

Throughout the past year I have tried to attend as many Parish Council meetings as I can, and Highways issues have again taken up most of my time, with funding being the main reason for delays in finding solutions.

Last May, I was appointed to the Suffolk County Council Scrutiny Committee, which has meant a lot of extra work, particularly reading lengthy reports prior to the meetings. We have dealt with a number of controversial items, such as the Budget setting process, including the changes to the Citizen's Advice Bureaux Funding, Home to School Transport changes, and the relocation of the Suffolk Records Offices in The Hold on Ipswich Waterfront.

I was also appointed as a substitute member of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel last May, which has involved quite a lot of training before I could take part in any of the meetings. Gang culture and the County Lines Drug problems have been major topics we have had to scrutinise.

I am still on the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Pension Board as an employer representative, and as Suffolk County Council Armed Forces Champion I have attended numerous meetings of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Board, and the East Anglian Army Reserve Force and Cadet Association. I was also very pleased to accompany the Suffolk County Council's new Chief Executive Officer, Nicola Beach, on a visit to RAF Honnington, and further visits are being planned for later this year to Wattisham Flying Station and Rock Barracks at Woodbridge.

During 2018, we commemorated the 100th Anniversary of the Signing of the Armistice, which ended the First World War. Since April 2017, I was pleased to serve on the Lord Lieutenant's Centenary Commemoration Committee, and helped organise 5 major events across the County. The first was a Naval Parade and Service which took place in Lowestoft on October 7th. Then on Sunday 4th November we held a Service at Bury Cathedral, called the Crimson Glory Service, where local school children participated with singing and poetry. This was followed by another service at Bury Cathedral on Wednesday 7th November, called the Eve of Peace Service, which was attended by representatives of all the Military and Civil Leaders in the County, as well as Veterans organisations and Charities, and relatives of WW1 casualties. The following day, Primary School children from across the County laid Poppy Crosses and Commemorative Plaques on all of the 1332 WW1 Commonwealth War Graves across the County. It was a major task, implemented by members of the Royal British Legion, Churches, Schools, Parish Councils and members of the public.

The final event was the Remembrance Day Services held across the County on Sunday 11th November, where record numbers of people turned out to mark this very significant event. As Chairman of Ipswich branch of The Royal British Legion I have been responsible for organising the Remembrance Day Service in Christchurch Park for the past 12 years, and it was estimated we had up to 10,000 people present in the park for the Service. I had given notice that I wished to retire as Chairman at the end of 2018, and I certainly went out on a high, as we had not previously experienced such a high turn out for the Remembrance Day Service. Following the Service I had to dash up to London, as I was very honoured to have been asked to represent Suffolk at the Service of Thanksgiving held in Westminster Abbey that evening, in the presence of the Royal Family.

During the past year I have been pleased to support local groups by funding various projects in Carlford Division. These have included traffic calming measures, and the provision of play equipment, and I hope they will all improve the lives of residents.