

**Aldham Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022**  
**at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Aldham**

**Present:** Cllr Jackie Daines (Chairman), Cllr Chris Hall, Cllr Brenda Brown, Cllr Adam Scott & Cllr Andrew D'Angibau. The Clerk, Mr G. Walkingshaw, CBC Dennis Willetts and 1 resident.

**Apologies:** ECC Lewis Barber, Cllr Stuart Simpson & Cllr Iain Wickes

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly Meeting 2021**

The minutes of the above meeting were agreed as a true record.

The Chairman signed the minutes.

Proposed: Cllr Chris Hall

Seconded: Cllr Andrew D'Angibau

CBC Dennis Willetts joined the meeting at 7.35 p.m.

**Chairman's Report 2022**

Like most years when I start my report this year is no different.

It doesn't seem possible that another year has gone by and whilst this time last year we were hopeful that the awful pandemic would be well and truly behind us unfortunately that is not the case.

However, on a positive note Aldham Parish council has resumed face to face and open meetings, which we have all found to be preferable to the dreaded zoom.

All the usual village business has been carried out by the Parish Council members alongside our Clerk, Grahame Walkingshaw, and it has been encouraging to see the rise in planning applications.

The Council Members always look at these in a fair and open-minded way, and just hope that the outcome is to the advantage of the applicant.

An ongoing problem, and one that we have been dealing with for many years, is trying to find ways of reducing the danger posed by speeding traffic in both parts of the village.

There have been many accidents over the last year in Ford Street, none of which included fatalities I'm pleased to say, but nonetheless serious enough to warrant the attendance of the police and ambulance services.

All of these accidents are logged and the information sent to Essex County Council Highways.

At this moment Aldham Parish Council are in the final throws of getting a Vehicle Activated Sign installed. This is going to be shared jointly with the Parishes of Fordham and Wormingford and each Parish will have the sign for 4 months of the year. Our sign will be sited at the bottom of the hill in Ford Street and near to the "Children Playing" sign in Brook Road, and will be in situ for 2 months at each location. Our sign will be of the "smiley/sad face" type and we can only hope that it proves effective in slowing the traffic down. Community Speed Watch is about to resume so we can only hope that this will go some way to slowing down the traffic and making our village safer for all concerned.

Our tenure on the Millennium Playing Field comes to an end in the summer of next year and despite very strenuous efforts by the Parish Council, no new site has been obtained. This is despite writing to 7 landowners in and around the village. Several suggestions have been put forward, for example installing some play equipment at the rear of the village hall, but this was deemed to be totally unacceptable for a variety of reasons. So the search goes on.

Due to the increasing demand for housing nationally and locally, we have decided to undertake a survey, which will be conducted by the Rural Community Council of Essex, to ascertain how and why the residents of Aldham would like to see the village moving forward in the coming months and years.

The survey will highlight if there is a need for new housing within the village boundaries, and if so how many dwellings would be deemed to be a sensible amount. It is not our intention to recommend very large developments, but the survey, which will be filled in anonymously, could indicate a need for a few houses to be built, which could accommodate Aldham families who are wanting to have relatives living nearby. The survey should be going out in the next couple of months, so I do hope we get a good and encouraging response.

Many of you may have noticed that a very distinctive landmark has disappeared from the village.

A very large, and very old and damaged, oak tree was felled last Saturday. No one likes to see any trees being taken down but following from the various storms of late, the old oak tree was deemed to be unsafe so, for that reason, and that reason only, the local landowner had it taken down.

The large tree stump remains as this will be home for various bugs and wildlife and in itself will be a landmark in that part of the village.

At some time in the future we will be having restoration works carried out on Gallows Green.

Another huge tree came down in recent storms, which lies in the middle of the pond, but, having had it checked by our tree surgeon, it is perfectly safe and can, if we so chose, be left there.

We will not carry out any work on the Green until the time is right and taking into account any nesting birds that may be present.

Lastly, we are now fast approaching our Queens amazing Platinum Jubilee and the celebrations we are planning to hold in the village will all fall on the Saturday of the Jubilee weekend. We are deliberately focusing our events on one day in order that other organisations can schedule their celebrations so we do not clash with each other. Also I'm sure many of us will be having our own family celebrations and possibly even attending one of the planned events in London.

I must emphasise that our meetings are open to the public and I would encourage anyone to come along and see the workings of local government.

