

Castle Acre Parish News

The Parish Council (PC) met on 13 April for its usual monthly meeting, with one member of the public in attendance.

Priory Precinct Meadow. You may remember that Priory Precinct Meadow (extending out from the Priory, down to the ford and across to South Acre Road), was due to be leased by Norfolk Archaeological Trust (NAT) from the landowner, Holkham. However, the Trust postponed the change due to funding constraints post Brexit. Holkham intend to continue managing the grasslands by grazing sheep on the meadow. As dogs and sheep don't mix, Holkham is proposing to restrict access by fencing but within the footpath that runs parallel to South Acre Road and within the ditch parallel to the Nar, thereby allowing walkers to reach the gate at the west end that links to the double fenced path that runs round to Common Lane. Holkham are in negotiation with Historic England to share the cost of the fence as the latter wish to stop people visiting the Priory for free by climbing over the lower Priory wall from the meadow. However, Cllrs are aware that the criss-cross of paths over the meadow have been used by residents and dog walkers for many years, despite the paths not being designated as public footpaths and without an open access agreement. While accepting the direct path across the field would be blocked off, the PC intend to persuade Holkham to amend their plan further by installing a two metre wide double fenced path along the northern edge of the meadow, as well as round the Priory perimeter, to link, via the bridge, to the path by the Nar.

Bench at South Acre ford. One of the metal legs is broken and will be repaired before the summer.

Dog walking and bins. Residents are calling for more dog poop bins around the village, particularly near Minns Meadow, in addition to the current six that cost ratepayers £487 a year to empty. This capital expense and the increased emptying charge could be justified if dog owners always placed their bags into the bins but they often don't. There are full bags littering both roads and paths or even thrown into resident's gardens. This is unsightly and inconsiderate to others. It must stop. If dog poop is double bagged, it can be taken home and put into household black bins. Clearing up dog poop costs British taxpayers £2.3 million every year – dog owners have a legal requirement to clean up and safely dispose of their dog's waste. The PC will decide next month on whether to approve the purchase of one more bin and some bag dispensers.

Diary date. Tuesday, 2 May at 7.30pm in the village hall for the key public consultation event on the village's Neighbourhood Plan to highlight your views and issues about the future development of Castle Acre. Everyone is invited. There will be free refreshments!

To view past Council Minutes and finances, go to www.castleacre.info/parish_news.htm
The next Parish Council meeting is at 7.30pm on Thursday 11 May in the village hall, preceded by the Annual Assembly at 7pm – please come along.

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