

Annual Parish Meeting of Electors

Acton Village Hall

Wednesday 17th April 2024

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Acton Village Hall at 7.11pm on
Wednesday 17th April 2024.

Before the meeting residents were invited to review an update on the current progress of task identified in Acton's Action Plan. Those attending the consultation session were encouraged to list future tasks for consideration.

Present: 17 residents (including 8 Parish Cllrs), County Cllr and the Assistant Clerk

1. Welcome

The Acton Parish Council chairman Cllr Round welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th April 2023 were approved and then signed by the meeting chairman.

4. Chairman's Annual Report

The chairman reported on the work of the Acton Parish Council throughout the past year. Report attached.

5. County Councillors Report

Cllr Philip Faircloth-Mutton congratulated the parish council on its work and expressed his enjoyment in the working relationship in the past year. Cllr Faircloth-Mutton reported on some highlights of the year and the coming months:

Signed:..... Date

- Working closely with Cllr Antill to have signs indicating ‘Not suitable for heavy goods vehicles’ placed at either end of Mills Lane at the intersections with Acton Lane and the A134.
- Working with Cllr Round on the installation of four new gateways to the village as a further traffic calming measure.
- Finger post signs in the village were updated in 2024.
- Supported a new speed indicator sign with a grant.

6. Public Forum

The chairman opened the meeting to a public forum.

- A resident raised concern over the vandalism down Sudbury Road, the chairman encouraged non urgent reporting to the police (tel 101) as this helps them to direct resources effectively.
- A resident requested an update on Acton being considered a “hinterland” or a “core village” in the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan. The chairman advised that this will form part 2 of the Local Plan.
- Residents reported speeding cars down Sudbury Road at more than 30mph and asked that signage be used to encourage vehicles to slow down along that road.
- A resident reported potholes and verge erosion along Sudbury Road that is in need of repair. The chairman responded that such items need to be reported via the Suffolk Highways online ‘Reporting Portal’.
- A resident enquired whether ideas given at the meeting which are not the responsibility of the Parish Council would be passed on to the relevant authorities. The chairman confirmed this.

The chair thanked residents for attending and closed the meeting at 7.39pm

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Parish Meeting 17th April 2024

Chairmans Report.

The Parish Council works to ensure residents are informed of its work around the parish. Our meetings are open to the public, we have a parish dedicated website, the council make uses of social media and print a regular newsletter. The latest Parish Council newsletter was delivered to all homes in the Parish during March.

I am extremely pleased to report that the council is currently running with a full complement of 9 councillors.

You will have seen from the latest Action Plan Report, available prior to this meeting that the Parish Council has achieved many of the task that were identified during 2022 and 2023. I will note a couple of highlights:

The successful formation of the **charity Acton Field Trust**, the charity has taken ownership of the field known recently as the Barn Owl Field and will manage the field's future for the benefit of wildlife and the wellbeing of residents.

The installation of **three new pieces of play equipment** at Lime Tree Green. This was funded by a grant from Babergh District Council CIL funds and parish council's CIL funds.

Bunn Meadow public right of way, we had a long drawn out process trying to obtain funds from Babergh District Council and Suffolk County Council (SCC) to upgrade the surface. We organised quotes from contractors and submitted these for a grant from Babergh. After a very long wait, many emails and site meetings, Babergh decided they would pay the grant to SCC. SCC claimed they could complete the work at a lower price than the quotes obtained by the parish council.

Work started in December 2023 and we soon learnt why SCC contactor's price was substantially low than the ones we had obtained. SCC had informed their contractors the route was 50 metres long and not 110 metres, so only half the job got done. How embarrassing for all, especially that SCC said they did not have any further funds to complete the job and we probably have to start a fresh bid for further grant funds.

I am so grateful that the management at local firm **ABC Ltd** offered their services to the community free of charge and completed the work.

It's amazing how much effort can go into resolving small issues, it took nearly two years of correspondence with Babergh and the UK Power Networks to have the vegetation cut back from **blocking a streetlight along Barrow Hill**.

Excellent progress has been made by **Acton Neighbourhood Plan** Group, the group, made up of parish councillors and Acton residents is a formal subcommittee of the Parish Council. An immense amount of work has taken place since autumn

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2021. Normally one would envisage a 5-year timeframe, but in just over two years, our group have come together and formed a committee, carried out in-depth research, drafted the plan, which is supported by many appendices and reports, then consulted with residents and statutory bodies, this is an excellent achievement.

The final step is for Babergh District Council to hold a referendum to have Acton's very own Neighbourhood Development Plan put to a vote, the referendum should take place in the next few months.

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