

November 2017 report for Hawstead Parish Council.

Local issues

Roads. Whilst canvassing for the role of Borough Councilor, many people complained of the lack of maintenance and potholes. As a recent member to the Extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny Committee I attended a meeting where Suffolk County Council Highway Services gave an account of the new Suffolk Highways structure which came into force on September 4th 2017. The hope is to improve communications between Highways and the various tiers of local government, perhaps even facilitating minor road repairs at a local level. However, the consensus is that much more needs to be achieved. There is a further review in six months.

Locality Budget. Due to the sad death of Angela Rushen and the subsequent delay in appointing a new Borough Councillor, the £2500.00 locality budget is untouched. This fund is available to the villages of the Chedburgh Ward. Please make submissions.

Borough

St Edmundsbury Borough Council decision to buy the Post Office in Bury St Edmunds has been welcomed for the opportunities it brings to improve the link between new and historic shopping areas.

The creation of a single West Suffolk Council may affect existing Ward boundaries and lead to the loss of some Councillors. More to follow.

Housing. The average salary in the Borough is about £28,000, making the cost of a small family home (3 bed semi) approximately 8 times salary. The need for affordable housing has never been greater. This I propose to investigate further.

Western Way redevelopment. St Edmundsbury has purchased the NHS supply depot off Western Way. This sits well with the buildings portfolio and for the potential redevelopment of the area, with the possibility of a multi-story car park being discussed.

Bury St Edmunds is celebrating St Edmunds Day on November 20th, with fun filled activities throughout the weekend.

In 2020 a series of community events is being lined up to celebrate the 1000th anniversary of Bury St Edmunds historic Abbey.

Bury St Edmunds Abbey Gardens has been nominated for a UK's Best Park 2017 award. Please vote using www.fieldsintrust.org/bestpark/eastofengland

O Seaman and Son Builders have won the national Best Local Builder Award at the Grand Final of the Local Authority Building Control Building Excellence Awards for the work they carried out in restoring Cupola House in Bury St Edmunds. St Edmundsbury Borough Council recommended them for the award.

A new call blocking device is available to people living with dementia, thanks to the work of Suffolk County Council's National Trading Standards Scams team (NTSST) which has secured Government funding to provide the free technology.

- Free call blockers are available to anyone living with dementia (allocated on a first come first served basis).
- The dementia condition does not have to be formally diagnosed – it can be suspected/in the process of diagnosis.
- The consumer must be receiving scam or nuisance calls.
- There is no link to age, income, benefits or allowances.
- Consumers/families/carers must make a direct application for the unit to the NTSST via the Friends Against Scams web page:
www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/callblocker

Mike Chester

Borough Councillor -Hawstead, Whepstead, Rede, Chedburgh and Chevington

