

Land adjacent to 7, Lock Close, Debenham.

There have been many letters and emails to Debenham Parish Council, Mid Suffolk District Council's Councillor and myself as Suffolk County Councillor about the fence construction adjacent to 7, Lock Close, Debenham.

The overall clamour is for this piece of land to be categorised as a "Village Green" and therefore incapable of being enclosed.

As Suffolk County Council is responsible for awarding the status of "Village Green", I have taken it upon myself to enquire how land qualifies for such a description. This is what I have been told:

"It would be necessary for the application to be accompanied by evidence that the land has been used by a significant number of the inhabitants of a locality or a neighbourhood within a locality as of right for lawful sports and pastimes for 20 years. I have produced a form which I can make available to anyone who asks for it."

*"I would like to stress that **registration as a village green does not affect ownership**. If the land is eventually registered as a village green, it will be owned by the same person who owns it now. If the land is deemed to be owned by the Crown now, that will still be the case after registration. The land will not become publicly owned simply by virtue of registration."*

So this is what I have learnt and I have obtained copies of the "Evidence Form" mentioned above and given them to the Parish Council for use as they see fit.

Cllr. Eddy Alcock, Thredling Division, Suffolk County Council

As District Councillor I write regarding the construction of a fence adjacent to 7, Lock Close Debenham.

When the development was originally built it was with the open spaces provided and it was envisaged that these grassed open areas would be adopted by the local authority. However because the Developer's Company was dissolved under Section 585/595 Companies Act 1985, the land reverted to 'The Crown'.

Mid Suffolk District Council have maintained these areas on the Estate for the last 20 years or more, even though they do not own the land.

Because the gentleman concerned is changing 'the use' of the land MSDC can now get involved from a planning point of view. The gentleman has sought, and been given advice, and been told he would need planning permission for the change of use. This would not change the ownership. He is now, I understand, going down the planning route/

In the meantime I have arranged for, and it has now been served, a 28 day stop notice to be put in place.

It is for the Suffolk County Council to consider a 'Village Green Status'. That I understand is where the Parish Council's view and desire (and that of many residents) stands and I understand are pursuing.

Mrs Kathie Guthrie, MSDC Councillor - 29 May 2009
