

# Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 2023

## Supporters Against Fressingfield Expansion (**SAFE**)

**SAFE**'s primary objective is to oppose unsustainable development in our village which is not consistent with the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

**SAFE** was established in 2017 to object to three major housing developments totalling over 200 houses with, what would have been, the consequent overdevelopment of Fressingfield. A person-to-person survey - undertaken by **SAFE** - at that time showed that most residents were opposed to these proposals. The applications were refused.

Some developments such as Red House Farm and School Lane with the Baptist Chapel were approved before the inception of **SAFE**.

Information and communication of planning Issues are important aspects of **SAFE** activity. Our website is important in this respect and has been well received by villagers. It has had over 24,300 visitors. To make access to our website easier, we have a new web address - [www.fressingfieldsafe.co.uk](http://www.fressingfieldsafe.co.uk) [www.fressingfieldhousing.org](http://www.fressingfieldhousing.org) can still be used or you can Google 'Fressingfield safe' and it will be displayed.

There has been a plethora of government policies on planning and some of these are summarised on the **SAFE** website. These include the Norfolk and Suffolk devolution deals. These plans give County Councils greater control over housing and regeneration. A national planning policy for housing was first mooted in 1995 and updated in 2017. Recently it has been resurrected in the Levelling Up Bill. Proposed changes in December 2022 should rebalance the planning system and give local communities more say about development. The ability of developers to 'land bank' would also be reduced.

**SAFE** has made submissions responding to consultation on several of the policy proposals.

Modifications to the Draft Local Plan for Mid Suffolk opened for consultation on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023. **SAFE** will review this document. Fressingfield is again confirmed in the Draft Local Plan as a *Hinterland* village, capable of sustaining only limited development.

Because of the NDP, planning applications are for smaller developments. On a personal basis, members of **SAFE** have reviewed these on a case-by-case basis. Conformity to the NDP, building within the settlement boundary and sustainability are still important criteria for planning approval. We are also very aware of the effects on the environment - more water pollution and shortages, decreasing green spaces and reduced biodiversity. Current planning approvals come with increasing 'conditions' and we aim to support residents in the hope of these being complied with, and enforced if necessary.

**SAFE** is considered as an interested party in planning applications. The chair of **SAFE** was invited to participate in a peer review of the planning department at Mid Suffolk District Council. The full review can be accessed on the **SAFE** website.

Many villagers will be aware of the significant problems of sewage overflow and flooding over many years. Members of **SAFE** have persevered in recording and photographing these events and sending the records to various authorities - in particular Anglian Water. Our chair and the CEO of Anglian Water had long term and helpful dialogue on the problem and at the end of 2022, a new inner liner was inserted into the existing sewer thereby preventing the ingress of surface water. The aim of these changes is to reduce the volumes in the foul only sewer and reduce sewage egress. A period of time will be necessary to assess the effectiveness of these measures.

**SAFE** does not wish to oppose **all** development in the village but supports the building of the **right** homes in the **right** places and for them to be of good and appropriate design. We will continue to highlight infrastructure deficiencies in a polite, rational, and objective way.

On Behalf of **SAFE**

30.3.23

Members

John Castro, John Kelsall, Pam Castro, Warren Albers, Judy Cantrill, David Jacobs, Elizabeth Manero, Abi Maydon, Paul McCann, Michael Miles, Jenny Morris Bradshaw.