

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
24 April 2018
REPORT BY CHAIR OF MENDLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Cllr Mike Exley

This time last year, the meeting included a presentation regarding completion of our **Neighbourhood Plan** (still the only one in Mid Suffolk District Council). However by June 2017, it became clear with further guidance from Government, the lack of a five year housing supply at MSDC and the planning applications either received or rumoured forthcoming for Mendlesham, plus as seen in neighbouring parishes, that we needed to revise the plan to specifically allocate land sites for the future growth of Mendlesham until 2036 which will also tie in with the forthcoming Babegh/MSDC Local Plan.

Fortunately Pete Dawson was still willing to be involved, with Terry Moore volunteering towards the end of the summer so with Parish Councillors, the steering group continues.

Following consultation in October, it has become very clear what the residents of Mendlesham want and where. The details can be found on the Mendlesham web site. There is a formal process to follow, which is underway, which will include further formal consultation and legal processes to be completed.

With the completion of Station Fields, permission granted for Old Engine Meadow and some smaller development sites, we can demonstrate that Mendlesham is not anti development and has delivered the housing expected of us under the existing Neighbourhood Plan. However, this has been achieved within the first few years of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan which covers the period to 2031. There is only so much that a community can cope with in a short period of time, so any new development will need to deliver what the community needs and within phased timescales.

Our Neighbourhood Plan and revised plan will help us to support the needs of Mendlesham and places us in a position of strength, particularly compared to those without a NP. However, nothing is guaranteed with planning, so as a Parish Council we will also need your help by attending Parish Council meetings for particular applications and providing your thoughts to both MSDC and Mendlesham Parish Council. Please also note we also have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor- perhaps someone interested in the wider picture rather than a particular development near their home. Any Parish Councillor or the Parish Clerk would be delighted to discuss this further as required.

Neighbourhood Planwork and general planning work has taken up much of our time as a Council this year, but other work continues:

Playingfields: we have projects ongoing to improve the equipment at Mendlesham Green and the working party for the Mendlesham Playingfields continues to work on the spend further to the S106 monies available from Station Fields.

Football Pitch.

I am pleased to say that dugouts were moved and the new pitch was used and played upon this season .

Community Centre:

Working in partnership with the school, the building has benefited from new external doors, improved security lighting and installation of CCTV. This year, there will be more premises work which will benefit the Community Centre, which Tessa Sait will detail in her school report this evening.

We have a new Community Centre Co ordinator, Rachel Brown, have put booking availability on our web site and have a parish council working party working on administration and premises improvements.

Mendlesham Green telephone box: the defibrillator is on order and volunteers have been found to replace the glass and paint the box.

Future:

So what next?

We will continue to receive planning applications and need to make sure as far as we are able, that new development is suitable, provides additional facilities for the residents, but also protects our valuable assets, including the School and Health Centre.

We have commissioned a Housing Survey and are waiting for a report. Once received, options will be considered as to how we can locally influence provision of suitable housing to meet Mendleshams needs.

Community:

We have some wonderful organisations in Mendlesham , looking after the young, older residents, the religious needs of our community and providing sporting, educational and social activities. The earlier presentations about the new clubs and organisations demonstrate that Mendlesham grows in many ways and is a wonderful place offering many things which are so important to our quality of life.

Many other individuals are also just quietly doing their bit for the community. You know who you are, your work is much appreciated Thank you.

Parish Councillors, I would like to say thank you for the valuable and often unseen and unsung work that you do, and on a final note most of you ,probably have noticed that you are seated on rather more comfortable chairs than last year . This was due to the generosity of MSDC , who when clearing the building in Needham Market allowed Parish and Town councils to freely benefit and recycle some of the furniture and stationary which was going spare ,we have of course already thanked them for their generosity .

Mike Exley, Chairperson of Mendlesham Parish Council .