

# **District Cllr Report Battisford and Ringshall Ward**

## **Barking, Battisford, Great Bricett, Offton, Ringshall, Willisham**

**Submitted by Councillor Daniel Pratt for April 2020**

### **Public Realm**

In March I met with the Head of Public Realm to discuss opportunities for restorative planting on council-owned land at Castle Lane and St Mary's Close in Offton. At Castle Lane, we discussed a low-level tree planting scheme to maintain access to the waste treatment facility and deter fly-tipping on the Channel verge. For the land north of St Mary's, a range of options were proposed including a reduced mowing regime and planting of fruit trees. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 outbreak means that Public Realm team have been reassigned and consultation with Offton and Willisham Parish Council and residents will be postponed until further notice.

### **Ringshall Community Orchard**

In February, a team based in Ringshall planted 15 fruit trees including apple, pear, plum and cherry to establish an orchard free for the community to use. A special thanks to the village hall committee, children from Ringshall Primary School and volunteers who helped. Trees were sourced from the orchard heritage project 'Orchards East'.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

Outline planning application for 35 new homes in Elmsett (Babergh DC) were refused after the planning committee decided it conflicted with the village's Neighbourhood Plan. This demonstrates how NP's can carry weight against proposals that are detrimental to the landscape of the village.

### **Bonfires**

MSDC have received a surge in bonfire complaints. With many people in lockdown and self-isolation, smoke from bonfires is likely to cause more annoyance or even breathing difficulties for those with respiratory issues. The District Council advises against lighting bonfires. If it is necessary to have a bonfire, please notify your neighbours to enable them to get their washing off the line and close their windows.

### **COVID-19 MSDC response**

Some district council-run services have been delayed or postponed, including the brown bin collection service. Covid-19 has affected us all in many ways and to this end the council can offer the following support: Grants are available to help small businesses and those in the retail, leisure or hospitality sectors: <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/news/payment-of-covid-19-business-grants-fund/>. The 'Home – but not alone' scheme has been set up to offer support and practical help during the Covid-19 crisis. Residents can contact the helpline on **0800 876 6926**. A Covid-19 emergency fund is now available to help community groups: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/news/emergency-funding-pot-available-to-help-local-community-groups/>

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