

## Report from your County Councillor, Cllr Steffan Aquarone



### Climate Emergency

The Liberal Democrats are asking the County Council to increase their action and visibility on the council's work on global warming. At the moment it is all rather inward looking, yet their current policy seems to have little effect or is not being considered when the council is making important decisions like the Western Link.

The leadership needs to make its ambition to make Norfolk as a whole Carbon neutral by 2030 much clearer. We are asking for a local climate action plan to be produced in collaboration with local partners and stakeholders that will help to bring the rest of Norfolk along with the Council.

There is also a lack of urgency. The refusal to call the crisis a climate emergency only makes this worse. It gives an impression that all is well when the reality is far from that.

The risk of the NDR becoming a coastal road as Norfolk floods due to the rise in the sea level becomes more of a possibility day by day.

### Holt Hall

The County Council decided to put Holt Hall on the open market, in spite of receiving a viable and funded business case from the Friends of Holt Hall during the period when the Asset of Community Value (AOCV) allowed a window for them to negotiate keeping it community use. I have been trying to get access to information that would allow me to assess the claim the council has made that they received better proposals during the moratorium period however the administration and the monitoring officer have concluded after lengthy exchanges that I have no right to inspect the correspondence that was entered into. I find their defence of this position problematic - I am not sure how they can reconcile the integrity of the AOCV with the claim that such correspondence is commercially sensitive.

Perhaps Friends of Holt Hall have genuinely been 'outbid' on both financial and community benefit by an as-yet unknown party. But I have no way of validating this hypothesis until such time as more information comes out - when it will likely be too late.

### Footpaths

I have had productive meetings with the CLA (Countryside Landowners Association), the NFU (National Farmers Union) and County Council footpath teams, and hope to be able to bring the first four sets of proposals forwards in the new year - to connect up properly signed, circular walks in each village. I'm keen to explore any village where I've not yet been out for a walk with local parishioners!

### Parish Council Attendance

It's extraordinary to think of the number of big events that have happened since the first lockdown. I'm pleased to say that in the Spring, one of mine will have moved forward to a new chapter and I'll be more able to attend in-person Parish Council meetings again. In the mean time, please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

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