

## DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Chairman of the Denham Parish Council, it is my pleasure to present the annual report for the year ending April 2025. This has been a year of progress, challenges, and community spirit, and I am proud of what we have achieved together.

During this time, two of our Councillors stepped down from post (with our profound thanks for their service), and we were fortunate enough to welcome back Tania Farrow as a parish councillor as well as new councillors: Lydia Marriott and Richard Gilmore.

Their appointments, and the actions taken by the Parish Council subsequent to their joining will need to be ratified at our Annual Parish Meeting on 21 May 2025 in order to ensure compliance.

Without the support of the volunteer councillors none of the following could be achieved.

I will be stepping back as Chair in the near future, but will remain in post as long as needed to ensure continuity and will remain as a Parish Councillor for at least the next year.

### 1. Council Activities and Achievements

This year, the Parish Council has been actively involved in various initiatives to improve the quality of life for all residents of Denham. Key activities and achievements include:

- Denham Village Hall Renovation:

Along with our colleagues in the Denham Community Council (including but not limited to Derek, Tania, Jane, Kerina and Nick) we reached practical completion of the renovation works of the Denham Village Hall.

The upgraded facilities include modernised rooms, disabled WC improved accessibility features, and new kitchen with equipment.

This project, costing circa £194,000, was funded through a combination of lottery funding, grants, and community fundraising efforts (Denham Community Council).

Our clerk Wendy Alcock, supervised payment flows and VAT reclaim to allow for management of this project and our council members continued to support in the project (dealing with rebates from off-boarded contractors and insurance companies).

Although there are some snagging issues that will be resolved, the practical completion of the project (allowing the return to use of the village hall) represents a considerable achievement by all who were involved in the project.

- Environmental Initiatives:

We held our annual litter pick which was well attended. Alongside this volunteers continued to monitor and report on the state of footpaths, roads and road-signs within the parish.

- Planning Matters:

We have been engaged with MSDC, SCC, Suffolk Constabulary and others to deal with planning enforcement, not least of all Poplar's Farm and Manor Farm.

- HGV traffic.

We have liaised closely and continue to do so with other parishes with regards rescinding of the ETRO in Eye, and the proposed development of Cranswick plant on the Eye Airfield. Since the rescission of the ETRO Denham Parish Council has not received any formal comment of an adverse effect on HGV movements within the parish.

## 2. Financial Overview

The Parish Council has taken steps (after several years of freezing the parish precept) to put the finances back into good order. Going forward Denham Parish Council should be able to manage its budget and has enough reserves for unexpected outgoings (including any continued improvements to the village hall).

## 3. Community Engagement

Engagement with our community has been a top priority. We hold regular meetings and councillors can always be contacted directly or via the clerk.

## 4. Challenges and Future Plans

While we have much to celebrate, we also face challenges. These include managing increased traffic, addressing concerns about local development, and safeguarding the village we live in,

Looking ahead, our priorities for the coming year include:

- HGV Traffic from Town Farm Mill,
- Impact of Cranswick Development on Eye Airfield

- Lack of public transport
- Sustainable development within the parish and its environs

I would like to thank my fellow councillors, our dedicated clerk, and all volunteers who have given their time and energy to our community. Special thanks go to our parish clerk, Wendy whose organizational skills and commitment have been invaluable.

In closing, I am optimistic about the future of Denham Parish. Together, we have laid a strong foundation for continued growth and improvement. I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year to make Denham an even better place to live.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Duncan McGregor

Chair, Denham Parish Council