

ALDBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 26TH APRIL 2017 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, ALDBOURNE****In attendance**

9 members of the Parish Council, Parish Clerk, Cllr. James Sheppard, and 15 members of the public

1. Introduction – Cllr. Peter Lawler

Cllr. Lawler welcomed everyone to the meeting. His report is below:

I would like to thank the members of the Parish Council for all their hard work over the last year, with a particular thanks to those members that will be retiring from the council in the near future. I am sorry that there will not be an election this year, in fact it is many years since we had enough candidates standing to call an election. I am one of the last few that can remember being elected. The last year has been dominated by green issues! The grass cutting contract did not perform well and although I had every sympathy with “Grass cutting Andy” as he is listed in my phone, I believe he had dramatically underestimated the amount of work and the diversity of the grass areas we have in the village. I am pleased that the new contractors seem to be performing well.

Another green area is the trees on the side of the Blue Boar on The Green. The Hawthorns were all showing signs of age and at least one had died completely. It was with some relief that when all were cut down it was obvious by the amount of rot in the stem that they would all have been dead within a year or 2. It will be great to see the Malus trees grow.

The last green area that has taken up a lot of parish time, and especially for those of us on the advisory committee which has met for many hours, is the Heads of Agreement for ARC to lease Palmers Field and Southward Lane field (otherwise known as the football field). I was especially pleased that the council agreed a 30 year lease on Palmers Field and hope the groups involved are pleased with this, it is a great vote of confidence by the P.C. and should enable to other parties that have declared an interest, like the Scouts and Guides and the Band, to start planing. Although of course any sub-leases will be subject to council approval.

I would like to acknowledge the great works by the volunteers in the village, especially Katie Thorp and her band for keeping the village clear, and helping the village to win the CPRE Best Kept Village Laurence Kitching Winner of Winners award. Also Keith Warren (known as The Colonel) for repainting anything he is asked to do, the last being the swings in Goddards Lane play area. I would again like to thank our excellent Clerk for the council, Karen Clay, and to my ever vigilant and tireless Vice Chair, Alison Edmonds. Without the two of them the village would be the poorer and I would not be have been able to function as the Chair for the last 3 years. I hope the next Chair has as good a support.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held Wednesday 27th April 2016

The Minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 27th April 2016 were unanimously accepted as correct

3. Parish Councillor reports**a) Cllr. Alison Edmonds – Play areas**

The three play areas Goddards Lane, Claridge Close and Whitley Road playing field have all been well used. The play equipment in both Claridge Close and Goddards Lane areas passed the annual safety inspection as well as the climbing bars on Whitley Playing Field. Thanks go to Keith Warren for repainting the swings in Goddards play area. The bins in Goddards are emptied by volunteers on a rota organised by Katie Thorp. At the moment each volunteer does it twice this year, but more volunteers would be most welcome. The bins in the other play areas area also all emptied by volunteers. Under the Wiltshire Dog Exclusion Order 2012 dogs are not allowed on any of the above play areas.

b) Allotments

The allotments cost just £6 to rent and currently there are 4 available.

4. Wiltshire Council Report

A copy of the report for Wiltshire Council is attached to these minutes

Cllr Sheppard was asked some questions:

When will The Garlings & Marlborough Road potholes be fixed?

In the Garlings the top layer of the tarmac is de-laminating whilst the surface below is actually very sound meaning the 'potholes' are not deep enough to require intervention. WC do have it on their list of roads requiring work, but it will not be carried out in this financial year.

There are some large potholes appearing in Marlborough Road, when will they be fixed?

WC have realised that just filling them is not cost effective, as they break up again within weeks.

Cllr Sheppard advised he is pushing for them to be fixed with patch fixing.

Is the raised path on Lottage Road likely to receive top priority this year?

Cllr. Sheppard could not guarantee that it would be but he will do his best to try and ensure something happens.

5. Reports by village organisations

a) DIG & Flood – Nick Josephy

DIG work with Thames Water, Wiltshire Council and the Environment Agency in order to improve the fresh water drains and sewers and so reduce the risk and severity of flooding and sewage contamination in the village. It has been a very dry winter with the bore hole only being 135mtrs above sea level. In 2014 it was at 144mtrs. Future winters may be wetter meaning the work of DIG is still very relevant.

The Flood Warden Team are appointed by the Parish Council to co-ordinate annual flood prevention measures and to deal with flooding events if they occur. They meet approximately every 3 months with the Operational Flood Working Group South which is organised by Wiltshire Council and brings together representatives of other villages situated in chalk downland who suffer the same sort of flooding issues that Aldbourn does, and staff from Wiltshire Council, the Environment Agency and water companies.

WC highways no longer automatically clear gullies every year. If possible they will be inspected every 2 years, but clearing will be restricted to gullies which are or could cause flooding of houses or roads where flooding would create a safety issue. They will however pay attention to the content of village flood plans in prioritising gully clearing, so the FWT are updating the village Flood Plan to highlight areas where blocked gullies are likely to lead to real problems (essentially in the lower lying parts of the village), so that these are on WC's priority clearance list.

Thames Water are currently putting together a groundwater infiltration reduction plan for the sewage system. This will not be completed for several years, but may eventually justify more expenditure on the village sewers.

A grant from SSE has been used to purchase a generator, two pumps and also some barriers that can be deployed should flooding occur.

It was noted that Wiltshire Council had spent £250,000 in 2015 on work to rebuild the culverts in parts of the village to help improve drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in the future.

Thanks expressed to the members of both groups for all they have done and continue to do.

b) ALEC – Vanessa Butler

The next ALEC play is taking place this week. The productions take a lot of time and effort to arrange, but everyone has great fun and they are always well attended. Anyone who is interested in acting or helping out back stage is always very welcome.

c) Aldbourn Band – James Sheppard

This year has been the bands most successful ever, and it continued to receive great support. Their trip to the Royal Albert Hall in October last year was well attended by two coach loads of supporters. Aldbourn certainly received the loudest cheers. The Band thanks them for their fantastic support. It is unusual for a band of the calibre of Aldbourn not to have their own band room. Thank you to all the groups that helped move things forward to make this much more of a reality now.

d) Memorial Hall – Alan Phizacklea

The hall continues to be very well used, but does cost £20,000 a year to maintain. Not all of this money can be made up from bookings, and hence fund raising events are also held throughout the year. The hall is very well equipped for all types of events and activities, Everyone is urged to book and use it as much as possible.

e) 5 – Aldbourn Community Heritage Group – Terry Gilligan

There are now over 120 members. Included in their membership fee is free admission to our monthly talks, and also having the privilege of being a voluntary steward at our brilliant Heritage Centre (not mandatory!). Our diverse monthly talks have included research on our village charities; 100 years of Aldbourn shops; WW2 troop movements in Aldbourn; What the Romans did for us; A Dabchick's sad end, including a Beatles connection to the village, and only this week, a great talk about Graffiti in our church. In 2016 we operated what is now our annual village Treasure Hunt; held an Antiques Roadshow type event, and hosted a tour of Americans on the Band of Brothers trail. This June 2nd sees a party of 80 coming over for our guided tour of the village, so please look out for us. We have also got very close to our local school, and have led walks around the village concerning the Great Fire; gave a pottery demonstration, the subject being the Aldbourn Cup, and took 50 or so children on a "flint walk" (courtesy of William Brown), some results of which are displayed in the Heritage Centre.

Visitor numbers at the Heritage Centre were up by more than 200 on last year. We change our displays each year, and this year you will see a more in depth history of our earliest bell founders, together with a bigger display of bells cast in Aldbourn; a history of Upham House; a history of Aldbourn pubs; a wider interpretation of the Enclosure Act; a sporting history; the history of the pond and legend of the dabchick, and a closer look at the 101st Airborne "Band of Brothers" in Aldbourn.

None of this comes for nothing! And we are indebted to Aldbourn Parish Council in allowing us to use the Community Room for a peppercorn rent. Our 2 main funding days came from our Antiques Roadshow day, and the Doggy Day, plus, of course our membership subscriptions. From this we have been able to purchase some artefacts "made in Aldbourn", and have started an acquisitions fund to further this aim. Anyone so inclined can contribute directly to this.

A full copy of the report provided by Terry Gilligan is attached to these minutes.

f) Dabchick – Terry Gilligan

The magazine is exactly that – a magazine and not a newspaper, although a lot of news will be published, thus giving future generations an insight into our diverse history. Every issue is held in the Heritage Centre, plus many back copies.

The Dabchick is funded almost solely by its advertisers, who we feel sure get great value, and also an occasional donation, such as the Carnival grant, and this is always welcome. We send many issues to ex-patriots, at home and abroad, and they are requested to give a donation of at least the postage. We are a non-political publication, and have no "interference" from the Parish Council, although we welcome their regular items. Indeed, I feel we have the wholehearted backing of the PC. A full copy of the report provided by Terry Gilligan is attached to these minutes.

g) Poors Gorse – Terry Gilligan

45 acres of land are rented out and the income from this is disbursed to anyone over the age of 65 who has lived in the village for more than a year. There is 1 payment made per household in November each year. 78 people received funds last year. Anyone who would like to receive this payment should contact Terry Gilligan.

h) St Michaels School – Kate McPhedran

The school received an outstanding OFSTED inspection in July last year. This was attributed to excellent teaching and exemplary pupil behaviour. There are 196 children on the school role, in 7 classes. 67% of pupils come from the catchment area. The school works closely with other local primary schools and has strong links with St John's to ensure a smooth transition for the pupils into secondary education.

There have been several changes of both teach and admin staff in the last year. There are now 11 teaching assistants, necessary because we have a high proportion (relative to the nation) of Special Educational Needs children who require special attention. Currently 16% of our pupils are on the register. Despite recent school funding cuts we are ensuring all our children are given the best opportunities to develop and learn.

We have recently been lucky enough to purchase a large TP which sits next to the Forest School on the school field. The children benefit immensely from learning outside and the wonderful qualified Forest School staff give children opportunities to build and create.

Our after school club Willows is now being run in the school for St Michaels' pupils and it is proving very popular. Children have a hot meal and relaxation time in a familiar and fun environment.

Claire Perry recently paid a visit to the school to run a small debate and be taken for a tour by two year 6 students. We welcome visitors and are always happy to arrange a tour.

A full copy of the school report is attached to these Minutes.

The following questions were asked:

What is happening with funding for the new building?

Planning is under way to extend the reception class and KS1 toilet/cloakroom area. One of the ways funding is being raised is a 'buy a brick' campaign. Anyone can purchase a brick and have a message put on it. This will then be put on display in the school.

What steps are being taking re parking as it is extremely dangerous along West Street during drop off and pick up times? There is a very real fear that a child will be injured.

This is something the school are constantly reviewing and reminding parents about. The Parish Council confirmed that they had recently written to the school voicing concerns. It was suggested that a 'walking bus' could be looked at. Kate agreed to take this suggestion back to the school governors.

i) Emergency Response Group – Malcolm Pryce

The group was set up to co-ordinate help, and to get information out, during an unexpected event. For example if the village was cut off by snow, electricity or gas supply failure for a long length of time, or if there was a gas leak that required urgent evacuation. Aldbourn is very fortunate that there are 4/5 people in the village with previous emergency response. The group have carried out a couple of 'virtual emergencies' this year to test if the plan currently in place works. One of the biggest challenges is keeping people motivated to be on standby to do something that might never happen. The SSE grant has also been used to purchase 2 generators, thermal blankets, snow shovels, high viz vests and walkie talkies.

The following questions were asked:

How do you know who and where the vulnerable people in the village are?

Due to data protection the group are not allowed to keep a list of vulnerable people in the village who may need extra help. They would be reliant on the Community Co-ordinators.

It was noted that people can also register with their utility suppliers that they would be in need of extra help in the event of a utility failure.

Is there a list of local farmers that would help in an emergency?

There is a list of some, others have said verbally they would be happy to help should the need ever arise.

Where would the control room be in an emergency?

It does depend on what the emergency was and what type it was, but the school, Memorial Hall and Methodist Hall are all locations that there is agreement to be used if needed.

j) Community Speed Watch – Anne Deuchar

The speed watch team continue to get out as often as they can. The equipment is shared with another village so is not available all the time. Having the volunteers there does make a big difference, with drivers visibly slowing down. It is realised that not everyone is going to slow down, but it does help. The group are looking forward to the village getting some SID units. New volunteers are always welcome. Full training is given by the Police. Please get in touch with the group if you would like to be involved.

The volunteers who carry out these speed checks were thanked for their work on this.

ARC – Malcolm Pryce

There is a huge amount of sporting history in Aldbourne, which can be found in the Heritage Centre. The village was gifted the Palmers Field land to provide sports and recreation in the village. 3 years ago a team of 5 got together to work out how best to put this together. They realised that they would need to do a lot of listening to the village, and also raise a lot of money to allow anything to happen. The ARC charity took 10 months to form and was set up to enable money to be raised. The group of 5 went up to 10 in the last year. There are 5 trustees and 5 associate members who bring a wealth of knowledge with them. The biggest challenge, and the one which is taking the most time, has been listening to the village and finding out what it wants. The comments received have been pulled together to use as the parameters for the proposed design of developments. The PC got behind the project in November last year when they approved a letter of intent for a lease. Members of ARC have met with the PC working group several times to agree a Heads of Agreement that was presented to the Parish Council at their April meeting. A 30 year lease was granted for the Palmer's Field area. It is important that leases are now worked on as grant applications cannot start without them. The letter of intent in November did trigger activity, with appeals to the village bringing forward £2,600 of local donations. At Christmas a similar amount was also received. These donations along with two grants and other donations in kind total £15,000. This is enough to get the access track built. Though this work will not commence until leases are in place. ARC have visited other villages with similar sorts of facilities being proposed, and most raised their precept to pay for them. ARC are keen for the projects to be self funding. There are lots of skills within the group to drive the project forward, but it does have to be based on what the village wants. On going consultations will continue for the next 2/3 years. The groups AGM will be held this summer.

The following questions were asked:

Will the access track be built before any buildings have planning permission?

Yes, this could happen. Though the PC has final say in what happens in the area.

The PC's primary aim in the Heads of Agreement is that a sports pavilion, or a building that incorporates changing facilities and toilets for public use is built.

Where will funding be coming from?

Currently there are over 20 grant providers that have been approached. Anyone is welcome to view who has been approached.

There are rumours that an insurance company are underwriting a loan, is this true?

This is not true at all.

Anyone is always welcome to contact ARC to look at what they have been doing, or to ask questions on the project.

6. Topics for general discussion

The 2020 Festival still needs volunteers willing to work with others to organising the event. The 2010 Festival took 3 years to plan and raised £18,000 for local groups. Without enough people coming forward to help organise this there will be no 2020 Festival.

There will be an open gardens event on the weekend of 10-11 June, with 20+ gardens being open. All funds raised will go to the Friends of the Church. £5 for adults & £1 per child. Tickets will be available from the Post Office or Mary Cowan.

The grips on the 4 barrows need clearing and there is a lot of debris washed down from the area. It was confirmed that WC have recently cleared the grips and the debris.

7. Next Parish Council meeting

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – 10th May 2017 @ 7.30pm in the Methodist Hall

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21.05

Chairman's Signature: _____

25th April 2018