

Annual Report to Fen Ditton Parish Council from County Councillor Claire Daunton

I am the county councillor for the Fulbourn Division, a colleague of County Councillor, Anna Bradnam whose Waterbeach Division includes most of the parish of Fen Ditton. The area of Fen Ditton that falls within my division is the Marleigh development and houses along the east side of Newmarket Road from Marleigh northwards

1. The general picture: the County Council has responsibility for adult social care, for many aspects of public health, for children's social care and well-being, for foster carers and children in their care, for many aspects of education including maintained schools, allocation of school places and for school transport. For the Library and Archive service, for the registration service, the coroner's service, elements of the waste service, large-scale planning applications involving minerals and waste; for energy and green investment projects; and of course, highways and transport.
2. What part have I been playing in all this? I sit on four major committees and four working groups at county level covering many aspects of the list above. Then there are a few extras. These include: the County Archives and Local Studies Group which, as a historian, I am very pleased to attend; and chairing The Library Presents committee which steers the excellent series of performances in Libraries. I'm also a county-appointed governor on the NHS Trust whose services include community mental health and mental health in-patient services in Fulbourn Hospital and the Cavell Hospital in Peterborough.

I mention all this because there is understandable confusion over who does what in local government (County, District, Parish, GCP, Mayor and Combined Authority) and because local government funding, particularly the lack of it, has been in the news very much of late. I work closely with my good colleagues at these various levels

3. Two thirds of the County's budget is spent on adult health and social care and children's services. Over the year, in these areas, we have allocated additional funding but also extended provision by extending the new approach I wrote about last year: the Care Together initiative. This brings together, on a very localised basis, private and public provision – health, social services, voluntary services, local private carers to offer to each individual in a small locality who needs care, something that is available to them locally and tailored to their needs. There is already much out there, but it can be much better coordinated and made available much more locally by people who are known locally.
4. This year in education and children's services, among many areas of work, two that I might mention are: in-depth examination of the provision for children

with special; needs, an area where much greater central funding is needed; and the provision of home to school transport.

5. Our Libraries play an important role across the county as centres of information and learning but also as places where people can go to meet each other, keep warm, join in events (music, art, craft) and conversations, pick up skills and make friends. Increasingly, they are also providing access to a wider range of council services and are an indispensable part of the county's work.
6. This year we put up the council tax 4.99%, the maximum, to deal with the huge increase in costs of care which must be found and to try to keep up levels of funding for school holiday meal vouchers for the most vulnerable and for extra support for children's mental health and of course to begin to make a dent in repairs to roads and footpaths. I am happy to give more detailed explanations on the county's budget for this year, since I know there are those who are concerned about value for money. We had to make savings but, with careful use of reserves, we are able to put very much needed additional monies into the areas mentioned above.
7. Following calls from the Local Government Association, central government set aside some extra money for roads this year, after the very wet autumn and winter which has caused havoc with road maintenance nationally. But Cambridgeshire's share is only £2.3 million. That does not go very far so we have put in an additional £5 million from reserves and added that to an additional £20 million from the budget. The roads all need rebuilding from beneath to cope with the huge increase in traffic. That won't happen but we can be, we are being, smarter about what we do: new machines, new techniques, better inspection of contracts, more training of staff and more flexible working to attract staff to work for the county filling gaps in the highways teams.

To more local issues:

I am a member of the Marleigh Steering Group and over the past year have attended and participated fully in all meetings of this group. The group has representatives from parish, district, county, residents and voluntary groups, The Land Trust management group and Locality, the community development organisation employed by the district council for Marleigh. Over the past year we have dealt with issues of: resident parking, contractor parking and noise, access to the school, opening of the shop and café, use of the park and ride, anti-social behaviour, community gatherings, communications concerning issues with water, expansion of Marleigh, transport. One of the issues I have been concerned with is the use of the park and ride both as short-term parking for parents dropping off and picking up from school, but also ensuring that everyone recognises the primary purpose of the space is to provide parking for those using the bus service.

It is worth noting as well that three bus routes serve Newmarket Road and therefore Marleigh: Nos 11 and 12 to Ely or Newmarket stop outside Marshall's and the park and ride stops in the park and ride site itself but also outside the airport.

I have also dealt with issues of grass cutting, road surfaces and lighting along Newmarket Road and worked alongside Cllr Bradnam concerning issues raised in respect of speed limits on High Ditch Road.

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