

## **Shotley Parish Council annual report**

It is never a dull year as a district councillor and that has been no different for me as your Ganges ward member since last we met for the annual parish meeting.

Babergh had a cabinet reshuffle due to a falling out between the Conservative Group, which led to leader John Ward and three other former Tories (Including Mary Stour ward's Mary McLaren) becoming Independent Conservatives, all four are standing as Independents in this election.

### **Vice chairman honour**

I became Babergh vice chairman and was thrown into the deep end with the chair on holiday I was immediately put into the hot seat and chaired my first full council in the role.

Council meeting aside, my role has been largely ceremonial and with Her Majesty the Queen's sad passing, the Chair still away I was in demand with various wreath laying ceremonies and church services.

Then it was the King's Proclamation, racing from Ipswich to Sudbury representing Babergh.

Subsequent duties included Shotley Remembrance Day, very poignant, other memorial services, museum visits and the Gay Pride march in Ipswich. All these allow me to promote Shotley and Erwarton to various dignitaries, groups and organisations within Suffolk.

All in all, an enjoyable and interesting time adding to my experience and contacts.

On top of this I continue to work on various committees including the AONB, Stronger and Safer Communities and the Suffolk Communities Partnership, which includes carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews.

### **Ganges progress**

As we can now see the progress at the Ganges site, or Barrelmans Point as the marketing people call it, has made tangible progress.

Along with some parish councillors I have been in close contact with the developers and our planning team and it is good to see promises being kept as the joint venture between Galliard and Wavensmere is delivering and they are proving to be considerate contractors, dealing promptly and effectively whenever I pass on issues brought to me by residents.

It is fabulous to see how well the restoration of the iconic HMS Ganges mast is going, mainly in Nelson Hall and seeing it back in place next summer is keenly anticipated.

Another nice touch was when we were able to work together to pin down the actual office signs that adorned the door when Maureen and Jane worked and Richard and I were able to present both with the originals with their names on.

The next phase will go before the planning committee soon, but what is already pleasing as the managing director confirming that the site once completed will be fully open for access to all, and that also goes for all the facilities which will be on offer. Talk of residents being excluded is total nonsense.

## **Erwarton**

Attempts to build new luxury homes in the farm yard next to Erwarton Hall were turned down at the planning committee twice.

I have been involved in helping and advising on various matters in the village, including the community plans to be by the Queen's Head.

Meanwhile, between us we secured the village's first dog in, on the public path down by the church. It may not seem much but these things matter.

## **Locality Awards**

After being the cabinet member that secured locality awards for Babergh councillors for the first time in the district's history, it has been good to see many ward members making the most of the £2,000 a year to help groups and organisations in their community.

For me this year, I was able to help the revival of Shotley Rangers youth football, Shotley Bowls Club, helping to secure the future of the Shotley pop up library, credit to Tom Veasey the musical librarian and everyone now involved with the Friends of Shotley Library and all the other grant providers, including my peninsula council colleagues Mary McLaren and Jane Gould, county councillor Simon Harley and of course the parish council.

Not needing to fund another project in Erwarton, as we found another way of doing it, meant I had a bit more to spend than originally thought so I was delighted to be able to help out the amazing Shotley Drama Group.

For an even wider perspective of what we have done at Babergh over this four-year term take a look at the [end of term report here...](#)

Happy to take any questions and as always I'm available to be contacted by email [derek.davis@babergh.gov.uk](mailto:derek.davis@babergh.gov.uk) or by phone 787375 or 07548 153784