

Melton Parish Council
Chairman's Annual Report 2022/2023

This is my ninth Annual report as your I took on the chairmanship in 2014 and a lot of things have been done since then.

Just to remind you that Melton Parish Council consists of up to 15 full councillors who may also serve on the three working groups. We currently have a full council of 15 members. The newly formed council from May has 13 Full members & there is at least one new volunteer to be co-opted. This is highly unusual as many parishes carry a number of vacancies. In Melton we are seen as a group who just don't talk - we do things. In this particular year a lot of very big things!

We have Full Council meetings every month the business of the old committees has been combined into the monthly meetings. The committees were:-

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

This has been done to give our staff more time to do the things they need to do. Producing agendas, papers and minutes takes a lot of time. This is currently in experimental stage but so far so good.

All our meetings take place in public and everyone is welcome. We do get members of the public coming along, which is lovely to see. Planning items cause particularly high attendance, where local people may be affected by developments and more recently traffic and speeding issues. 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 our Clerk Pip Alder, at the Burness Parish Rooms by Cllr. Carol Gradwell and also on the Melton Trust charity by Cllr Katy Martin. For my sins I am also the treasurer of the Burness Rooms

Staff and Volunteers

Pip Alder; our clerk continues to do a great job. Last year we appointed Fliss Waters as our Assistant Clerk and has certainly made an impact. We also have Phil Donoghue who is our maintenance officer who does a great job with all sorts of odd jobs around the village.

David Steptoe is our footpath advocate and Jacq Tricker is our cycling advocate.

We are very lucky to have a great team at MPC and between them they all keep a good grip on what is going on, which is usually quite a lot!

Finally, as I have already mentioned, we have Martin Wilks who is our volunteer tree warden and is doing a great job planting trees and bushes around the village together with his Tree Crew. I think we have a really strong team in Melton and I am very proud of them all.

The year 2022 - 2023 achievements

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

- Melton Road Playing Fields
 - New pavilion built and opened for use
 - Public accessible toilet in the pavilion
 - New emergency road to the pavilion
 - New notice board and roundels on the beacon
- Hall Farm Road Sports Ground
Fitting of new equipment and ground works in the renamed Jubilee Green, Including tree planting, football goal and basketball hoop.
- Purchase of Speed Indicator Devices – one on Woods Lane and a portable device that is moved to several sites around the Parish
- Tree planting at various sites within the village, over 2500 so far this year.
- 2 quiet lanes with signs installed Lodge Farm Lane & St Audrys Lane
- Two crossing points in Melton Road - double yellow lines still awaited
- Improved the parking provision on The Street by Winifred Fison House opposite McColls. 11 new spaces created
- Bat box building with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust yet to be installed
- We held the first fete for 3 years
- I lit the Beacon on 2nd June complete with Majesty bugle call & raised the flag. An amazing evening with a few hundred people coming along
- A third speed indicator device was purchased
- Maintained a full council compliment of 15 members

The achievements since I started in 2011

The very first thing I did was starting to remove tree guards in the woods, I never understood why they weren't biodegradable. Some larger dog bins got fitted but in those early days we were often on the move going from Lindos House bungalow to SCDC Melton Hill, then the boatyard in Woodbridge before we bought Unit 17 in Riduna Park.

It takes a while to work out how the council works and what you have to do to make a contribution to the team effort. I have certainly seen a lot of new people join and see them develop over the years.

Since becoming chairman in 2014 the council has done a lot of great things which have all been nicely recorded in the Melton Messenger for all to see and read about.

Some of the highlights of my time are:-

1. Buying the office in Riduna Park
2. The beacon lighting in 2018 where hundreds turned up on a balmy November evening was a wonderful thing and people stayed & chatted.
3. Again the beacon lighting for the Queen's 70th jubilee was popular too
4. Holding a number of successful fetes with another coming this year
5. Getting our own maintenance person to do small jobs has proved to be a great thing for MPC. Phil Donoghue is a real asset and people sing his praises as walk around the village
6. The car park at McColls
7. The crossing points in Melton Road
8. Maintaining a full council of 15 members, I got this increased from 13 to 15 many years ago to help spread the workload even if we have vacancies
9. Helping to raise the profile of MPC locally and in the council community where our input is highly valued
10. Leaving a legacy of "can do" which I know will continue after I have left MPC.

Projects for 2023/24

A new council will be formed in May and they will then elect a new chairperson and all the other roles. The new council will set future objectives whilst completing any in progress.

One of the things high on the agenda is to refurbish the Beresford Drive play area.

It will be up to the new council to set its own priorities but as most are existing councillors it won't be a massive shift of direction.

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 make all the effort we put in seem worthwhile.

Thanks very much for your kind words of support & encouragement during the year. It is most appreciated, there are so many good people in Melton and that is something to feel proud of.

This is my last APM as your chairman as I am stepping down after 12 years. Hopefully it is au revoir!

Alan Porter
Chairman – Melton Parish Council