

WIGGENHALL ST GERMANS PARISH

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23rd May 2022 at 7.00PM, CONVENED IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, WIGGENHALL ST GERMANS.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Rob Keal (Chairman), Margaret Blackburn, David Rust, Robert Ward, Scilla Ash, Bob Rawlings and Cllr Margaret Bunkall.

Parish Clerk: Mike Inder.

Borough & County Councillors: None

Apologies: County/Borough Cllr Brian Long, Mrs Katherine White (Ladies Group),

Public: 6.

1. **Introduction and Welcome:** Cllr Rob Keal welcomed everyone present.
2. **Selection of Chairman:** Cllr Rob Keal invited nominations to Chair the Meeting, there were no nominations or volunteers, so he offered to continue as Chair and it was agreed.
3. **Apologies** were received as noted above with reports submitted in advance.
4. **Minutes of the previous meeting** held on 25 Apr 2021 were reviewed and Cllr Keal proposed them as true reflection. Those present at the previous meeting agreed.
5. **Report from the Parish Council:** Cllr Rob Keal gave his report of the Parish Council's activity since the last meeting. Report included at Annex A.
6. **Reports from County and Borough Councillors:** none received.
7. **Reports from Local Organisations:** Community organisations were invited to attend and/or provide a report:
 - a. Mrs Katherine White provided a report from the Ladies Group, read out by the clerk (Annex B)
 - b. Mrs Margaret Blackburn gave a report on behalf of the Bowls Club (Annex C).
8. **Public Forum**
 - a. A resident raised a concern about the state of the verge adjacent to 55 Sluice Road, the lack of a tarmac driveway whilst the garden is used for off-road parking was causing the path to be extremely muddy and slippery in wet weather. The clerk stated this was a known issue that was already being addressed and Cllr Bob Rawlings provided an update on his work to find which authority is responsible for the verge. Both the County and Borough Councils stated that it was not theirs, however, contact with Freebridge resulted in them saying they would program it for a driveway to be installed in this financial year. This is on the Parish Council's list of outstanding work to monitor and hasten when appropriate.
 - b. Disappointment was expressed at the apparent lack of co-ordination for the Platinum Jubilee between community groups and the Parish Council. A discussion took place with views exchanged regarding how the Parish Council might show more leadership to promote ideas and support events, that was rebuffed in part as there had been 'Hub and Spoke' correspondence between the PC and individual organisations but overall it was accepted that the PC could do better with the caveat that the Parish Council is not an entertainments cttte, nor the sole arbiter of good ideas; if members of the public approached the PC with ideas then they could be supported in organising and fund-raising to hold them. The PC would look at taking more of lead in future and co-ordinating between various groups and organisations, but that should not preclude them from co-ordinating between themselves.

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- c. A resident asked if it was possible to attract a more diverse cross section of the community to serve on the Parish Council as it was predominantly senior citizens. The Council responded that efforts had been made about 5 years ago to form a Youth Council, but it had not sustained support from the younger generations, thought to be due to their proposal for more exciting play equipment not being taken forward. Pre-pandemic the Council was revisiting youth engagement and that remains a challenge for the Council. It was also suggested that a more direct approach to local businesses for them to promote the Parish Cllr role to their staff might be mutually beneficial. The clerk gave a brief insight into other initiatives being started by other tiers of local government and Norfolk ALC to try and attract or enable young families who may have childcare, financial or work/life balance limitations deterring them from taking an active interest, the PC continues to follow those initiatives and agrees that wider representation would be good but that we can't force people to step forward.

The Chairman thanked those present for their contributions and closed the meeting at 7.53pm.

Signature:

Chairman

Date

Prepared by Mike Inder, Clerk to Wiggshall St Germans Parish Council.

2021/2022 PC Chairman's report

I would like to welcome everyone to our annual meeting. The last twelve months have seen a continuation of various challenges both within the Parish and wider. I would like to thank our parish council members, our esteemed clerk and the parish as a whole for both their efforts and support in continuing to try to maintain and improve our parish. I think that everyone would agree that the return to 'in person' meetings is a welcome step forward, with increased public involvement during the meetings.

Our final set of accounts for the year have been compiled by Mike Inder, reviewed by the auditors and should shortly be published. Whilst rising costs are a particular concern, the conversion of all of the parish owned streetlights to LED lighting has already demonstrated a reduction in the operational costs and should hopefully minimise the impact of rising energy costs. Looking further ahead, the Parish Council have been in consultation with parties looking to improve the sustainability of energy.

Whilst there are still some areas that the parish council is focussing on to try to make improvements, the last 12 months have seen good progress.

- The installation of CCTV at the Leonard Towler Playing Field Pavilion is complete and operational (thanks to the support of the AFC Lynn), allowing the police to hopefully identify any persons involved should be experience any further anti-social behaviour or vandalism
- The local school has recently carried out a speed awareness project with anonymously donated prizes awarded to 3 of the pupils for their poster designs, keep a look out for the posters. In addition, a steering committee is starting up to specifically focus on road safety on School Road. Whilst the SAM2 speed sign is currently with the manufacturers needing some repairs it should be back in use shortly
- We have secured parish partnership funding to help pay for a trod on the corner of Fitton road to improve safety for pedestrians
- A second defibrillator has been acquired and is being installed at the bowls club
- As previously highlighted, the funding for cutting grass and verges has been reduced and as such we ask for people assistance in monitoring and advising if any areas are areas of concern with the reduced maintenance

As a Parish council we do currently have vacancies for any members of the parish that feel they can make a positive contribution to the community.

I hope that the following year allows us to continue to serve our Parishioners to the best of our ability.

Cllr R Keal
Chairman

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St Germans Ladies Group report for 21/22

We had our "Welcome back after Covid" meeting in September at the Crown & Anchor pub in the village which proved to be quite a success as it included "retired" members, current members and guests which made a diverse group and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The next couple of month's were a bit rocky with another Covid scare around Christmas which meant we had to cancel our planned Carol Concert and Buffet event in December but we were back in good heart again in January. Our numbers did drop initially, due to lassitude after Covid but I'm pleased to say we are once again back up to 20. We have extended our membership to ladies in the surrounding villages and this has met with some success and the Group is now quite varied. Though we would like to increase numbers it has been decided that a top number of 25 members would be ideal. No too small but not too large to become "faceless".

There have been several interesting events so far this year, Alex Harrison of Harrison's Chocolatiers gave an amazing demonstration and talk which went down (literally) very well with the Group. Lisa Palmer-Silcock's Gentle Chair Based Yoga was another great success, so much so that Lisa has organised a regular Chair Yoga session on a Monday each week at the Village hall commencing on June 6th 10:00am to 11:00. £5.00 per session with refreshments included - a real bargain we think.

We have seen Pippa May of Norfolk Befrienders, an excellent demonstration of soap making from David Press and an evening fashion parade at Edinburgh Wool Mills in Kings Lynn was most enjoyable.

Planned events are: Ascot Ladies Day with "Gambling and hats"; Derek Russell talking about his experiences as an Elvis impersonator; your very own Mike Inder discussing how the Parish Council works and how we can all assist in its smooth running.

There are two special Open Events planned also this year, to which anyone who is interested can come along to at a guest fee of £2.50: (i) a talk about the renovation of the Baden Powell by Tim Clayton; and (ii) the Randall Revival (the Lost Stories). Arthur Randall is a Magdalen born author who's pieces about our villages (researched and collated by Gordon Phillips) will be read, with the assistance of local children.

The Randall Revival is quite a coup for us and we really hope that there will be a good uptake from people in the local villages to come along for this event. Gordon Phillips has won Lottery funding for this project and proposes to produce free booklets containing these stories for local distribution shortly after this event.

As we will need to know numbers for these events please e-mail Katherine White at karcwhite@talktalk.net for information and dates on these two events.

Last but not least, we were able to contribute a small amount towards the tree which has been planted to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and are assisting (in a small way, albeit in the background) the Sunshine Club with their Jubilee Fete which is to be held on 3rd June.

Katherine White
Chair

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Annex C

Report from: Wiggshall Bowls Club

The Bowls Club opened the green for the 2022 season on Good Friday. The Club is taking part in 4 leagues this season, the only victim of post-pandemic times being the Club Pairs competition, as not enough people were available this year to make it feasible. We hope that next season we will be able to run it again.

We are having our regular Saturday afternoon 'roll-ups' over the summer, weather permitting. We gather at around 2 p.m. and continue until around 4 p.m. These sessions are open to members and visitors. Complete beginners are particularly welcome to come along and have a go.

Over the winter months we held our weekly Wednesday evening carpet bowls sessions in the St. Germans Memorial Hall. There were no competitions to enter, as many clubs were not fully back into operation, but it gave us a chance to get back into the swing of playing, and plans are in hand to return to normal over 2022-23.

The Club also managed to hold the annual Christmas Bingo in December 2021, in spite of the uncertainties at the time about covid and safety. We adjusted the arrangements for use of the village hall, and in the event it was really successful, lots of people came, the raffle was well supported, and thanks to all our helpers all went well. In fact, the revised arrangements worked so well that the Club has decided to continue in the same way in future. The Club would particularly like to thank the local businesses who kindly gave us raffle prizes - Crown & Anchor, Evergreens, Flower Corner, St. Mary's B&B and Timpson's.

We are planning to have a tombola and children's lucky dip stall at the Jubilee celebrations on 3rd June, and on 26th June we shall have our annual Open Day, welcoming visitors and encouraging anyone interested to come and meet us.

Margaret Blackburn
Secretary
Wiggshall Bowls Club

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