

**Chairman's Report for the year 2018/19**

I am pleased to present my report on the past year's activities of The Kirby-Le-Soken Village Preservation Society.

Like everywhere else in the Region, Kirby has had to absorb a large amount of residential development and we have yet to see the impact that this will have as most of the housing that has been approved and would directly affect this village, is not yet built. However, the Village is still threatened by more planning applications and I have no doubt that we will see many of these being approved in future – certainly whilst there is still no local development plan in place. Villagers can take some comfort however, from the recent outcome of an appeal against the earlier rejection of an application to build up to 85 houses on land to the West of Edenside. This was dismissed mainly on the grounds that if permitted it would diminish the “green gap”. This is good news as we have argued strongly in the past that the open spaces between Kirby and its' neighbouring villages, should be preserved at all cost. Once the long-awaited Local Plan is adopted, it should be clearer where future development would be permitted. In the meantime, we will continue to oppose any proposals which we feel would have a detrimental effect on the Village

Traffic levels through the Village seem to have significantly increased, particularly when there are roadworks or temporary traffic lights on the top road. Building contractor movements and the increasing number of residents also influence traffic levels. This is concerning as both the Halstead Road and Martello developments are a long way from completion, but when they are, all the resultant traffic will have to go through either Kirby-le-Soken or Kirby Cross.

Last year John Anderson kindly addressed the AGM and explained how much money needed to be raised in order to carry out urgent repairs to St Michaels Church and avoid the building becoming unsafe to use. There has been a strong response and the work is well under way. John has agreed to provide an update on the progress of the restoration, following the formal business of this meeting. This Society does not benefit from much in the way of annual income apart from what is donated by each year by attendees of the AGM. However, the Committee was still able to pledge £1,000 from its now depleted reserves, towards the church appeal. We also conducted a simple survey in order to gauge local opinion, as to whether some of the funds currently held on behalf of the Village by various trustees, should be put towards the church restoration appeal. Whilst this did prove to be somewhat contentious for some people, the outcome was overwhelmingly in support of the church appeal. I am pleased to report that the Kirby Enhancement Fund (AKA Childrens Playground Fund) has made a donation to the St Michaels appeal.

In the coming year, The Society will continue to lobby for better road maintenance including the repair of potholes, cutting back of roadside hedges and replacement of broken or missing road signs. For some time, we have been asking for priority guidance at the Western entrance to the Village where the road narrows to almost a single carriageway and we now understand that at long last a feasibility study as to how best solve the issue, is being initiated.

At last years' AGM we appealed for someone with IT skills and who cares for the Village to come forward and assist with running the Village Website but so far nobody has. Victoria Burgoyne has continued to maintain and update the website, but she never

intended taking on the job in the first place and still needs to share the task. There must be someone out there with relevant skills and the time to be able to assist. If you are interested or know someone who might be, please let us know.

I am grateful to my colleagues on the Committee for all their time and input over the past year. However, our Committee is in urgent need of new blood and in particular, I know that Chris Heal who continues tirelessly to carry out her Secretarial duties would welcome some help or the opportunity to hand over to someone else altogether. I must also mention Robert Bucke who has for many years served as a local councillor as well as serving on this Committee. Robert has recently given up his local council activities, but I am pleased to confirm that he is prepared to continue as a KVPS Committee member, which means that this society will continue to benefit from Roberts vast local knowledge and understanding of the inner workings of Local Council

Over the past three years we have been using the excellent meeting facilities at Walton and Frinton Yacht Club, for which we are very grateful, however, due to changes at WFYC this is no longer practical and we shall be holding future committee meetings at The Ship. We hope that by using this new venue it will spark more interest in The Preservation Society and inspire others to become involved.

David Wood (Chair KVPS)