footpath Working Group, April 2018

KCPC Working Group (Kersey Community Playground Committee)
REPORT for Kersey Annual Parish Assembly
9th April 2018

The playground continues to be a popular resource for children in the village and locality. This report highlights last year's key events and some plans for this year.

The Quiz Night held in November 2017 was a very successful evening, with numbers considerably up from the previous year and we raised £555.19 net of expenses. We plan to hold the event again at a similar date later in the year (date TBC).

The KCPC funds stand at £2859.33 and are sufficient to cover our current planned expenditure.

I'm delighted that Will Steed agreed to join KCPC.

The exercise equipment is serviceable (after some repairs in the year) and available for use. Two successful maintenance days were held. The cricket net was available throughout the year, though the matting continues to suffer in the wet from moss etc. It was regularly treated but needs to dry out before it can be used this season.

The refurbished bark area has been a success and held up very well over the year. There are issues surrounding some rot on some wooden equipment that will eventually need replacing, but it is being monitored and is not considered urgent. When this work is eventually undertaken, we will most likely need additional funds. The RoSPA report highlighted a couple of new issues, the urgent matters were rectified.

The "new" mower has been serviced and is in good working order. It is back in the rabbit hutch for the new season.

I thank Pascoe Gibbons for continuing to run the Grass Cutting Rota and Inspection Schedule. We have managed to recruit a few new volunteers for grass cutting, but still need more to replace those who have retired from the list. I would make a request that if people are unable to mow the grass on their designated day, could they please organise a stand-in, and email Pasco when they complete the task.

I would like to thank Sarah Partridge for her hard work and support, and we would like to thank all the volunteers who assisted with the maintenance day and the grass-cutting last year. We continue to be very grateful to the Whymarks for allowing us to use their garden for the mower storage. I would also like to add a personal thank you to the members of the KCPC Working Group for their hard work and support.

JPFM 4.4.18

The Forget Me Nots

Report for Annual Parish Assembly APRIL 2018

The Forget Me Nots are still going strong after over 30 years since the formation of this group. There are approximately 10 regular attendees and a few others dip in and out whenever they can.

The Group have had a good year 2017/18 and the present aim of the group is to try and have two social outings per month; that is to meet up for coffee, and also to have lunch at a chosen hostelry or a favourite restaurant. We have travelled far and wide and have found excellent venues.

The Group extend a welcome to anyone who wishes to join us, there is no obligation to attend regularly, we are delighted to meet new and old friends. If you would like to join in and need a lift, just call Veronica on 01473 823188,

or just call that number to book a place at table.

Veronica Partridge, April 2018

Franey and Rand Charities

The Charity did not receive any applications for grants in Kersey during the past year. Grants were given to Individuals, as well Organisations (such as Shelley Riding Centre and Hadleigh Elderly Peoples Welfare) whom the Charity recognised as being needy and deserving of help.

Rachael Rogers, April 2018

Friends of the Fabric and Bells of St Mary's Church

It has been an average year, there are not enough ringers from Kersey so the Church relies heavily on ringers from Elmsett. To commemorate the centenary of the armistice there are plans for all churches across the country to ring from 10.30 -11am on 11 November. There are not enough ringers in Kersey so it is hoped that new volunteers will come forward to learn to ring so Kersey can join in with this commemoration. At present there are no plans to ring to celebrate the royal wedding on 19 May. Thursday night is practice night 7.45 – 9.30pm all welcome.

Neville Whittell, April 2018

GRAYS' TRUST, KERSEY

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 9 APRIL 2018

The object of the Grays' Trust charity is to promote the education of persons who are resident in the Parish and surrounding area of Kersey. Applications to the Trustees are invited via the Newsletter annually, in September, and if funds are available, again in January. We welcome applications from university and sixth form students, as well as from mature students undertaking educational courses, who live in the residential area. The distribution also includes Kersey School and the Tuesday Club.

In 2017 we gave financial assistance to 2 Sixth Form students (1 new applicant) and 7 University students (1 new applicant), and the Tuesday Club. Gifts were given to 5 Kersey School leavers in July, and £1,000 set aside to fund travel, etc. for Kersey School outings in 2017/18. If there are any new families who have teenagers considering further education and would like more information please contact the Chairman, John Robinson, or any of the other Trustees. Telephone numbers on the newsletter 'contacts' page.

I would like to thank the Trustees, especially those who have been in post since the Grays' Trust in its present form began in 2003. Age is rather catching up with 2 of us at least, and we are pleased to say that 3 new, younger Trustees have volunteered to join us as from our recent ANNUAL MEETING. This will give them the opportunity to take over some of the responsibilities after the next distribution in September. The Kersey Vicar (or Priest in Charge) has an ex-officio role as a Trustee – we hope our new incumbent will wish to take up the post when he arrives in September.

Joan Hatrick

Trustee (7.4.2018)

Kersey School Report from the Head Teacher for Kersey Annual Parish Assembly April 2018

We are a well-supported and oversubscribed Primary School. We are a friendly, inclusive school, committed to the wellbeing of every child and enabling them to achieve their full potential. All our staff, governors and parents work closely, resulting in a supportive, successful effort to ensure all the children excel in their own way.

The values of the school are We Care, We Believe, We Strive and We Achieve. This is echoed in the ethos of a caring and Christian community and this is even more visible with the introduction of 'Open the Book' where the bible stories are read and acted by the children. As a Church school we have close links with our local Church, holding whole school assemblies at the Church three times per week.

Our school facilities are well utilised and have been developed in the last year to ensure the use of the outside area is engaging for all and learning opportunities are maximised. The school accommodation does not include a school hall or canteen but the four class bases are well used by 76 children and four teachers along with all the other staff. We lease the village hall for certain indoor sporting activities and an annual performance. Other sports are conducted outside in the playground or on the village Glebe, which is also used at lunch times for games.

Children are constantly involved in exciting curriculum activities such as museum visits, sports tournaments, residential trips, music festivals, arts and other educational visits to support a broad, balanced and creative curriculum for every child. We offer a range of 'out of hours' school clubs ranging from a variety of sports to piano, guitar, French and drama.

This year has been additionally exciting as we have entered a partnership with Hintlesham C of E Primary School, sharing a head teacher in order to strengthen the future of both schools strategically as we move into the future. We are most definitely a very busy little school.

Liz Donaldson
Headteacher

KERSEY PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION
2018 REPORT TO THE KERSEY ASSEMBLY

Rejuvenation is the keyword for the last year. Bruce Newbigging has taken on the Treasurership following the death of Paul Ryde and the Secretaryship will be assumed shortly by Mark Pertwee. Also we were delighted to be joined by Will Steed to bring the Trustees up to full strength.

We are grateful to Mark Sergeant for keeping our hedges in good order and also to Pete Partridge for essential work on the gates which were showing signs of wear.

Weather permitting the school makes daily use of the playing area and the equipment on the playground, which is maintained by the Community Playground Committee, is also in regular use.

Ian Hattrick, April 2018

KERSEY SOCIETY
2018 REPORT TO THE KERSEY ASSEMBLY

This year there was only one event. We are grateful to David Anderson for introducing Ian Gibbs, the Chairman of the International Tea Committee based in London. We were treated to a fascinating talk on the two thousand year long history of tea drinking around the world, followed by an introduction to the cultivation and harvesting of tea worldwide and concluding with a tasting of twelve widely contrasting varieties.

It was disappointing that no more than seventeen people attended. This is a cause for concern and there will be a general meeting next month to discuss the future programme. Details will be in next month's Newsletter and we do hope that all who are interested will be there.

Ian Hattrick, April 2018

Lewis Mowles Trust

Last year the trust donated £600 towards a pump and borehole at the allotments in memory of Paul Ryde. Our balance now stands at £9,700.

Norah Orriss
April 2018

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FOR KERSEY ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 9th APRIL 2018

Introduction

It would be an understatement to say that the last year has been a turbulent time for Babergh District Council. Since the last Annual Meeting, 6 (probably about to become 7) Conservative District Councillors have formed an Independent Conservative Group. We are still loyal to the principles and policies of a Conservative administration, but a number of us have deep concerns about the way business is being conducted by the current Babergh Conservative leader(s). Speaking personally, I am concerned about the move to Ipswich (we still don't have any information on costs/benefits); the decision to press for merger with Mid Suffolk without proper consultation (this cost Cllr Jennie Jenkins her role as Leader); we have yet to see the business plan that would support merger and we have no idea what Memorandum of Understanding arrangements have been made with Mid Suffolk to ensure a fair merger solution. Most recently, a decision has been taken to put the whole thing on hold because of a decision by Colin Noble to explore a unitary option for Suffolk without any prior consultation with the District Councils. There is an on-going failure to communicate with Members and there is a clear need to think through options before ill-considered solutions reach a point of no return.

Updates

Against that background, and because I give the Parish Council updates regularly, this will be a short report that refers to the last 12 months, this report will provide updates on Babergh DC activity since I last reported to The Parish in February 18.

Public Access

As I reported in February, there are some moves to have a "landing point" location provided in Hadleigh to meet with Council Officers. This was proposed at a recent Council meeting when a Motion was moved by a Labour Member to demand this additional facility. I supported the Motion. It's early days but from the papers that I have seen, the Cabinet will reject the Motion. For this reason alone, it would be wrong to offer any assurances that it will succeed. However, I am still keen to see some form of public access support provided in Hadleigh (with people to advise (& not just an unmanned computer terminal) even if it's not for 5 days a week. Either way, the Motion will be considered by the full Babergh Council for a decision. Watch this space

Leisure

The expenditure of £3.8 millions to replace the Hadleigh Leisure Centre Pool and to redevelop the Kingfisher Leisure Centre in Sudbury is proceeding apace. Tenders will be sent out shortly with target completion dates of Sept 19 for the Sudbury facility and Jan 20 for the Hadleigh Pool.

Boundary Commission

The Boundary Commission is still expected to submit their final recommendations in August 18 for presentation to the Sec of State and for implementation at the next local elections in May 2019 – getting time critical. The number of District Councillors will almost to come down from 43 to 32, and in our case, it will probably comprise the parishes of – Aldham, Elmsett, Whatfield, Nedging & Naughton, Kersey, Semer, Chelsworth and Lindsey under the title of South East Cosford. I am pleased to report that Kersey is now back in the Cosford Ward group! I intend to submit an application to stand as a Conservative candidate for the new District in May 2019, but there is now an interview/selection procedure that filters to ensure best representation.

Public Sector Housing

Babergh DC has recently agreed to fund the provision of additional council housing (27 new build units at Holbrook), but frustratingly, I am currently not able to provide any further detail in the case of

Angel Court in Hadleigh. It is evident that work on this project will not start in the timeframe that was originally anticipated, and it could be 2021 before we see a result – from my perspective this is a highly undesirable delay and the residents of Hadleigh deserve a clear explanation why the project has been subject to such delay. Returning to the positive, Babergh continues to buy suitable properties on the open market to increase the supply of Council owned houses – seven 2 or 3 bedroom properties between April & November 17.

Private Sector Housing

The Sec of State (Javid) has issued new guidance to help facilitate the building of more private sector houses. As you know, we are now required to build 440 houses a year rather than the 335 that was already a serious challenge. The issue for Babergh DC has been seriously complicated by the absence of a 5-year land supply and I suspect that the introduction of new regulations will only slow/complicate the process. For what it's worth, in the last year the Babergh Planning Committee approved 74% of the applications considered and a new issue of the draft new Local Plan is expected to go before the Cabinet this month with a further public consultation in the summer of 2018. Last time there were 13,960 comments submitted and I strongly recommend that you encourage individuals and Parish Councils to remain engaged in this important exercise. In theory, it will inform the number of planning applications that go to the Planning Committee and I will be pressing strongly for more account to be taken of Parish Council views in future. They claim that your views are important, but I don't always see the evidence to support the claim. Not all Parish Councils are "Nimbys". Sometimes, they do know what's best for the village!

Merger of Babergh & MSDCs

It gives me no pleasure to report that the expression "dogs breakfast" come to mind when updating the Babergh/MS merger proposals. Initially the chief Executive and the Babergh DC Conservative Administration were pressing for an early decision on merger – which was not helped by additional pressure from Mid Suffolk to "get on with it". As you know, a small group of Conservative Councillors sided with the Opposition to prevent it happening without another referendum of Babergh voters who had rejected the option 7 years ago by a 60% to 40% margin. A failure to listen to the concerns of Ward Members out in the field cost Cllr Jenkins her position as Leader of Babergh DC. The new Leader Cllr John Ward subsequently agreed to a referendum but the Motion that required a referendum also required that no public funds to be spent on the project - Catch 22 ... ie it's not now possible to explore the merger option as it would require Officer time and money. Fortunately (or unfortunately depending on your view), the Leader of Suffolk CC (Colin Noble) has resolved that particular issue when he **informed the Districts** that he had contracted with an external agency to examine and report on a Unitary Council option for the whole of Suffolk. **He did not consult with the Districts** before initiating the study and the Leaders of both Babergh & Mid Suffolk called for the exercise to be stopped until the option had been discussed between Suffolk CC and the Districts. That call was rejected so any consideration of merger between Babergh & MS is now on the back burner for the foreseeable future as the Babergh/MS merger solution could become irrelevant if the Unitary option is adopted. **These exercises are all about saving money.**

Disposal of Corks Lane Buildings

A public "drop in" presentation has been arranged for Wednesday 11th April 18 (in the Hadleigh Cricket Club Pavilion on Friars Road, Hadleigh from 3pm to 8pm) to get local views on the proposals for redevelopment of the Corks Lane Babergh DC former HQ. I strongly recommend that you take the opportunity to "drop in" and to see what's being proposed – essentially it will be for additional private sector housing. If you are unable to make the Wednesday presentation it will be repeated on Wednesday 18th April in the Guild Room in Hadleigh Town Hall. Same time for both occasions.

Alan Ferguson tel: 01449 741542 or 0797 407 5430

County Councillors Report for Kersey Annual Parish Assembly 9/4/18

When I was elected 10 months ago one of my key goals was to hold the Conservative administration to account. My ability to do this was helped by forming part of a larger group of 12 councillors – Greens, Liberal Democrats and Independents, which gave us access to officers and resources.

School bus cuts

This plan first emerged in August and a decision has not yet been made. By delaying consultation, our group gave time for parents and school heads to voice their concerns. Cabinet are due to make a decision later this month and I hope they will have listened to the many representations from parents, teachers and councillors like myself.

Highways reshuffle

Shortly after I was elected, Highways was completely restructured. The idea was to integrate staff at Kier, the company with the contract to repair our roads, with county staff. Under the new structure, rather than contacting individual officers for an area, parish councils and individuals and councillors must contact a central service centre. Though this is in some ways frustrating it does mean that they have a proper record of reports and jobs and can monitor them better. The reshuffle however, can not disguise the fact that highways do not have enough money to do all the work that they have done in the past. For example the lack of repair of many signs. After much urging the broken brown tourist pointer sign by Kersey mill has been removed for safekeeping but repair awaits funding they have told me. Much of my time has been spent urging highways to do jobs that appear to have slipped for whatever reason.

Pension fund risk

I sit on the pension fund committee and have been pushing for the committee to examine the risk to the fund from investments in coal, oil and gas stocks becoming “stranded assets”. The Governor of the Bank of England warned of this in 2015 given looming climate change regulations. At our last committee meeting it was reported that one of the fund’s managers at Black Rock was now long term negative on fossil fuel stocks because he believed they would be hit by consumer demand for cleaner fuels. I have been promised a statement on the risks at our next meeting.

Ending culture of secrecy

Four cabinet committees were set up in September. These committees are “advisory” to cabinet only. At the meeting at which they were set up I pushed hard for them to be held in public rather than in secret as was the plan. Although this was resisted by the administration, the cabinet has promised to review this after 12 months. I am continuing to press for them to be in public. Later in the new year, it emerged that there is a Public Sector Leaders group which also meets in private and makes spending decisions over millions of pounds. After public pressure from me, they invited the media to their last meeting this month and they are reviewing the way it is governed.

Care, health and Wellbeing cabinet committee.

Meanwhile on my particular cabinet committee I pressed for a proper commitment for investment in cycling and walking infrastructure. This has not yet materialised but as a result of these discussions the cabinet has appointed one of its number - Robin Millar - as a "cycling champion". I shall be pressing for some action here.

Budget

It is not pleasant to have to report that the removal of revenue support grant for the county council has left a hole in its budget for the 2018/19 year, even after it has raised its precept by the 5% maximum it is allowed. This is being met by a host of cuts across various services and a small amount from reserves. Even though the removal of central government funding was known long in advance, the council decided to freeze council tax for the past seven years. A 1% increase in the precept every year would have almost eliminated the deficit and so negate the need for these latest cuts.

May I wish you well for the remainder of 2018.

Robert Lindsay
Suffolk County Councillor
April 2018

Millennium Book Fund

This fund was set up with the income from the sale of the book 'Kersey Within Living Memory' written by Anne Maltby. Funds are available for the benefit of Kersey village organisations. Decisions about Kersey Millennium Book Fund and any applications for funding are considered and agreed by Kersey Parish Council. There were no applications received in the last year.

Neighbourhood Watch – no report

KERSEY ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 2018
REPORT FROM THE NIGHTINGALE TRUST

During summer 2017 a second pump was installed at the end of allotment 15. It was purchased with donations from the Nightingale Trust, The Village Produce Association, and the Lewis Mowles Trust in memory of Mr. Paul Ryde who was a Trustee of all three organisations. The pump will be looked after by Adrian and Natalie Blyth. We are grateful to Colin and Jenny Leeks for their care of our first pump and to Chris Lister for vermin control.

During the year the Trustees made two inspections of the allotments and were pleased with the high standard of cultivation and general care of most of the plots. However, as a result of the concern expressed by some tenants that weeds were spreading from neglected allotments, we have updated the terms of the Tenancy Agreement to reinforce the importance of keeping allotments in a clean and tidy condition. New tenants will be asked for a deposit on acceptance of the tenancy to cover any costs incurred by the Trust for clearance, etc.

We have one half allotment vacant and no waiting list at present. Notice of the vacancy has been put in The Bell and in the Newsletter, and future advertising will be considered. Rents remain the same and are very competitive.

We would remind the general public that the allotments are private land and do not contain any public footpaths. Visitors to the allotments should be by invitation of Trustees and Tenants only.

Fulfilling the second object of the Trust, we were able to give financial help to 7 Kersey residents in 2017.

At an Extraordinary Meeting during the year Mr. Mark Rigby was appointed as a Trustee. We wish to record our thanks to our Treasurer, Mrs. Norah Orriss, and our Secretary Mrs. Natalie Blyth. Finally, at the Trustees 2018 AGM held in March two Trustees, Jill Harbinson and Joan Hattrick said they wished to retire as soon as replacements could be found. If anyone is interested in becoming a Trustee please contact either Natalie Blyth (827805) or Norah Orriss (827513). Jill and Joan have been Trustees for many years and feel it is now time for younger folks to take their places.

Natalie Blyth
Secretary to the Nightingale Trust

Short report from St Mary's PCC to Kersey Annual Parish Assembly 2018

We would like to thank everyone in the village who helps us look after our beautiful church: those who clean, act as sidespersons, help with keeping the churchyard well maintained, arrange flowers organise rotas, ring bells, play the organ, carry out maintenance jobs and attend our events.

We are grateful to Rachel Wells and Frances Whymark for continuing as Church wardens and the hardworking team of PCC members comprising Colin Grannell, Nick Judd, Lucy Oldham, Rachel Wells, Frances Whymark, who continue to look after the fabric of the building and endeavour to raise enough funds to meet the annual running costs of this beautiful place of worship. In January 2018, David Boast was co-opted onto the PCC to help specifically with the repairs to the Tower.

We are delighted that the Food bank uses the church as a collection point and the gifts from harvest Festival were much appreciated by families in need from the local area. We continue to support the Royal British Legion with the collection from the Remembrance Day service.

In August 2017 Revs Tim and Trish French left our Benefice for a new post in Kent. Our benefice then faced the challenge of an Interregnum only a year after Tim and Trish's sabbatical. We are very grateful to our Elder, Mrs Julie Boast, church wardens, Parishioners and retired clergy, who continue to lead our monthly pattern of services on Sundays and Tuesdays throughout the year and to provide pastoral support during our interregnum. We are particularly grateful to the Reverend Drew who has worked ceaselessly to welcome people to St Mary's for many of our services. Because of his commitment, we are delighted to report increased congregation sizes of up to 80 people for the special services of Christmas, Easter, Remembrance, Harvest and Mothering Sunday.

We are delighted to announce that our next Priest-In-Charge has been appointed and Jackson Crompton-Battersby will take up his post in September. We are looking forward to working alongside him more closely with our community.

DEANERY SYNOD The court case and resignation of Martin Thrower has dealt a blow to all in the Deanery. It has meant proposed changes to the way the Deanery is organised have not been implemented. Rosalind Paul has been acting Rural Dean and she is due to retire in spring 2019.

FINANCES The accounts together with a full report will be available at our own APCM on 11th April. Along with many other parishes, it is proving more and more difficult to meet the annual expenses at St Mary's and there are signs of a small loss in the first quarter of 2018.

FABRIC, CHURCHYARD AND TOWER REPAIRS We are monitoring ongoing problems with the heating system with a view to making cost effective repairs. The floodlights were replaced, the cost of which was fully covered by donations from villagers for which we are very grateful. We have begun the process repairing the cracks in the tower identified in the Quinquennial report of 2015, and we are awaiting final costs and grants and it is anticipated that the work should be complete by the end of the year.

SCHOOL Linda Newbigging and Frances Moore continue to support the school as foundation governors. The head teacher guided school through a SIAMS inspection which was graded GOOD. Then in September 2017 Liz Donaldson became joint executive head of both Kersey and Hintlesham on a trial basis for a year. The Head Teacher and governors are looking forward to working with our new priest-in-charge.

Legislation regarding Safeguarding (Oct 2017) and the Data Protection act (May 2018) will become additional legal responsibilities of the PCC. We would welcome any help you may be able to offer discharging these obligations.

We very much welcome everyone to our own Annual meeting on 11th April and our concert on 28th April. We would particularly encourage anyone with a little time to spare to consider helping with fundraising ideas and events or caring for St Mary's, both as a building and as a place of worship.

Kersey Table Tennis Club - Report for the Year ending 31st March 2018

The Table Tennis Club has had another successful year with good levels of attendance so much so that the purchase of another table is being considered.

The Clubs finances are healthy and self supporting via the fees structure. The accounts for the year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 will be audited in the next few weeks.

The club operates from Kersey village hall on Thursday evenings between 7:30 and 9:00pm. Players may elect to play either one hour or the full session at a cost of £1.50 or £2.00 respectively. Juniors are charged £1.00 irrespective of the duration. The season runs from September to June.

The purpose of the club is social and recreational and all abilities are welcome.

Adrian Blyth

01473 827805

adrian.blyth1@btinternet.com

TUESDAY CLUB

A varied programme held during the year included talks on a holiday in Gambia, The Samaritans, Air Ambulance and The Cotswold way. We had visits to the Shelley Centre where we met Tilly the horse that the club is currently sponsoring and to Assington Country Kitchen. A donation was sent to The Fishermans Mission from money collected at our monthly competitions. Club members are grateful for the money received from the Grays trust to help with expenses. We have another interesting programme for 2018 and anyone is welcome to come along.

Rachel Wells, April 2018

KERSEY VILLAGE HALL

Kersey Village Hall is used on a regular basis, so providing guaranteed income to keep the Hall in an excellent condition.

Kersey School attend the Hall nearly every weekday during term time, and often book it for extra curricular activities throughout the year. Also there is weekly Yoga, Table Tennis and monthly Tuesday Club activities. Many Village meetings are held in the Hall, and an Annual Buffet is held in October, which is the only fund raising that the Village Hall Committee organizes. Last year over £800.00 was raised during this event, which includes a popular Quiz and Raffle, as well as a well stocked bar and excellent buffet.

The Church also has an annual buffet at Christmas, with Carol Singing, mince pies and great food, starting off the Festive Cheer.

The Annual Village Lunch, which is to be held this year on Sunday 15th April, is always a popular event where the Villagers can come together and enjoy neighbourly time.

This year, to maintain the high standard of refurbishment to the Hall, the whole of the electric system was overhauled and a new fuse box was installed, this was done at a cost of £1400.00. Also the painting of the Mill at Kersey that is at the back of the stage, was found to have mould growing on it. Although the value of the picture was not high, it was decided by the Committee that it should be restored, which was done at a cost of £550.00, and the picture has been rehung so that air might circulate behind to prevent further damage.

The Kersey Village Hall Committee work tirelessly to maintain the excellent condition of our Hall and they must be commended for doing such a splendid job.

Veronica Partridge
Chair of the Village Hall Committee
April 2018

VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

The outing to Waddesdon Manor in July had been well supported and enjoyed by all, a successful flower show was held in September. At the end of the year we purchased some replacement covers costing £1800 for the frame marquee, both marquees are now in good order and ready for the new season of lets. After 8 years it was agreed the hire charge be increased to £140 for 40x20 and £120 for 30x15. Villagers still get a reduction of 25per cent. The show schedules have been delivered and the committee are grateful to Claire O'Sullivan for her continued sponsorship of these. Our outing this year is on the 30th. June to Penshurst Place in Kent and the show is on the 8th. September. We are sorry to hear of the death of Harry Buckledee he was the last surviving member of the original VPA committee from when it was formed in 1947. He always took an interest in what was going on, had a great knowledge of gardening and show judging and we will miss his expert advice.

Rachel Wells, April 2018