

LITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Meeting Extracts for 2008

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FEBRUARY 2008

At the February meeting, attended by 7 Councillors, District Councillor Kiddle Morris and one member of the public, the following was considered:

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** Norfolk County Council Highways are to be contacted regarding potholes in Dereham Road and Pound Lane and that surface water is not flowing away at the top of Tittleshall Road near the junction with Back Lane. It was noted that the 30m.p.h. flashing sign is not working on the Mileham Road and maintenance is to be requested. Confirmation had been received that the footpath at the junction of Pound Lane and Lexham Road would be improved over the next months. Councillor Lawrence would identify verges that can be planted with bulbs in consultation with the Mr. T Angell. The members felt that the white lines at the Post Office had not had the desired effect as pedestrians are still unable to walk past parked cars. Norfolk County Council is to be contacted to enquire if alternative restrictions can be implemented.

**Planning Applications:** The members objected to the application for a new chalet style bungalow on the land adjacent to 19 Wellingham Road as the design is totally out of character with surrounding properties and would not maintain the street scene. Decisions. The members noted that permission had been granted for the domestic extension at Cedaville, Front Street. Enforcements.

The correspondence regarding the proliferation of vehicles at 7, Wellingham Road stating that maintenance of vehicles registered to the resident and the occasional selling of vehicles did not require planning permission was noted.

In the last edition of the magazine it was stated that enforcement would be taken against the selling of goods from 5, Lexham Road. This was incorrect and should have stated 7 Lexham Road.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary, the hire of the Jubilee hall and donations to the Open Spaces Society, the Litcham Common Conservation Group and the Norfolk Accident Rescue Service were all approved.

**Other Matters.** Prior to the meeting the members had a presentation from the Enabling Officer of Breckland Council and the Local Housing Enabler of Norfolk Rural Community Council about the possibility of providing affordable housing within the village. It was agreed that the Parish Council would proceed with a housing needs survey which would be distributed to all households in the next few months.

The Parish Council had received several complaints about dog fouling in the village especially between Manor Drive and Church Street. The members felt that the Dog Warden at Breckland Council should be contacted to enforce the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 which makes it an offence not to clear up after your dog which carries a fixed penalty notice of £80.

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## M A R C H 2 0 0 8

At the March meeting, attended by 7 Councillors, District Councillor Kiddle Morris and one member of the public, the following was considered.

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** Norfolk County Council Highways are to be contacted again regarding the potholes in Pound Lane which have not been repaired from the previous meeting and that surface water is not flowing away at the top of Tittleshall Road near the junction with Back Lane. The road between Litcham and Tittleshall is also to be reported as where work has been carried on the drainage of the road this is causing the verge to disintegrate. It was noted that the 30 mph. flashing sign had been repaired. Councillor Lawrence had after consultation with Mr. T Angell identified

that the roads into Litcham with the exception of the road through the common would be planted with bulbs and would now produce costing for a future meeting. Norfolk County Council had replied that the space outside the Post Office was classed as footway and any bollards placed there would have to be sited near to the highway edge therefore stopping any parking. Further consultation is to be made.

**Planning. Applications:** The members raised no objection to the application for a new garage and access at New Inn Cottage, Dereham Road. It was agreed to hold another meeting in March to discuss the Minerals and Waste consultation paper from Norfolk County Council as the proximity to the village could have extensive repercussions over transport and of the environment.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary, maintenance of the street lighting, membership of the Norfolk Rural Community Council and to Beetley Parish Council for photocopying were all approved.

The resolution to change bankers to the Bank of Ireland was approved.

**Other Matters.** The registration of the Green is to proceed despite the correspondence from Norfolk Property Services and Norfolk County Council stating that the bench should be removed and that replacement posts would have to be sited 2.5 metres from the carriageway edge therefore not discouraging parking on the green. It is also expected that any planning application to site a new notice board on the Green would be opposed by the owners of the land.

A volunteer is being sought for a Community Emergency Coordinator for Litcham. It is hoped that a resident would offer themselves for this post and further details can be obtained from the Clerk.

The dedication of a new section of the Nar Valley Way taking it off the Mileham Road is proceeding as consent in principle has been obtained from the landowners.

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## APRIL 2008

At the April meeting, attended by 7 Councillors, District Councillor Kiddle Morris and one member of the public, the following was considered:

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** Norfolk County Council Highways are to be contacted regarding a pothole in Lexham Road, a dropped manhole cover in Lexham Road, the poor state of Tittleshall Road and Dereham Road and the pavement on the corner of Lexham road and Pound Lane. Norfolk County Council are to be contacted again regarding the possible placing of bollards outside the Post Office as the current information received seems to contradict that received in 2006.

**Planning. Applications:** The members raised no objection to the application for a new dwelling and garage on the land adjacent to 19, Wellingham Road but would prefer to have the front of the property on the same axis as the adjacent properties and parallel to the road. The members objected to the new cottage style dwelling on the land adjacent to Rose Cottage, Weasenhams Road as they felt that the size of property was too large for the plot and that safety would be compromised when accessing the road. The members also objected to the application for siting a garden shed at Southery Cottage, Tittleshall Road as the visual impact of this was detrimental to the area.

**Decisions:** The members noted that permission had been granted for the garage at New Inn Cottage, Dereham Road but the previous application for a dwelling on the land adjacent to 19, Wellingham Road had been refused. A lengthy discussion took place on the Minerals and Waste Consultation paper from Norfolk County Council and it was agreed to object to the two sites in the Litcham area.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary, the maintenance of the Village sign, a donation to the Jubilee hall, membership of the Norfolk County Association of Parish and Town Councils and the fee for the external audit were all approved. The rent for Long Meadow has now become overdue and the Clerk is to write to the tenant to remind of the contract timescale.

**Other Matters.** A further supply of questionnaires was distributed for the registering of the Green. In the time allotted for public questions, one parishioner raised the issue of the seat on the Green. At the moment the Parish Council have not confirmed to the landlord the actions it is going to take. It was agreed not to place any slabs on the Green in front of the seat at this time. As no volunteer has come forward for a Community Emergency Coordinator for Litcham the Clerk was appointed.

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## JUNE 2008

At the June meeting, attended by 6 Councillors and District Councillor Kiddle Morris, the following was considered:

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** The repairs to the pothole at Lexham Road does not appear to have lasted and this plus two others on Druids Lane are to be reported and it is hoped that improvements can be made to Dereham Road on the entrance to the village. Only one volunteer had come forward for the speed watch and as three are needed to be operate the system this is to be held in abeyance. Norfolk County Council had replied to the Parish Council regarding the parking outside the post office and stated they would not be in favour of bollards as this would create an additional hazard as the vehicles would overhang the highway. Norfolk County Council are checking their records regarding the ditch on Dereham Road as the Parish Council is concerned that there is inadequate protection of the ditch from the pavement.

### **Planning**

**Applications:** The members raised no objection to the application for the alterations to the shop front at 12 Church Street. Decisions. The members noted that permission had been granted for the satellite dish at Corner Stores Mileham Road and the detached dwelling on land adjacent to 19 Wellingham Road.

**Local Development framework:** A meeting is to be held in Litcham with other parishes and Breckland Council to discuss the next phase of the Local Development framework specifically the village guidelines. The members noted that no further action is to be taken by Breckland Council over the selling of car boot items at 7 Lexham Road.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary, emergency call out for the street lighting and the renewal of the web site were all approved. **Other Matters.** As no comments had been received regarding the proposed removal of the payphone from Weasenham Road it was agreed to raise no objection provided the area is restored correctly. Mr V Piffero was appointed as a Parish Council trustee to the Litcham Relief in Need Charity. It was agreed to defer the refurbishment of the Heritage Map until after the Local Development Framework is published as there could be alterations to the conservation area and other matters that are shown on the map. The Safer Neighbourhood Team had visited Litcham and had noted that there was no street lighting in Manor Drive. A reply has been sent stating that there are two street lights in Manor Drive and requesting clarification as to whether more have been asked for.

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## JULY 2008

At the July meeting, attended by 7 Councillors, District Councillor Kiddle Morris and one member of the public the following was considered:

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** A list of problems on many of the roads in the Parish is to be forwarded to Highways which include potholes on Druids Lane, Back Lane Dereham Road, Tiitleshall Road, and Butt Lane as well as dropped ironworks on Druids Lane and Lexham Road.

Norfolk County Council had replied to the Parish Council regarding the parking outside the post office and stated they would paint hatchings on the pavement if the Conservation Officer was in agreement. The Parish Council decided not to proceed with the markings and to leave the markings as at present. Norfolk County Council have confirmed the ownership of the ditch on Dereham Road and it is to be contacted again to see if they will consider a fence. It was agreed to plant wild flowers on the junction of Dereham and Dunham Roads as the first phase of the planting on roads leading into the village.

**Planning. Applications:** None.

**Decisions.** The members noted that permission had been granted for the erection of a pair of semi-detached cottages on Manor Drive. **Other Matters.** A discussion occurred on the site specifics proposals for the village as part of the consultation on the Local Development Framework from Breckland Council including a representation from a parishioner who had put forward a site to be included for development. The sites proposed include the area to the rear of Litcham Hall, the land to the rear of the houses on Wellingham and Weasenham Roads, the allotments on Dereham Road and a parcel of land on Butt Lane. The map displaying these sites will be posted on the notice board, web site and placed in the Post Office and at the September meeting the parishioners will have their opportunity to make representations to the Parish Council prior to the members making a decision on the Parish Council's response to the consultation. Please note this meeting starts at 7.00p.m. This is your opportunity to have a say in how the future development of the village should proceed, whether there is to be large scale, limited or no development.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary, cutting of the churchyard, insurance and street lighting maintenance were all approved. It was agreed to reduce the number of hours that the street lighting is on in response to concerns about the light emissions in rural areas. The accounts for the year to 31 March 2008 were approved and are available for parishioners to view by contacting the Clerk.

**Other Matters.** A letter from a parishioner regarding the appointment of Mr Vince Piffero as the Parish Council appointed trustee to the Litcham Relief in Need Charity was read out stating that the Trustee should live in the village and this letter was noted.

A very informative presentation was made from Chris Hood of Signs of Life regarding the refurbishment of the Heritage Map. Councillor Payne agreed to look at the content of the Heritage Map prior to obtaining a quotation for its refurbishment.

A Crime Prevention report had been received from Norfolk Constabulary regarding Manor Drive and it was agreed to confirm that other interested parties, for example Peddars Way had received a copy.

A costing had been received from the High School for the use of a classroom for meetings but it was agreed to remain at the Jubilee Hall.

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## SEPTEMBER 2008

### Open Parish Meeting

An Open Parish Meeting was held on 1st September to allow members of the public to give their views on the proposed sites for development in Litcham as the next phase of the Local Development Framework consultation by Breckland Council.

This was attended by twelve members of the public who all felt that there should be no large development in Litcham and felt that any large development of housing would mean that the infrastructure within the village would be strained beyond its capacity e.g. the School and Health Centre. Many comments were made that an increase of vehicles from the new housing could not be accommodated on the narrow roads of the village. The possible inclusion of the allotments on Dereham road was not considered to be advantageous to the village as parking would be lost for Canaan Row as well as the allotments themselves. The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments which would be taken into consideration when deciding the response from the Parish Council.

### September Parish Council Meeting

At the September Parish Council meeting, attended by 7 Councillors, District Councillor Kiddle Morris and one member of the public the following was considered:

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** Most of the problems reported to Norfolk county council after the last meeting have now been addressed. No fence would be placed by the ditch on Church Street nor would this area be cut unless the Parish Council undertake it which was not agreed. Approval had been given for the planting of the wild flowers and this is likely to be done in October.

**Planning. Applications:** There was no objection to the installation of an air conditioning plant at the Old School House Litcham High School or to the single storey extension to the rear of Byre Cottage on Watery Lane.

**Decisions.** The members noted that permission had been granted for the alterations to the shop front at 12 Church Street.

**Other Matters.** The response to the consultation on the proposed sites was agreed. The following sites were agreed to be recommended in the LDF: Butt Lane provided that this is only as deep as the existing dwellings, the site near the Health Centre to be included in the guidelines, the allotments along Dereham Road provided that the development is only one dwelling deep, as was a strip of land along Pound Lane to allow single depth development only. The guidelines along Weasenham and Wellingham Roads, Tittleshall Road and Rectory Meadow are to be moved closer to the dwellings to ensure there is no back garden development.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary, cutting of the churchyard, insurance and the Internal Audit were all approved.

**Other Matters.** The provision of street lighting and dog bin in Manor Drive is still being considered as is a barrier at the rear of Kepple Close.

## OCTOBER 2008

At the October Parish Council meeting, attended by 5 Councillors, District Councillor Kiddle Morris and one member of the public the following was considered:

During the part of the meeting open to the public Mr Birkbeck raised the matter of the proposed development to the rear of Litcham Hall. The Chairman and Clerk explained that they had been contacted by the agent for Lexham Estates, the owner of the land, requesting a meeting to discuss the proposals that had been forwarded to Breckland Council. The Parish Council had already forwarded its response to the Local Development Framework and felt that at this point a meeting was not necessary but the proposed development documents would be circulated to all Councillors to enable them to discuss the matter further at the next meeting. The proposed development is for 26 dwellings plus a new village hall and sports pitches. The Parish Council decided during the meeting to contact Breckland to ascertain if it was possible to develop the site for a new village hall without the necessity for a small estate being constructed.

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** Refreshing of the white lines had been carried out in the village and the Parish Council had queried why not all the white lines had been refreshed and this query would be raised with Norfolk County Council. Following the heavy rain the previous weekend there had been flooding on Mileham Road, Dereham Road and Pound Lane and the highways authority is to be requested to inspect the sites and clear the gullies if appropriate together with the gullies on Church Street. The damage to the path leading to the notice board is to be reported to the contractor who has been parking vehicles on the piece of land to ensure that it is restored correctly.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary and photocopying charges were approved. It was agreed to support the Homewatch Scheme in Litcham by funding the meetings that are held quarterly.

**Other Matters.** The Parish Council decided to proceed with fitting of photo-electric cells to the street lights to change the hours of operation from, half an hour after sunset to half an hour before sunrise on the next day, to half an hour after sunset until midnight and from 0500 until half an hour before sunrise on the next day. This would give a saving of electricity of about 40% and decrease the light pollution from the village as has been promoted by the Campaign for Rural England. All the light bowls are to be changed as most have become yellow with age and do not emit adequate lighting.

**Litcham Relief in Need Charity.** A lengthy discussion ensued following the receipt of a letter from the co-opted trustees. It was agreed to discuss the matter further after a meeting of all the trustees has been held in October. The main bone of contention appears to be the wish to dispose of some allotment land although it is not the responsibility of the Charity to provide allotments but to provide relief in need and therefore, to maximise the income for the charity the Chairman of the Trustees felt that it was prudent to sell the land and to use the income from the sale for the benefit of the parishioners of the village.

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## N O V E M B E R 2 0 0 8

At the November Parish Council meeting, attended by 6 Councillors, District Councillor Kiddle Morris and ten members of the public the following was considered:

During the part of the meeting open to the public the co-opted trustees expressed concern that the content of the letter from the Co-opted Trustees of the Litcham Relief in Need Charity had not been correctly reported in the last edition of the Church and Village magazine. The Parish Council felt that what had been reported was an accurate summary of the meeting, however to avoid any misconception the letter expressed concern about the leadership of the Charity by the current Chairman.

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** The white lines had been refreshed at the main junctions and the remaining white lines would be refreshed in the future. Following the heavy rain the previous weekend, again there had been flooding on Mileham Road, Dereham Road and Church Street and the Highways Authority is to be reminded to inspect the sites and clear the gullies if appropriate.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary and a donation to the Homewatch Scheme in Litcham to fund the meetings that are held quarterly were approved. It was agreed to donate to Dereham Citizens Advice Bureau to support the work it does.

**Planning.** The Parish Council raised no objection to the single storey extension to the garage at Stapleherne, Tittleshall Road. The decision to refuse the discharge obligation requiring the annexe at Bramley Weasenham Road to be used as ancillary accommodation in connection with the existing dwelling was noted.

**Other Matters.** The Parish Council decided to approach all the owners of the properties at Kepple Close to enquire if there would be any objection to the erection of a barrier on the path to the rear of the properties and to obtain the costs for the erection of a barrier. The access to Long Meadow is to be raised with Litcham Common Management Committee as no vehicular access is now possible. The strip of land between the allotments that leads to the river is to be checked with land registry to try and identify the owner as it was felt this piece of land should be available to the villagers to access the river. It was agreed to adopt the telephone kiosk on Weasenham Road which would mean that the box would remain in situ but without any telephony.

Litcham Relief in Need Charity. A lengthy discussion ensued following the receipt of another letter from the co-opted trustees. The co-opted trustees felt that proper procedures had not been followed when the second Parish Council nominated trustee had been appointed. All the matters raised in the letter had been referred to the Charity Commissioners and it was now a matter for the trustees not the Parish Council.

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## DECEMBER 2008

At the December Parish Council meeting, attended by 6 Councillors, and three members of the public the following was considered:

During the part of the meeting open to the public a parishioner raised the matter of the missing village sign on Dereham Road that had been demolished in a road accident. The matter will be raised with Norfolk County Council.

Mr K Walpole informed the Parish Council of the new charity that had been set up, The Friends of All Saints Church Litcham, which had been started to protect and renovate the fabric of the church. The first project is to replace the two clockfaces and have the clocks serviced. At this juncture the Parish Council agreed in principle to assisting with the project financially but wished for further information on other funding prior to deciding an amount to donate.

Mr T Angell requested assistance with the cutting of the roadside nature reserve on Wellingham Road, as Norfolk County Council is unable to cut this year. As Norfolk County Council is due to cut an area of grass at the junction of Dereham and Dunham Roads it was hoped that the nature reserve could be cut at the same time but this would have to be confirmed.

**Highways/Traffic Matters.** Concern about safety was expressed over the footway near to Pound Lane on Lexham Road as it is now nearly impossible to walk on the footway and therefore pedestrians are in danger from HGVs. As this has been reported previously the Parish Council wished this matter to be raised with the Area Manager of the Highways Department.

**Finance.** Payments for the Clerk's salary, a donation to the Dereham Citizens Advice Bureau, the hire of Jubilee Hall, the external audit fee, membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks and the maintenance of the street lighting were all approved.

The external audit had been completed with the only comment being on the addition of notice boards to the fixed assets register, which had been done at the Annual Parish Council meeting in May 2008.

The precept, which is the amount raised for the parish through the Council Tax, was set at £6000 which is no increase on the previous year as reserves would be used to fund any shortfall.

It was agreed to donate to the Litcham Common Conservation Group to provide assistance with the public liability insurance and the replacement of equipment. Planning. Permission had been granted for the single storey extension to existing domestic garage at Stapleherne, Tittleshall Road.

**Other Matters.** The Parish Council decided to proceed with the registering of the Green as an open space based on the replies received. A request has been sent to land registry to enquire if the access to the river between the allotments has been registered.

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Councillor Payne resigned from the Parish Council and as there is now a vacancy on the Parish Council Breckland Council will be requested to put in motion the procedure for filling the vacancy. Initially a notice will be posted and if ten parishioners wish there to be an election they should inform Breckland Council. If no election is requested then the Parish Council will proceed to co-opt a member.

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## END OF EXTRACT FOR 2008

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**Monthly Meetings** to which all parishioners are welcome, are held in the Jubilee Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. and the first part of the meeting is made available for public discussion and to bring matters to the attention of councillors. Council meetings will normally take place on the first Monday of each month, but this could be subject to change in any one month. Please consult the Notice Board for the date or contact the Clerk on 01362 861112.

The full minutes are available for viewing by any parishioner by contacting the Clerk.