

# Chairman's Report on the West Wratting Parish Council 2024-2025

This has been a second consecutive year of great change for West Wratting Parish Council (WWPC). During last year's May meeting Caughlin Ryder and Paul McKenna joined us as councillors, making up the full set of seven, then in July Cameron Biggs was employed as our new Clerk. All three have greatly strengthened our team - and to me it really does feel like a team that's working well together. We now have a clearly defined working group and committee structure to help with division of labor and assignment of responsibilities (see our [Terms of Reference](#) document). Cllrs. Ryder and McKenna now lead our working group for the village hall, so are on the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC), and have been a big help this year in setting up a good working relationship between the Parish Council, the VHMC and the developer's of Lamb's yard.

Cameron quickly became the backbone of the Parish Council, taking a great load from me and giving us a lot of support and advice over the year to ensure that we do things properly as a Parish Council. As I said in [my report from last year](#), I hoped that would make us a better Parish Council for the village - and I think it's working. In order to know what "properly" means Cameron went to training for new Clerks, and I'm sure avidly reads the latest addition of the "[big yellow book](#)" on Local Council Administration that we bought for him. In addition, all of the councillors have now attended the workshop for new councillors, which I think is a first for WWPC. Cameron also arranged for several of us to watch a series of 4 webinars on planning matters.

## Solar Farm

By canvassing the opinion of our parishioners with a [survey](#) back in September the Parish Council knew that the majority were against the proposed Kingsway Solar Farm development (78% against, 15% undecided, 7% for) - and that was before the threat to our rural landscape and community was increased with the addition of Henry d'Abo's land to the original plans. When that happened we arranged a private meeting with David Vernon - the developer's lead for the project - to try to get more information. From this, we were able to respond confidently in December to the [non-statutory consultation](#), saying that:

*West Wratting Parish Council objects to the solar farm and battery storage proposal as presented by Downing Renewable Developments in October 2024 because of its considerable adverse impacts on the landscape, visual amenity, and heritage of West Wratting and potential of harm from long term hazards.*

We also made many suggestions for improvements to the design<sup>1</sup> to try to reduce the impact it would have on our community. We won't know until this summer when the details of the design will be made public if our feedback will have made any difference.

Opposition to the development is an ongoing task for our parish council, and particularly its solar farm working group. I've been attending meetings of the local opposition group - Kingsway Solar Community Action (KSCA) - since its inception back in mid 2024, and I'm

---

<sup>1</sup> not prejudicial to our overall objection to the proposal.

now a member of its committee, acting as a liaison with local Parish Councils. I was able to arrange a [meeting with Pippa Heylings](#), our MP, for me, Cllr. Geoff Harvey from South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), and a member of the KSCA group. Because I believe opposition to the project will be more effective if we work together, I also arranged a [public meeting in Balsham](#) in December to introduce other Parish Councils to KSCA, to hear from the head of the Say No to Sunnica opposition group, and to propose the formation of a formal alliance of Parish Councils. Although that's not happened yet, we have been collaborating informally, most notably (so far) in helping other PC's to write their responses to the 400+ page [scoping EIA report](#), which the deadline forced us to do during the Christmas holiday period. Almost everyone on West Wratting Parish Council helped pull together a detailed response, much of which was copied by other PC's (with our blessing) and was even used to help Greater Cambridge Shared Planning write their own response.

We are now waiting for the details of the proposed design of the solar and battery farm to be made public in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEI or [PEIR](#)). That is due to land mid-summer in what is called the "statutory consultation" period. From what I've seen from similar projects the PEIR will be huge. For another solar farm proposed by Downing Renewable Developments ([Meridian Solar](#)) the PEIR has 16 chapters and over 100 appendices - and the Parish Councils will have just 6 weeks to make comments to the planning inspectorate!

When I remember and have the time I try to document our activity in this area to the village website's [Solar Farm](#) page.

## Traffic and Local Highway Improvement

On a more positive note, we heard in November that our bid for Local Highway Improvement funding was successful. This will pay - together with a contribution from WWPC - for road markings and gating at key entrance points to West Wratting that we hope will slow down some of the traffic that passes through our village. Members of our Road Safety and Highways working group met on-site with someone from the Highways Department back in January to discuss that work, and we are waiting to hear from them about when that work will be carried out.

As far as we know, our proposal for a footpath on Six Mile Bottom Road is also still on a waiting list at Highways for consideration. These things, we have to accept, all take time. Sometimes, however, we can take the initiative and get things done quickly. You may have seen the duck warning signs that we've just put up at either end of the stretch of High Street where a mother duck and her ducklings tend to cross. This was prompted by a request from a concerned parishioner at the last PC meeting in March, and it's already been done!

Also on a positive note for wildlife, in January the Parish Council approved taking on ownership of the Wildlife Area that will be constructed as part of the Lamb's Yard Development.

The Parish Council would like to thank the parishioners who show interest in what we do, and who attend the Parish Council meetings. In particular, a big thankyou to Cobby for his attention to the footpaths and litter picking, and to the people who are not on the Parish Council but help on our working groups and planning committee.