

## WIGGENHALL ST GERMANS PARISH

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10th MAY 2023 at 7.00PM, CONVENED IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, WIGGENHALL ST GERMANS.

**Present:**

Parish Councillors: David Rust (Chair), Robert Ward, Scilla Ash, Bob Rawlings, Tony Park, David Johnson, David Harrison (arrived during item 8).

Parish Clerk: Mike Inder.

Borough & County Councillors: None.

Apologies: Mark Wright (PCC), Margaret Blackburn (Bowls Club)

Absent: Cllrs Rob Keal and Margaret Bunkall.

Public: 6.

1. **Introduction and Welcome:** Cllr Rust welcomed everyone present.
2. **Selection of Chairman:** In the absence of the current Chair, Cllr Keal, Cllr Rust 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 23 May 2022 were reviewed and Cllr Rawlings proposed them as true reflection, seconded by Cllr Ash. Those present at the previous meeting agreed.
5. **Report from the Parish Council:** In the absence of Cllr Keal there was no report available. However, his report in the Spring 23 Newsletter provided a summary of the PC's successes and aspirations.
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 Margaret Blackburn sent a report on behalf of the Bowls Club (Annex A).
  - b. Mr Mark Wright sent a report on behalf of the Church (Annex B).
  - c. Mr Karl Anthony of the Bridge for Heroes Charity gave a presentation on the work of the charity with the theme of helping the Parish Council and other Parish Organisations to help them in helping veterans in dire need. The Charity has grown in its ability to support veterans and the wider community and whilst still focusing on the mental health aspects and providing 'soft handing' support (new terminology that better describes the hands-on approach to their work rather than 'signposting'), they also provide other wellbeing support and activities. Information cards were left for distributing in the community.
8. **Public Forum**
  - a. A resident mentioned that the house repairs that are required following the collision by a lorry last year has been further delayed as the NCC has not arranged a road closure for the work to be carried out yet.
  - b. A resident raised the issue of the locked MH playing field gate to the School Lane and the School gate. The matter is currently being handled by the PC with a view to helping resolve the dispute and it was suggested that the PC meeting that followed was the best time to cover the matter.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initial)

The Chairman thanked those present for their contributions and closed the meeting at 7.35pm.

Signature: .....

Chairman .....

Date .....

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

**Annex A**

Report from: Wiggenhall Bowls Club

The Club is up and running again in 2023.

Carpet bowls took place in the regular weekly sessions over the winter of 2022-3 in the St. Germans Memorial Hall, and we had an increase in bowlers for this indoor game, which was very encouraging.

The Club held the annual Christmas Bingo and Raffle at the end of 2022, and in spite of competition from the weather and the Football World Cup we had a decent turnout, and it was another successful and fun evening. We much appreciate the generosity of the local businesses who donate prizes for the Raffle,

We have also this year had most welcome new sponsorship from 3 local businesses, Evolve Security, Ryan Style, and Emneth Service Station, whose notices will be displayed at the Clubhouse in Mill Road, St. Germans. In view of the rising cost of just about everything, we are even more grateful for all the support.

For our current outdoor bowling season, we opened the green on Easter Sunday, and also held an Open Day on 30<sup>th</sup> April especially targeted at people who hadn't bowled before. We had a few takers and together with Club members to help and explain we had a very enjoyable afternoon.

We have put together teams to enter 4 leagues, and this year we are running the Club Pairs competition, so what with all that and the regular Saturday afternoon informal roll-ups open to all it's a very full programme from now until September.

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July we shall have our annual Open Day, welcoming visitors and encouraging anyone interested to come and meet us.

Margaret Blackburn  
Secretary  
Wiggenhall Bowls Club

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initial)

**CHURCH REPORT for PARISH ANNUAL MEETING**

The Church continued, as it has for over 700 years, to be the spiritual heart of the village. It was open daily throughout the year for private prayer and visitors.

The daily Morning Prayer on weekdays included mentioning the sick by name while on Sunday mornings a variety of sung services were held with Evensong sung once or twice a month. Total attendances at services during the year exceeded 2700, well in excess of pre-Covid levels.

For most of last year we enjoyed the ministry of Revd Martin Dale who had run the East Marshland Benefice of which St. Germans is a part for over twelve years; however, he retired at the end of October. We are also grateful to Fr. Brian Redgers, a retired priest from Downham, Jo Chilvers and Lesley Best for leadership of Sunday services. Sadly, we had the resignation in August of our organist John Etherington due to ill health; as we have been unable to find a replacement for Sunday mornings music is provided on CDs which we have obtained from the Royal School of Church Music. James Trundle has kindly taken over playing for Evensongs, funerals and weddings. Special events during the year included a service and concert by Mervyn and Maria Futter for the Platinum Jubilee in June and the tolling of the bell and half-mast flag to mark the Queen's death in September when we had a Book of Condolence in the Church for everyone to sign.

The Annual Flower Festival and Open Gardens was held in July and will be repeated this year on 10/11th June with Open Gardens from 11 till 5 on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The usual Remembrance service was held in November. The Church hosted School services for main events during the year. A three-hour vigil was held to mark Good Friday and special services were held on Easter Eve and Easter Day.

The Church responded to the cost-of-living crisis by offering free lunches at the Crown and Anchor in September and January by kind permission of Chris and Chloe. Special Kids Afternoons were held in September, December and April in the Memorial Hall.

Sadly, the Church suffered two lead thefts over the winter and temporary repairs were executed immediately by members of the congregation; permanent repairs are to be undertaken shortly. The Church is also faced with major repair to the north aisle roof later this year if funding can be obtained.

The Church publishes a single-sheet Newsletter every month to cover both special events and regular activities like the Walk-and-Talk events, the Coffee Morning and Library services. It also published a monthly Pew Leaflet with details of all services. These are available by e-mail or by printed copies at the back of the church.