

ACLE PARISH COUNCIL

Community News - April 2024

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is taking place on Monday 22nd April 2024 at 7.00pm in the Methodist Church, Bridewell Lane. All residents are warmly welcomed to attend and to raise local issues.

The Annual Parish Meeting is not to be confused with a Parish Council meeting. This is a meeting of the people of Acle, that just happens to be organised by the Parish Council.

The purpose of the meeting is to give the Parish Council, and other local organisations, an opportunity to let local residents know what they have been doing over the past year. The meeting is also an opportunity for electors to have a say on anything they consider valuable to the people of the Parish.

The agenda will be published online and on the noticeboard in The Street.

Street Lights

The Council is currently reviewing options for dimming some of the Parish Council-owned street lights in the village, in the early hours of the morning. Currently, the lights are on throughout the night but we would like to find a safe and practical way to reduce the amount of light emitted in the village for the benefit of both the environment and residents, but not in a way that will affect anyone's safety.

It is likely this will be a gradual process and upgrades to the lights will be done as and when repairs are necessary. It would not be a practical or a financially sensible decision to upgrade all the lights in one go.

Please note the street lights in The Street are owned by Norfolk County Council, and those on the A47 are owned by National Highways, and these particular lights are not included in this review.

Fletcher Room

There is an important message on the reverse of this newsletter regarding the Fletcher Room, which will affect residents' Precept payments (included in Council Tax). Please read this carefully.

Folly Tree House

Folly Tree House is open for business with our final Tenant - Acle Premier which opened on Saturday 16th March 2024!!

Parish Meeting Dates

The Next Parish Council meetings are on:

29th April

20th May - Annual Parish Council Meeting (early because of bank holiday)

24th June

29th July

No meeting planned for August

30th September

28th October

25th November

16th December (early because of Christmas)

All at 7.00pm in the Methodist Church.

Residents are always welcome to attend, to raise local issues and concerns.

Agendas are published online and on the noticeboard in The Street.

Website

<https://aclepc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/>

Increase to Precept

Residents should have received in the post their Council Tax bill for 2024/2025. It will be noted that there has been an increase to the Parish precept of 7.8% for an average Band D home. Increasing the Precept was not a decision taken lightly by the Council and the Councillors discussed at length what percentage increase to apply. As there was a 0% change the previous year in response to the cost of living situation, the councillors felt that, this year, they had no choice but to increase the precept in order to fund the planned expenditure.

The approach of the Parish Council is not only to pay for the expected services and facilities for the village, but also to put into earmarked reserves a percentage of the estimated replacement or refurbishment costs for each asset, of which Acle Parish has many, ready for the future replacement or refurbishment.

The income for the Parish Council has decreased over the past few years as the Parish Council's share of Community Infrastructure Levy from the new houses has reduced from £136,733 (22/23), to £21,716 (23/24) to £nil 24/25. However, the income from the rents at the Folly Tree House and the Chocolate Box is now coming on stream, and is expected to be about £38,000 in 24/25, which is great news, but the cost of the refurbishment of the buildings used up all the capital reserves, and there were significant legal costs in setting up the leases for the tenants. It is likely that some repairs to the roof of Folly Tree House will be needed in the near future so this is in the budget for 24/25.

The next major project is to replace the Fletcher Room community building, sited at the Primary School, which the Council primarily lets to the Pre-School. This is now reaching the end of its life and the replacement will have to be funded partly by a loan, (some grants are expected), so the Council has budgeted for the loan repayments for this, starting 24/25. Repairs of this modular building have increased in recent years as the building begins to show its age.

A couple of years ago, the Council bought additional land for a new cemetery, as the current cemetery is nearly full. The Council has started to put money aside for improving the access track to this land, at the top of Pyebush Lane, and this is also in the budget.

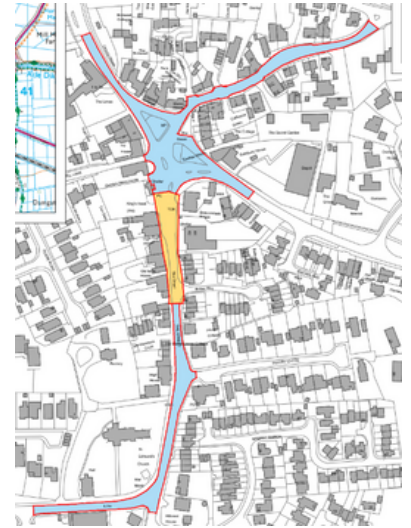
In addition, the Council pays for the Youth Club, the grasscutting, most of the streetlighting, 3 play areas, support for the Recreation Centre, Acle Lands Trust and other local groups, amongst other admin and maintenance costs.

Public Toilets

The Public Toilets are owned by Broadland District Council and managed by Acle Parish Council. We have been in discussions with Broadland District Council about the poor state of the toilets and we are pleased to let you know that they have agreed to pay for the general repairs to the building. This will mean there will be a period of time where the toilets will be closed. We will send updates via our Facebook page, websites and notices on the toilets once we have a confirmed date for the repairs.

Resurfacing of The Street and Trunk Roads

The condition of The Street and major trunk roads in the village is poor. Highways comes under Norfolk County Council's jurisdiction and the Parish Council has been in communication with them to establish an estimated date for resurfacing works. We have been informed that work on resurfacing the main roads in the village is scheduled for this financial year and they are hopeful to commence work in Summer 2024. The map to the right shows where the planned works will take place. We await further instruction from Norfolk County Council on the planned diversion routes and bus service routes.



Gold Standard Bus Stop

In addition to the works planned for the resurfacing, Norfolk County Council have indicated that Acle has been selected as a location for one of the County's Gold Standard Bus Stops. This bus stop will remain close by to Folly Tree House but will be redesigned with accessibility in mind. In addition, there will real-time passenger information boards installed. We are expecting real-time information boards and lighting to be added on the Great Yarmouth bound bus stop as well.

Summer Market Dates 2024

The Summer Markets have been a great success in previous years and we are delighted to inform you the Parish Council have decided to run the markets again for 2024. As previous years, they will be taking place in Folly Tree House car park from 3.00pm to 7.30pm. There will be no parking available on site but parking is available at the Recreation Centre Car Park which is just a short distance away. Dates are as follows:

13th June, 20th June, 27th June, 4th July, 11th July, 18th July, 25th July and 1st August

Brian Grint Centre

Did you know you can hire the Brian Grint Centre? The Brian Grint Centre is located in The Street above the Chocolate Box.

It is for short term lets for things like pop-up shops, community advice events, adhoc meetings, hot desks, etc.

If you would like to enquire please contact acleclerks@googlegroups.com.

Contact

Parish Clerk:
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Deputy Clerk:
Fiona Richardson
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Assistant Clerk:
Kristina Smyth
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The Clerks' email address is:
acleclerks@googlegroups.com

The current parish councillors are:

Angela Bishop - Chair
Jamie Pizey - Vice-chair
Sally Aldridge
Sarah Carter
Jackie Clover
Barry Coveley
Indra Goodson
Tony Hemmingway
Wendy Kenny
Richard Powell
Jessica Royal
David Stephenson