

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Assembly of Chalgrave held on Thursday April 16th, 2020 at 7.30pm. The meeting was held remotely via Zoom in order to comply with Government requirements put in place on March 23rd, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Present: Cllr. Phil Parry (Chairman); Cllr. Ken Green; Cllr. Debbie Levy; Cllr Kevin Ludgate; Cllr Frances Masters; Cllr Jan Day; Cllr Peter Warburton; Lesley Smith-Clerk

Public present: 4

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH ASSEMBLY-APRIL 18th, 2019

The minutes were approved by the council and signed as correct by the Chairman.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019/20

The Parish Council decided to cancel this year's Annual Parish Assembly because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. It is a necessary but unfortunate decision as the Assembly over the last years has been a great occasion for our community. Not only is it an opportunity to find out what the Parish Council has been doing over the past year, but we also get up to date with other organisations in the Parish. The number of residents that attend the Assembly highlights the strength of our Community. We hope to arrange a similar event later in the year.

As we are not having our Assembly, we have asked organisations in the Parish to write a short report which we will collate and put into the next edition of the Chalgrave News.

As always the Parish Council works hard behind the scenes to maintain and improve our community by monitoring planning, highways, fly tipping, footpaths, speeding, flooding and much more, as well as liaising with the Police, Central Beds. Council and with our MP Andrew Selous. We are also involved with anything that will have an impact on the Parish such as the development of Luton Airport and changing flight paths, housing development around Houghton Regis, protecting the Green Belt, the M1/A5 link road and the possibility of de-trunking the A5 through Hockliffe.

Our Emergency Plan has come into operation again during this time of crisis. If you need any kind of help – or just a chat – the contact numbers are Barbara Jackson 07960 445492, Debbie Levy 07931 408697, Paul Whitton 07808 174843 Roger Fenwick 07814 598309, Phil Parry 07831 605600. The team has picked up a couple of prescriptions and has done a couple of 'shop runs' for residents. The few calls that the team has had again highlights our community spirit. We are looking after our neighbours and each other.

We had an election in the past year, and we were sorry to lose Paul Whitton who contributed so much to the Parish Council particularly with his contribution to resolving the Great Pond issue.

Frances Masters has joined the Council. Cllr. Masters has taken the responsibility for monitoring fly tipping. With the current closure of Household Waste Recycling Centres, we anticipate that the amount of fly tipping will increase. Cllr. Peter Warburton is on the Speedwatch team and looks after our website. Cllr Jan Day is a member of the Great Pond team. Cllr. Ken Green is Vice Chair and looks after our footpaths. Cllr. Kevin Ludgate has responsibility for our Police liaison. Cllr. Levy heads up the planning committee as well as being on the Speedwatch and footpaths teams. However, the most important person in the Parish Council team is our Clerk, Lesley Smith.

As well as having specific responsibilities, Councillors will attend other meetings for example Cllr. Green attends the Town and Parish meetings and I attend the BATPC meetings.

We get a Precept every year which is part of your Council Tax. A third of this amount goes straight back into the community in the form of grants, we keep an amount in reserve for the unexpected and the rest is for the running of the Council activities. If you want to look at our accounts, please contact the Clerk.

The Parish Council has developed strong links with our Church. We hope that the 800th Anniversary goes ahead, and we will be supporting the planned celebrations.

As we want to maintain the rural nature of our Parish, we discuss all planning applications and make comments. Importantly, if permission is given, we check that the development adheres to the permitted plans.

Cllr. Jan Day, along with Barbara Jackson and Paul Whitton, have done a lot of work on how to maintain and develop the Great Pond of Tebworth. We have also had some help from the Wildlife Trust - they sent us a report on how to maintain and enhance the Pond. As soon as we are able there will be a 'work party'. If you can volunteer, we would be grateful for your help.

Parking is a problem in our Parish, particularly in Tebworth. You will probably know that we are exploring the option of Yellow Lines on the corner of Toddington and Wingfield Roads. Despite polite notices asking residents not to park on the corner, some choose to ignore the request and continue to park on the corner making it dangerous for drivers turning into Wingfield Road.

We continue pressing Highways England to make the A5/ B5120 roundabout safer. We first brought this issue to their attention in 2017. We find it incredible that they have done nothing despite the number of accidents.

You may be aware that the Parish Council has two awards to give each year. The first is the Millennium Award for under 18's for an achievement of some kind – educational, sporting, charity or service to the community. The other is the Community Award for 18 years and above, again for an achievement or service to the community. If you know of anybody that deserves such an award, please contact any of the Councillors or Clerk

Finally, you are always welcome to attend any of the Parish Council meetings. They are usually on the third Tuesday of the month in the Village Hall. At the present time we are holding virtual meetings via Zoom. If you want to join these virtual meetings, please contact the Clerk for details.

Stay safe - and check on your neighbours.

MATTERS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION/ANY QUESTIONS

- a) **Fly Tipping.** Mr Roger Fenwick asked that anyone having any work done asks to see the workmen's waste carrier licence. These licences are issued by the Environment Agency. Cllr Masters said that she would add Mr Fenwick's comment to her report for the Chalgrave News. **FM**
- b) **Potential Residents' Meeting.** Cllr Levy suggested having a meeting of residents later in the year, given the popularity of the Parish assemblies. Cllrs agreed that this was a good idea.

DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING.

To be arranged for April 2021

Meeting closed at 7.45pm

Signed by Chairman..... Dated.....

REPORTS COLLATED AND PUT INTO THE MAY 2020 EDITION OF THE CHALGRAVE NEWS.

1. REPORT from Andrew Selous-Member of Parliament for SW Bedfordshire.

Since I returned to work from home I have been dealing with a greatly increased number amount of casework trying to help our local hospitals, surgeries and care homes deal with the crisis as well as helping lots of local businesses apply for the business support available from the government. I am also lobbying hard to get enough personal protective equipment and testing available for everyone who needs this locally. One of my daughters is working on the front line in a London hospital and another is applying to go back to work at the Luton and Dunstable hospital so these matters are personal as well as Parliamentary to me. I have been greatly heartened to see the outpouring of community and voluntary support for those who need it. We must not lose that community spirit once the crisis is over. I know that many families are grieving for those they have lost and are worried about vulnerable family members and members of their family who are on the front line in health and social care. I also know that this lockdown is really hard for many people and I want to thank everyone who has done what they've been asked in order to protect the NHS and save the lives of those we love.

Kind Regards Andrew Selous

2. REPORT by Ward Councillor Mark Versallion

COVID-19 Council staff have been redeployed to prioritise food and medical provisioning to the vulnerable in our communities and care homes and the maintenance of critical services. Like all organisations there has also been a reduction in available staffing due to either contracting Covid –19 or to self-isolation. Some services have therefore been affected, such as green bin collections, which were restored on 27 April. Efforts are being made to co-ordinate the reopening of the tidy tip waste recycling centres, with neighbouring local authorities and to best manage what will undoubtedly be long queues and challenges in maintaining social distancing. The Police and Council have also been busy in organising and enforcing social distancing, such as at parks and woods where the closed cars parks have been are ignored by some by parking outside the entrances. More than 6,000 residents are known to the Council as being clinically vulnerable and a further 6,000 as vulnerable and all have been contacted by CBC. If there is anyone you are concerned about or if you need help, you can contact Central Bedfordshire Council's dedicated Covid-19 helpline on 0300 300 8900.

BUSINESS GRANTS CBC has so far processed over 2,000 applications with another 1,000 to go. More than £25m has been paid out to local businesses in central Bedfordshire.

LOCAL PLAN Recent communications between Planning Inspectorate and Central Bedfordshire Council discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the submission of new evidence by the Council. In CBC's response (EXAM 103) they stated they were still working towards the 30th April deadline but it was impossible to say whether resources might be affected. Unfortunately this crisis has had an impact on officer resource, as well as on CBC's consultants and so they have been unable to complete this work within the timeframe. Any delay will be minimal and CBC expects to submit on or around the 14th May at the latest. A public consultation will follow this submission.

PLANNING COMMITTEE Some emails and social media posts claimed CBC's planning decisions were to be taken by the Chief Executive rather than the usual Development Management Committee and that this was an attack on democracy. The accusation was a misrepresentation of the truth and of questionable motives. The facts are that due to the Covid-19 pandemic and a national ban on holding committee meetings, a decision was taken at CBC's General Purposes committee on the 4th of April to allow, for the 29th April planning meeting only, a panel of three Councillors to determine a small number of planning applications, five in total as it turned out. The Chief Executive then used his emergency powers to formally 'make' the decision based on the panel's recommendations. For the next planning meeting on 27 May the intention is to have virtual meetings with public participation by video, until such time as public gatherings can be safely allowed again.

LEISURE CENTRE I had previously reported that CBC's budget now includes £16m for a new leisure centre in Leighton Buzzard by 2023. In addition there is a £300,000 programme of refurbishment of the current

Tiddenfoot leisure centre, including swimming pool changing rooms, installing new showers, new LED lighting, new flooring, additional hairdryers and other essential items. Air conditioning will also be installed in the gym and in the café area. Other works will also be completed while the centre is closed to the public, including repairs to the lift.

Mark Versallion

3. CHALGRAVE MEMORIAL HALL REPORT by Roger Masters

We are living in unprecedented times. The Memorial Hall has been closed since January and we don't know when it will be open again. It has been very strange going into the building knowing nobody is using it.

There are a few bills to pay, keeping the grass cut, some insurance and electricity, and some urgent repairs to be done, but of course no income. Fortunately we have the Parish Council to hopefully grant us some money for which we are extremely grateful. This together with our balances should keep us going for the rest of the year.

Sadly the Chalgrave Games has had to be postponed for this year so the Fun day on 4th July has been deferred until next year when it will be back with a flourish. Unfortunately we have also had to defer the prize draw for an I Pad; still this also will be back.

Anyway, my thanks go to all our Trustees and the work they have put in to the Hall. Also I wish you all well in this difficult time. Keep safe.

Roger Masters

4. BOOK CLUB REPORT by Mrs Noeleen Thomson

We lost a dear friend and book club member Lyn Green last year and miss her so much at our meetings, she is always in our thoughts. We had our annual lunch at Mama Rosa's in Leighton Buzzard this year and enjoyed some lovely food and great company. The books we have read have, as usual, been a mix of good and not so good, which always brings about an interesting debate. There are currently seven of us in the club and we usually meet about once a month. We take it in turns to host the meeting over a cup of coffee and a biscuit, discuss the book we have read and have a general chit chat – it is a great opportunity to read some very good books and more importantly we get to socialise with people in the village we may not get to see very often. If anyone is interested in joining please contact Noeleen Thomson on 872168

5. SENIORS CITIZENS' COMMITTEE REPORT by Mr Roger Fenwick

The unprecedented situation we are living in is a particular concern to the Senior Citizens Committee. Although the Covid-19 virus is a threat to everyone, it is especially important that the older generation keep themselves safe. In order to ensure this, the SCC delivered a note (well before the Government belated lockdown) to everyone on our register offering help with shopping and collecting prescriptions etc. (phone numbers are repeated below). We have heard many stories of kindness and know most people are being supported by neighbours, friends and families but even if you are not on our register (we know it's not comprehensive) or are just unable to get out please give us a call and we will do our best to help. At the time of writing we are not aware of any cases of Covid-19 in the parish so it's important that people do not live in fear but it also important that we adhere to all the government safety advice. We realise it's very difficult for families not to meet especially when they live nearby but please resist the temptation to visit. With common sense we will all get through safely. It is also important not to neglect other health issues and although we would not advocate rushing to a hospital or doctor's surgery, please ring your GP surgery for advice. The Senior Citizens Committee are continuing to deliver birthday cards with contact numbers on and as our income is unaffected this year we will be delivering Christmas gifts as usual. Many thanks to everyone who has supported us with our activities and please don't hesitate to get in touch on these numbers:

Roger Fenwick: 01525 873768 or 07814 598309 Barbara Jackson: 07960 445492 Debbie Levy: 07931 408697 Phil Parry: 07831 605600

6. SPORTS CLUB CHAIRMAN'S REPORT by Mike Wells and Phil Parry

We have had a quiet year. We have been struggling to get a team together to play a cricket match against a league side. As a result, have decided to change the 'direction' of the club. So that rather than play cricket at a league level we should play more social cricket where everyone can have a go at batting, bowling and fielding - playing against pub teams or similar. This is what we had planned for this year – before the Covid

19 pandemic. The crisis has meant we have had to postpone both our Race Night and our Family Day. The Race Night is now planned for Saturday November 21st. We hope to have the Family Day before the end of the summer – and to have a couple of games before the winter. We did manage to arrange two Golf Days last year – thanks to Ed Morton. Both were successful and were followed by a fabulous meal in the Plough. There has been a lot of maintenance work on the pitch and in the clubhouse. Many thanks to Roger Fenwick and to Nev Andrews. Nev has really headed up the work and has spent many hours fixing, repairing, building, mowing, rolling and much more. Thanks to others that have helped such as Kevin Hydes. The ‘yellow peril’ is in operation, most things work in the clubhouse and the sports ground looks great.

Phil Parry and Mike Wells

7. ROGATION WALK ON SUNDAY MAY 17th, 2020: Ken Green.

We had planned to “Beat the Bounds” of Chalgrave again this year. We walk most of the boundary and it is the only day of the year that we are legally entitled to walk those parts of the boundary that are not a public right of way.

This year the walk has been cancelled but for more info look at the 1986 survey on the history of Chalgrave at www.chalgrave.org

Ken Green: kentebworth@gmail.com 874107

8. WI REPORT by Maureen Gilmour

Debbie Parry has stepped down as our President after setting up our W.I. and running it for nine years. We would all like to thank Debbie for working so hard for so many years to produce a wonderful W.I. Maureen Gilmour has now taken over as President.

Our Calendar for this year, 2020, was to be varied and interesting. In January Alan Higgs taught us to Hula Hoop and this was both fun and funny. Good exercise if you can keep the hoop going for any length of time. Many of us couldn’t, though we did have some hooping stars. The hall resounded with laughter and the clunk of hoops falling to the floor.

February was a fascinating talk by Stephen Jones who has been working with computers for 40 years. He has a degree in Computer Science and an MSc in Computer Security and Digital Forensics. His talk covered an overview of the range of threats those who use mobile phones and/or computers may get. He gave us some practical steps that we can take to reduce the risks of being hacked. He told us about the history of hacking and explained that hackers often work in organised, specialist teams and are not the Hollywood version of the lone teenager. He also told us the meaning of some of the terms used when discussing computer security.

Sadly, Covid 19 arrived, so we have had to postpone future events. Hopefully, we can re-book the speakers and events when it is safer to gather together. We would love more members from the Parish. Forget the old-fashioned image and don’t worry if you can’t cook or make jam, many of us can’t. Neither can you be too old or too young, we have a range of ages. Members can pick and choose which evenings they attend. And don’t worry if you know no-one, we are a friendly bunch!

If you want to find out more about Chalgrave W.I. you can ring me, Maureen Gilmour, on 07818 043311 or email me on mg@maureengilmour.co.uk
Maureen Gilmour

THE WI BOOK CLUB

The WI book club has now gone virtual due to lock down and social distancing. We are having our monthly meeting online using Zoom so that we can all see and talk to each other and it is not perfect but allows us to chat about the books we are reading. In the last three months we have read A Thousand Roads Home by Carmel Harrington, The Starless Sea by Erin Morgenstern and Blood Orange by Harriet Tyce. We are now reading The Traveling Cat Chronicles by Hiro Arikawa, which had been translated from Japanese and is being made into a film so something a bit different.

Some of us decided we would also meet up on Zoom for a virtual weekly chat just to keep in touch and to talk to some different faces, we chat about anything that is happening in these challenging times and hope things will get back to normal at some stage.

Sue Watling