



Mepal Parish Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

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MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

A Parish Council is only as effective as its clerk and members, and I am most grateful for the speed with which Mrs Emma Harris has grown into a most effective support and stimulant to competently-managed business in her role as clerk and proper officer. A number of councillors, for whose hard work we are I am sure all also grateful, have taken on specific roles, and it is a pleasure to reach year end with only one Councilor vacancy. Not everyone who serves on the Council has to take on specific work - many who are in full-time work find it hard to do so, but their wisdom and good sense in discussion at meetings are much appreciated. Please, if you feel that you could take on the role, talk to Mrs Harris about it. We badly need to fill the vacancy we have.

Over the year we have continued to represent your interests in considering and where necessary commenting upon planning applications large and small, and upon the local plan, and we are talking to the potential developer of the housing site immediately north-east of the Mepal/A142 junction to ensure that village concerns are understood and suggested possible solutions properly considered. We have also continued to put pressure upon the County Council as highway authority to seek improvements to the A142 - with the result that Mepal junction is the only part of the Ely-Chatteris stretch scheduled for improvement in the near future. This will be relatively low-cost work (highway works are very expensive indeed) as, in spite of all our concerns, the A142 is by no means the most dangerous road in the county, but we shall continue to press, and to make the highway authority aware of the burdens of new development. We are also delighted that our long-standing request to move the one-way signs at the north end of High Street is now at last about to be implemented, in satisfaction of a wish expressed by a very large part of our community some four years ago. For several years, since the demise of our previous youth club providers, Community Carts, whose work in the village we had been pleased to subsidise, there has been no youth club, and we are delighted that steps are now being taken to attempt to revive a club. Initial improvements have already been made to the children's play-place on the recreation ground, and further costed ideas are ready to be considered. This will form just one part of the Community-led plan, which we have been pleased to agree to facilitate. We are grateful to the leaders and shakers who are taking this work forward, independently of the Parish Council, on your behalf. We look forward, in the course of next year, to considering how best to react to its outcomes. We are also looking at how to improve our own business planning, to make sure

we make the best use of all our resources, including our information resource. A parish council has two major attributes, significant detailed knowledge about the parish, and knowledge of what our residents consider important. Our business plan and the community-led plan should stand us in good stead for the future - but we continue to rely on you to tell us about the things which concern you.

The year has been overshadowed by the difficulty of resolving the problems of drainage-line sinkage on the recreation ground in a manner which has best chance of providing value for money for the whole village. At year end we were much closer to finding a way forward, and we shall need to think carefully in the coming year about how best to maintain the field and make it and the pavilion widely-available once work to the field itself has been put in hand. I am very grateful to Mrs Diana Bray for hard work in this regard, and to all my colleagues for continuing to try to move matters forward in the face of what has sometimes seemed a barrage of criticism.

We are particularly fortunate in our elected representatives on the District and County Councils, who are assiduous both in attendance at meetings and in taking up and pursuing matters on our behalf. My thanks to them: Anna Bailey, Mike Bradley, and Lorna Dupre, and also to the various officers of both councils who help us behind the scenes with advice and take note of the concerns we express on your behalf.

Elizabeth Stazicker, Chairman 2017/18

WHO & WHAT IS THE PARISH COUNCIL?

Mepal Parish Council comprises of 7 voluntary Councillors who service for term of four years and represent an electorate of 761 (Electoral Register 1/12/17)

The Parish Council employs two part-time members of staff; Mrs Emma Harris as Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer and Mr Simon Batchelor as Parish Council Handyman. Mr Peter Smith is the Internal Auditor for 2017/18 and receives an honorarium.

Our Parish Council Meetings, held on the second Monday of every month except in August and December, in the Village Hall, are open to everyone. Agendas and information about Parish Council meetings are displayed on the Parish Council notice board located in the High Street. The forthcoming agenda, approved minutes and other information about the Parish Council and the community can be seen on the parish website www.mepalparish.org.uk Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings and may speak during Public Forum on matters that are on that meeting's agenda. Matters relating to items that are not on the agenda can be given to the Clerk in writing or via email for inclusion on the next relevant agenda. The Parish Council is not permitted to make a decision on matters that have not been duly advertised to the public, unless any matters are considered urgent or are authorised in the Parish Council's standing orders.

The Parish Council's major role is to represent the parish on issues affecting us to the District and County Councils, and to regional and central government, and other agencies. It is responsible for the Community Pavilion, parish grass cutting, its own street furniture (noticeboards, litter bins, dog waste bins, seats, bus stops and some street lighting) and through the Parish Paths Partnership, ensures that registered Rights of Way are open and maintained. It maintains open spaces: The Recreation Field and children's play area, the Village Green, the Laurel Close greens, Lilibet Wood and (on behalf of the County Council) the highway verges. The Parish Council considers and comments to the Local Planning Authority on all planning applications (statutory consultee). The Parish Council supports other charitable groups and organisations which work within the village. At the Parish Council's Annual General Meetings held in May, Parish Councillors elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2017/18

Year Ended 31st March 2017		Year Ended 31st March 2018
	INCOME	
34,425.00	Precept	32,425.00
3,806.76	ECDC Grant	-
747.40	Agency Service for Parish Maintenance	747.40
70.72	Interest on Investments	104.84
196.25	Tennancies (Allotments)	126.00
105.00	Newsletter (Mepal People Adverts)	525.00
360.00	Recycling Credits	360.00
-	FIT Payment	2,654.56
1,210.00	Other	300.00
1,902.35	VAT reimbursement	1,315.43
42,823.48	Total Income	38,558.23
	EXPENDITURE	
3,529.10	Administration	4,306.43
9,057.56	Wages, PAYE, NI, Pension	10,274.77
4,133.72	S137 Payments (incl, Grants)	2,855.00
897.84	Loan Interest & repayment	897.84
797.60	Newsletter (Mepal People)	580.68
715.45	Public Lighting	2,746.49
7,971.51	Parish Maintenance	8,419.79
1,159.29	Insurance	1,203.98
2,829.74	Pavilion Expenses	1,746.02
31,091.81	Total Expenditure	33,031.00
79,850.63	Balance at 1 April 2017 >	91,582.30
42,823.48	Add Total Income	38,558.23
122,674.11		130,140.53
-	Less Total Expenditure	- 33,031.00
91,582.30	Balance at 31 March 2018 >	97,109.53

PARISH COUNCILLORS 2017/18

 <p>Elizabeth Stazicker (Chairman)</p>	 <p>Alan Catley (Vice-Chairman)</p>	 <p>Diana Bray</p>
 <p>Steve Green</p>	 <p>Mal Peters</p>	 <p>Brian Rollason</p>
<p>Jan Fishenden (April 2017-January 2018)</p>		

To contact the Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Emma Harris

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District and County Councillor contacts

District Councillors:

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County Councillor:

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Copies are available online www.mepalparish.org.uk

Any enquires regarding this publication please contact the Parish Clerk (details above)

Mepal Parish Council Annual Report 2017-18