

Melton Parish Council
Chairman's Annual Report 2020/2021

This is my seventh Annual report as your chairman and still I can't believe the speed at which the years go by.

Sadly, due to the continued lockdown with the coronavirus epidemic, there will not be an actual Annual Parish Meeting for the second year running.

Firstly I shall present the annual Chairman's Melton Community award. This year has been a tough one for all of us and I asked for nominations. I received three nominations and rather than go for one or the other I thought "Why not make them all winners?"

The winners are:-

1. Marie-Therese Ind - has been a constant source of support for the parish council especially when we have had joint events with the church like the fete. She also works very hard within the community as part of the seniors' lunch clubs, churches good neighbour scheme, Mothers Union, Flower Guild and the little pantry. Finally, she had been going in to listen to children reading in the school pre-pandemic.
2. Emma Needs - This year Emma has volunteered at the EACH (East Anglian Children's Hospice) shop in Woodbridge and helped them when they were preparing to re-open after the first lockdown. Emma has supported Melton Primary School as a volunteer. Prior to Covid-19, Emma was involved in renovating the boats for the new school allotment, she also helped put up and paint fences for the new area. Melton GNS - Emma is secretary, committee member, volunteer coordinator - Emma has been one of the main contacts for volunteers and volunteered a huge number of hours since the scheme was launched. She has also ensured the MGNS systems were in place to support our community effectively.
3. Maggie Porter - Maggie Porter who has done 5 years' service as a key player on the committee of Melton WI. The recent Melton WI AGM set up by Maggie via Zoom, members had nothing but praise for Melton WI's efforts to stick together and keep going through the pandemic. Many of the members are from an older demographic and quite a few live alone- the WI has become even more important for them this year. Maggie has done a great job of keeping everyone in contact and her sense of fun and "we're all in this together, ladies" attitude has made a difference. Maggie is a real asset to the Melton community I see first-hand all the good things she does as of course she is my wife.

Each of the winners receives a certificate, an entry into our hall of fame on our website and a voucher for £25.00.

Just to remind you that Melton Parish Council consists of up to 15 full councillors who may also serve on the three committees. We currently have 15 members.

We have Full Council meetings every other month and

- Finance Employment and Risk Management (FERM)
- Planning and Transport (P&T)
- Recreation (REC)

All our meetings take place in public and everyone is welcome. We do get members of the public coming along, even when meeting by Zoom, which is lovely to see. Planning is particularly well attended, where local people may be affected by developments.

Agendas and minutes are published on our website. www.melton-suffolk-pc.gov.uk

Melton Parish Council works in partnership with local organisations in the village to strengthen community, identity and involvement. We are represented on the governing body of Melton Primary School by Cllr. Katy Martin, at the Burness Parish Rooms by Cllr. Carol Gradwell and also on the Melton Trust charity by Cllr. Carol Gradwell. Geof Butterwick does a grand job of being our transport representative and maintains the local transport guide available on the MPC website. We also have cycling and footpath advocates from the local community.

Staff

William Grosvenor is our Clerk and since he has been with us the activities of our council have grown like topsy. Somehow he keeps us on an even keel and keeps everything in order whilst complying with a lot of legislation. The turnover of the council has increased so we recruited a new member of staff two years ago. Pip Alder is our Assistant Clerk now and is a real asset to MPC.

We also have Phil Donoghue who is our maintenance officer who does a great job with all sorts of odd jobs around the village.

Finally we have Martin Wilks who is our new volunteer tree warden and is doing a great job planting trees and bushes around the village. I think we have a really strong team in Melton and I am very proud of them all.

The year 2020 - 2021 achievements

As I said earlier it has been a busy year, here is a list of some of our achievements.

1. The office is well established and is an asset to MPC rather than squandering money on rent. We still have our tenant and this provides an income to MPC.
2. The Melton Road Recreation Ground has been the focus of a lot of work this year. We now have CCTV to try to reduce anti-social behaviour. We have replaced the tennis court fencing and I think it looks great. Also the car park is due to be slightly enlarged and resurfaced this year.
3. We have continued to represent Melton at Sizewell C meetings and expect an application from EDF to go to the inspector soon.
4. Our Neighbourhood Plan is now 2 years old and is in the process of being updated to keep it fresh and enforceable. This has been made more difficult by the planning application for the northern half of the Carter/Warburg site.
5. There obviously was no fete in 2020 or this year, however we are hoping to have a fete in 2022.
6. The speed indicator (SID) was purchased and after some initial teething troubles is now working. We intend to buy a second one that will be solar powered to live permanently in Woods Lane.
7. Some new benches have been fitted in the recreation ground.
8. The process of divesting the 21 pieces of land from East Suffolk Council to has now been completed and took a ludicrous amount of time. All the trees on the land have been inspected and an action plan has been made.
9. We represent MPC at the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) forums. Although of course lately this has been on Zoom
10. I always attend the Remembrance Sunday service at St Andrew's Church in November and I lay a wreath on behalf of MPC. Of course 2020 was an unusual affair with just socially distanced wreath laying.
11. Every year we receive applications for small grants. This year we gave grants to :-
 - a. Melton Primary School - Contribution towards the cost of Covid-19 related expenditure. We awarded £500.00
 - b. Patients Participation Group at Framfield House Surgery - Cost of portable ECG machine. We awarded £158.99
 - c. We also awarded £400 to the Melton Messenger to assist with getting it up and running once it is safe to do so
12. Despite a couple of resignations we have been able to co-opt new councillors and remain a full council of 15. I am very proud to have such a

- strong team. Most parish councils struggle to get volunteers, we are indeed very lucky in Melton to have hard working committed volunteers.
13. Two new dog poo bins were installed, one at Wilford Bridge and the other at Old Malting Approach/New Quay Lane. We also continue contact NORSE to get them emptied when they are full and overflowing which happens more often that it should.
 14. Despite a rise of 5.6% in our precept this year, we still remain one of the cheapest Parish Councils precept wise in East Suffolk.
 15. The play equipment in the Melton Road Recreation Ground got a fresh coat of paint during lockdown number one.
 16. During the height of the pandemic we formed an Interim Management committee formed from Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the committees and Full Council. This operated for the worst of the lockdowns. I am pleased to report that we are now back to normal committee working. Of course that means more Zoom meetings.
 17. Over the years the vegetation has crept out from the hedge bordering the park and it has made the path very narrow along Melton Road. We have had the footpath cleared back so it is wider.
 18. The pavilion roof that Phil mended temporarily in February 2020 seems to have withstood the winter. Much work has gone into the design of the replacement pavilion and we are now at the planning permission stage. This should be complete well before the fete in 2022.
 19. The lower field was becoming a bit weedy following the dry spell that occurred after the new seed was sown. It has been treated with a broadleaf fertiliser which made the weeds 'overgrow' and die. This has worked very well and looks great now.
 20. In November 2020 all the grassed areas were quadrupled – the ground was brushed, rolled, slit and brushed again helps to improve the condition of the field.
 21. The Melton Village sign 2012 roundel was vandalised but Simon from SBD Ltd. repaired it. They have coloured the 'flame' backing and as it is made from stainless steel now so it should last indefinitely.
 22. Two new roundels were fitted to the Beacon to commemorate the men and women of Melton who served their country in World War II. These plaques commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE day (Victory in Europe) & VJ Day (Victory in Japan). They and were paid for with the help of a grant from our District Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte and a private donation from Colin Birkbeck. The roundels have been fitted onto the pole that holds the beacon in the Recreation ground. A new Melton shield has also been fitted.
 23. Following public consultations, we have Suffolk Highways working on designs for two island crossing points in Melton Road. Some changes are

being made to the design following consultations. This is taking some time but it is crucial to get it right.

24. We started work on designating two local roads as Quiet Lanes. Lodge Farm Lane & St Audrys Lane, both are popular with local walkers and cyclists, and taken together they form an arc between Yarmouth Road and Saddlemakers Lane. Public consultation is underway.
25. With the Melton Messenger only being an online publication due to the pandemic, I decided to write for one of the delivered local magazines. I now write an article for the In Touch with Woodbridge magazine. This of course makes more work but it means that more people have access to a physical article.
26. Budget wise we have been able to slightly underspend the budget in 2019/2020 which is a great achievement.

I often get stopped by local people in Melton whilst walking my dog or out shopping to discuss local affairs, people do appreciate what we do and kind comments like this make it all worthwhile.

Thanks very much for your kind words of support & encouragement during the year. It is most appreciated as indeed is all the work still being done by the Melton Good Neighbour scheme which we fully support. There are so many good people in Melton and that is something to feel proud of.

Alan Porter
Chairman – Melton Parish Council