

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**HELD 23<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2024 AT 7.30PM**  
**IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Doyle (Chairperson), Cllr Smith and Cllr Wilson-Medhurst, Christine Coles (Parish Clerk) and eleven villagers

**1. Apologies**

Cllr Lucks, Cllr Rapp, County Cllr Reynolds and District Cllr McHugh

**2. To receive an Annual Report from the Parish Council**

The Chair gave the following report.

It has been quite a year for the village with some highs and lows, as we emerge from the depths of a long and wet winter the Parish Council are progressing as fast as we can with Highways for a better drain management plan and working towards a regular schedule of drain clearing to try and make sure the recent flooding of Moor Lane is not seen again.

The incredible annual show of daffodils in the village came at the same time, thankfully, as works finished on Little Forge in the centre of the village which is now looking much tidier but I did want to acknowledge just how disruptive the development has been for many villagers.

Nicky Smith put a lovely piece in the newsletter recently about what it means to be a good neighbour and the Parish Council would ask that we all try to follow the essence of the piece and spread a little 'love thy neighbour' through offers of help or simple acts of kindness.

We have had further issues with our historic church clock but after a recent visit from the repairs team Tim Catton on the PCC assured me he is well equipped now to help with the clock in the future, thank you Tim for your hard work with the church and your continued support around all things clock related!

While the summer of 2023 seems a long time ago the Parish Council kicked off proceedings by supporting a wonderful celebration for the King's Coronation at the village hall and then undertook the usual busy diary including the village show which was a huge success as usual!

Maintenance of the poleaxe and numerous projects to repair the white gates and other small projects saw us through to the Autumn. Our bio-diversity team were busy and we now have pretty and eco-successful wild-flower verges to show for their hard work, thank you Nicky Smith and Stella Darke as well as other members who volunteer their time.

We finally managed to place the permanent commemorative tree in the church yard to honour our late Queen's Platinum Coronation, a plaque will be added soon. Thank you Graham for sourcing and planting the lovely slow growing tree which will now become our permanent Christmas tree.

We are blessed with support from Sue Robertson who manages our website and the village email, such vital tools for us, thank you Sue!

We also have 2 thriving community What's App groups now, 'South Newington Cares' (a group for emergency communication) where villagers have called upon neighbours successfully for help and support on a few occasions, we also have the village chat group which is ripe with fun chatter and offers a window on the best of the village, a really positive community to be part of. Please contact Vanessa Doyle if you would like me to add you ([vanessanpc@hotmail.com](mailto:vanessanpc@hotmail.com)).

I would like to thank Anna Undasan for all the delicious bread and flowers she delivers to the Church Bench and also for enabling us to help with the Breadline project who run food banks in Banbury, fantastic work, what more can we do?!

The village continues to support and consider supporting a few positive neighbourhood initiatives, Dark Skies, (please see [darksky.uk](http://darksky.uk) for more info) being one and also a group of village volunteers have begun work on a community garden for a disabled villager; it is wonderful to see Numerous villagers coming together to work and impart their wealth of knowledge for all things garden related.

Thank you also to my Parish Councillors, your continued cheer-leading your well thought out, considered views are very much appreciated.

Thank you to those villagers that support us in the Parish Council by showing up to meetings, I try to make them quick and interesting. Peter Hudson; your recent planning support has been so useful this year!

This past year we have been greatly supported by really positive and useful help from Councillors Andrew McHugh and George Reynolds, help and guidance that has moved our needs and causes forward at a great pace, thank you both.

Lastly - Please can I thank Christine our treasured Parish Clerk, our time and efforts would be fruitless without all you do to pull us together!

### **3. Presentation of accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

The accounts are unaudited at this present time. Receipt totalled £11.7K and expenditure totalled £10K. This left an end of year balance of £12.5K split between two accounts.

The Parish Council receive a mowing grant from OCC. Mowing costs have gone up but the grant stays the same.

### **4. Open Forum**

A villager spoke about the damaged chevrons on the corner of the A361 near the Barford Road. They have been reported before. The Chair will report again.

A villager spoke about the drains. There are many still that are blocked, High Street and Green Lane. Gulleys are full and interconnecting pipes require regular flushing. This is not being done on a regular basis and could be the root of the overall problem.

A villager spoke about building and planning. On reflection after what has happened at The Little Forge, this should be used as a case study. If another big application is put forward a village meeting will be held. Many villagers objected whilst the work was being done. The Parish Council asked CDC to come to a meeting but they did not come.

This surprised the Parish Council as CDC attended a meeting a few years ago and spoke about using Parish Council's as an alert system.

Another villager spoke about North Oxfordshire Topsoil on Barford Road. The conditions are 12 movements a day between the hours of 7.30-5.30 Monday to Friday and 7.30 to 12.30 on a Saturday. They are continuously breaching these conditions. Complaints have been made to OCC who are aware. OCC have said a new application will be submitted in due course. A village meeting will be held when a new application is received.

There is a current retrospective planning application for The Little Forge to comment on. There are a couple of objections on the CDC planning portal. Villagers need to respond as individuals. A villager noted the work at the property has caused a lot of heartache over the last eighteen months. There is reference to the property in the Conservation Area Appraisal of 2014 as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. What is the point of these appraisals if the village are continuously ignored by Cherwell District Council. Villagers were unsure if Building Control ever came out to view the property. Ownership of the property was discussed but it has been placed on the market.

Another villager thanked the Parish Council for all their work. He asked if there are any plans to upgrade the Poleaxe. There is soil erosion by the football goal. The area was returfed five years ago.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.