



ANNUAL REPORT 2022—2023



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The last year has been a busy and productive year for the Parish Council.

I am really pleased to see that the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field, Tews Lane has been successfully delivered recently using Section 106 Funds specially allocated by the North Devon Council for this purpose. The MUGA is a fantastic addition to the site and already appears to be well used.



As you may be aware the Parish Council has been working on a project to complete the pavilion at Tews Lane, however, the Parish Council is struggling with the significant rise in build costs and lack of funding available to complete the project. There is currently around £450,000 available through Section 106 funding but with an estimated cost of somewhere between £2k m² and £2.5 m² for materials alone and with a footprint of 329.86 m² on the current approved plans, we are currently looking at a shortfall of between £210,000 and £375,000 for materials alone. The Tews Lane Committee has been investigating options and the feasibility of these options to deliver the project, as I am sure you can appreciate funding options in the current climate are almost non-existent.

I know my fellow Councillors will share in my frustration that the MUGA at Riverside Park is still not open for public use. The Parish Council agreed to accept the transfer of the facility back in November 2021 the legal process appears to have been held up by the developers for unknown reasons, the Parish Council continues to try and apply pressure to speed the process up and have expressed our wish for the transfer to have taken place and the facility be open for the community by Easter 2023.

The Parish Council has recently appointed a Planning Committee to respond to Planning Applications on behalf of the Parish Council as a Statutory Consultee. Unfortunately, the Committee's job can be quite difficult in trying to balance the overall impact of a development on the parish whilst also being aware of the lack of presence of a five-year land supply.

We also have at least three applications in the pipe line which will add to the traffic problems on the B3233.

All Parish Council and Committee meetings are open to members of the public, and I would encourage anyone wishing to know more to attend any of our meetings and engage positively with the Parish Council.

This year also saw the return of our Executive Officer from maternity leave so welcome back Victoria and a fond goodbye and thank you to Eileen who covered for her in her absence.

We also said goodbye to Nigel, the Maintenance and Amenities Operative who moved onto pastures new and welcomed Ian as his replacement, whilst we also welcomed Maddy into the admin section.

Thankfully the Covid 19 situation seems to have settled down and we have all become used to wearing masks and taking precautions whilst getting back to some normality.

I would like to extend my condolences to the Gayton family following the loss of John Gayton. John has been a part of Fremington Parish for a number of years and with whom we have shared a working relationship as the Burial Superintendent at Fremington Cemetery through W.S. Gayton & Son Ltd.

In the last few days, we have also seen the one-year anniversary of the war in Ukraine. A number of refugees from Ukraine are being housed in the area and made welcome by our community and the Parish Council has flown the Ukrainian Flag over the past year as a mark of respect and support.

In the near future we have the elections for councillors at both Parish and District level so the parish is likely to see new councillors step up and represent the community in Fremington Parish, I would encourage all those interested in standing for Parish Council to get in touch with the Council Offices for more information.

Finally, looking forward we have the Coronation of King Charles III on 6th May 2023. This should be a fantastic celebration in which we can all take part whether that is by watching it on the TV and having a street party or celebrating with friends and family.

Cllr Sue Kingdom
Chairman

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

It has been another busy year for the Committee. We were sad to say good bye to our Administration Apprentice who left us at the beginning of June following completion of their Level 2 and 3 NVQs for a full-time position and we wish them the best of luck for their future career.

We were pleased to welcome back our Executive Officer from Maternity Leave in August and welcomed Mrs Madeleine Goodyear as our Administration Assistant in September. We also said goodbye to our Maintenance and Amenities Operative in November and wish him the best of luck in his new role. The position has been filled by Mr Ian Rawle who has been with us since mid-January and has settled in well and quickly become a valuable member of the team.

The Committee has taken the plunge and joined the 21st century, using savings made in the last financial year we have been able to purchase tablets for Parish Councillors to aid business. I must say a big thank you to Jude for all of her work in setting up the equipment.

Setting the budgets and associated precept is never an easy task but this year it was made all the more difficult with the cost-of-living crisis and rising utility and running costs. Members were keen to ensure that the Parish Council could continue to deliver its functions and services whilst trying to keep the impact on residents as low as it could and managed to set budgets with an annual precept increase of 0.39p based on a Band D property.

During the budget setting propose the Finance and Personnel Committee tried to be as shrewd as it could when considering the allocation of Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) and has managed to add to the play area maintenance EMR meaning that the Beechfield Play Area and Ellerslie Road Play Area will both shortly see some upgrades using this EMR and Section 106 funding. We have also set aside an EMR for a Night Landing Site at the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field, Tews Lane and began to build an EMR to cover the project costs for the completion of the pavilion at Tews Lane which Section 106 money cannot cover whilst continuing to ensure there are reserves for ongoing maintenance of some of the Parish Council's other areas.

I am pleased to say that the Committee has once again awarded grants of around £2,300 to local groups to include a grant to the Record Office, which will be awarded in July 2023. As well as supporting local groups through its grant process we continue to support Let's Talk Fremington run by Clarity which is an invaluable service to members of the community.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee and staff for the support they have given me over the year.

Cllr Frank Biederman
Chairman

GRANTS AGREED IN 2022-2023

Bickington Brownies	£100
Citizens Advice, Torridge, North, West & Mid Devon	£100
Elmfield Road Boat Planting Project	£100
Fremington Friendship Club	£100
Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee	£100
1 st Fremington Brownies	£100
1 st Fremington District Rangers	£200
1 st Fremington Guides	£100
1 st Fremington Rainbows	£100
1 st Fremington Scouts (Scout Troup, Beaver Colony, Cup Pack)	£200
Instow, Westleigh, West Yelland Parish News	£100
Go North Devon	£100
Lady Linscott Floral Club	£100
Roundswell Residents' Association	£100
Tomlin Hall Management Committee	£100
Record Office	£600

FREMINGTON QUAY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



The improvements at the Quay of the Signal Box have been completed. All the painting has been finished in the railway cream and green colours.

Most of the improvements have been requested and completed by the Fremington Quay Environment Group with the Parish Council supporting the works by paying 50% of the cost.

The improvements enhances the Heritage Centre and improves the visitor experience.

CCTV has been installed (this does not record) – this has been done to allow those who cannot climb the stairs to see the view.

We thank the Environment Group for all their hard work in the Heritage Centre.

The Parish Council has also taken over responsibility of the Wooden Galleon play equipment from the Environment Group.

An additional Memorial Bench has been sited at the Quay area. This is made of recycled plastic and will require less maintenance.

The café continues to attract visitors and supports cyclers/walkers on the Tarka Trail.

Cllr Sue Kingdom
Chairman

TEWS LANE COMMITTEE

The committee have met 5 times since the last annual report and I am pleased to say that I have chaired all of these meetings. I feel that the committee have been very pro-active during this time. (30.06.22 – 27.04.23)

Air Ambulance Landing Site

We welcomed representatives from Devon Air Ambulance to our meeting who expressed a wish to use the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field as a night time landing site. We felt that as it is an ideal location it was agreed in principal but the financial implications were to be followed up. Since that initial meeting and with all the funding details it was agreed for the project to proceed.

Illegal Encampment – Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field

Due to the above incident last year we discussed at our meeting (29.09.22) the cost of barriers being placed to prevent re-occurrence. This was agreed as we felt it would out way the potential legal or repair cost to the site if the situation was repeated in the future.

I would like to express thanks to staff and councillors involved on that day for their urgent response and assistance. This enabled the site to be cleared within 48 hours. Pleased to report no permanent damage occurred.

Multi Use Games Area

I am extremely pleased to report that the above (MUGA) was installed at the Playing Field and officially opened in March 2023. This was attended by 2 young people from the area, North Devon Council Bickington Ward Members, representatives from Fremington Parish Council, a representative from Redrow Homes, TK Play and a local press photographer.

I know the committee are delighted to have supported this project.

Fly Tipping

Unfortunately we have experienced the above in the area. It has been dealt with as soon as it has been brought to our attention. Local residents have been extremely helpful and on occasion have removed items immediately. We express gratitude to those residents concerned.

The Future

One of our priorities will now be to re-look at the drainage of the pitch and the community building at Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field. Finances will play a big part in what the committee is able to do but we will do our very best in the coming months to support these projects.

Joy Cann
Chairman

NB – Minutes of the Tews Lane Management Committee can be found on the Fremington Parish Council website if more detailed information is required.

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

The Environment and Community Committee is responsible for both built and natural environment controlled by Fremington Parish Council. It is also responsible for our climate change agenda.

We are undertaking a study into our use of energy within the parish, allowing us to see where energy is being used and where savings can be made. To get a true reflection this has to be a 2 year project.

We have finalised the lease of the community buildings on Riverside and Waterside, approved new trees on Ellerslie Road playing fields. We have started some wild flowers verges in the area, which are growing well.

We have undertaken the annual footpath survey and thank Mrs Steer for her hard work as always.

Lastly we have reviewed the climate action plan, formed by the climate action working party and can report good progress towards achieving the goals set.

Helen Walker
Chairman

PARKS & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Annual inspection and maintenance work carried out with recommendations made to repair or replace elements of play equipment.

Replacement of entire pieces of play equipment.

Work by Bickington district councillors to rejuvenate Ellerslie park alongside children from the area. Thank you to all of the children involved. We hope you enjoy it.

Plans to renovate/repair Beechfield underway pending funding. With a renewal of damaged park play equipment and the soft rubber mat flooring expected before the summer holiday begin.

Volunteer groups continue to work and support the diverse biosphere at both Leat Nature reserve and Lovells field to the benefit of the local community. We thank them for their efforts and ongoing commitment to the environment.

With this in mind Griggs field will see its annual cut with a view to also carrying out some tree management and preparation for drainage before the autumn and winter arrive.

Cllr Sam Adams
Chairman

This Annual Report is available on the Council's website at www.fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk and in a large print version.

If you would like a large print copy please contact the Parish Council Offices on 01271 321063, or email admin@fremingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

The Neighbourhood Plan process and formation of the document has been a slow one but we are getting towards a means to an end and it is hopeful that we will soon be able to submit the Plan to North Devon Council in the next couple of months, we just have a few items that need topping and tailing.

If the draft Plan submitted to the Local Planning Authority meets the requirements in the legislation, the LPA must publicise the plan for a minimum of 6 weeks, invite representations, notify any consultation body referred to in the consultation statement, all being well, the LPA will send the draft neighbourhood plan to independent examination.

Cllr Sue Kingdom
Chairman



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**Fremington Parish Council
Income & Expenditure Account (Unaudited)
1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023**

(Current) Year Ended
31st. March 2023

Income

Administration	3082.65
Parks & Playing Fields	2.00
Precept	276,488.92
Fremington Quay	23,295.66
Dog Bins	2,148.50
Cemetery	16,518.00
Grants	250.00
Allotments—Babbages	497.14
Allotments—Muddlebridge	1,841.54
The Beechfield Centre	7,868.90
Salaries & Inland Revenue	9,112.43
Parish Paths	500.00
Grass Cutting (Parks & Playing Fields)	5,391.81
Tews Lane	4,026.58
Former Army Cap	900.00
Section 106 Funding	98,252.00
Insurance	1,969.64
Earmarked Reserves	20.33
	<u>£452,166.10</u>

Expenditure

Grants	7,349.21
Administration	26,355.56
Parks & Playing Fields	4,378.97
Salaries & Inland Revenue	154,984.35
Insurance	10,084.85
Loans	16,708.42
Parish Paths	494.13
Fremington Quay	11,390.02
Dog Bins	9,618.92
Cemetery	4,605.70
Earmarked Reserved	8,618.52
Allotments—Babbages	755.00
Former Army Camp	1,950.47
Allotments—Muddlebridge	405.90
The Beechfield Centre	15,430.29
Section 106 Funding	98,252.00
Grass Cutting (Parks and Playing Fields)	18,307.19
Tews Lane	18,499.48
Parish Enhancements	825.68
Environment /Climate Emergency	550.81
	<u>£409,565.47</u>

Parish Councillors

Fremington/Bickington Ward

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Parish Council Officers

Mrs Victoria Woodhouse
Executive Officer

Mrs Jude Wood, Administration & Projects Manager

Mrs Liz Steer, Administration Officer

Mrs Maddy Goodyear, Assistant Administration

Mr Ian Rawle, Maintenance & Amenities Operative

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