

Wreningham Annual Parish Meeting 2021

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held remotely on 4 May 2021 at 6.30pm

Present: 4 councillors, 5 members of the public

The meeting was chaired by Michael Hill

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

District Councillor- Nigel Legg

Covid restrictions apart there have been significant changes in operations at South Norfolk Council. There has been a move to combine many office functions with those of Broadland Council. For example, there is now a combined Planning Department. Residents therefore may find that they have to deal with officials from Broadland Council for certain functions. There is to be a common Website and email address which hopefully will make these processes relatively seamless. The Council offices are now called The House and The Lodge respectively.

Hard copies of bin emptying calendars have not been issued so far this year. This is because there are proposals to change some of the rotas. Details are published on The Councils Website. For those who do not have internet access a hard copy of the calendar can be obtained by telephoning The Councils Depot at Ketteringham. Hard copies of calendars may be made available later this year, when any rota changes have been made.

It is likely that some restrictions will remain in place following easing of the Covid regulations. There will be limits to the number of people who can attend public meetings at The Council offices, for example. The details have yet to be clarified by officials.

The Members Ward Grant system is to continue as before. Residents who wish to take advantage of these should contact The District Councillors directly. The Community Action Fund grant system is also open for applications. These must be made by June 1st.

The Village Cluster element of The Greater Norwich Local Plan is expected to be published on 1st June. There will be a period of consultation afterwards.

Wreningham VC Primary School – Rob Jones

Rob confirmed the school has had a very disruptive and challenging year, with the children returning to school in January 2021 for one day before going back into lockdown. Numbers of children back in school in the last lockdown was higher than previous, and this presented challenges for teachers having to teach larger class sizes and also remotely. However, he was very impressed with how teachers provided learning in class and via Microsoft teams, with the challenges of limited resources of a small school. School returned to full capacity 8th March with a range of control measures still in place that include; parent mask wearing, limited visitors in school, classes operating in bubbles. Children's learning has generally not dropped too greatly on the whole and they have been very resilient. Children who need extra help have been identified and plans put in place to support them. He observed that both staff and children have both been fantastic throughout and children now all back in school have settled in very well. School activities are being re-instated with running clubs and hoping to have a whole school trip, Sports Day and Year 6 leavers assembly. The Chair, councillors and attending members of the public observed children seemed happy and getting on with things, and nice to hear the sounds of them playing again in the school yard.

Wreningham Support group- Tony Wright

When Michael Hill asked me to help set up a Support Group for the village as the Covid pandemic began to impact all our lives, I was concerned that there would be too few volunteers to manage the needs of the residents. I was soon reassured when many people offered to help. Michael and I identified around a dozen

Wreningham Annual Parish Meeting 2021

individuals across the village who were willing to act as contacts for their locality. They have done a remarkable job in helping residents who needed shopping to be done or medication collected and I am delighted to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for all volunteers' invaluable efforts which have on occasions entailed queuing for long periods at pharmacies. In addition to requests direct from villagers, we have been able to fulfil requests from South Norfolk Help Hub.

There are well-established support networks throughout Wreningham with assistance for those in need from family members, friends and neighbours. Those needs may well continue because of the pandemic or for other reasons and we intend to maintain that support for residents.

Chair commented that SNDC is looking at how to integrate these groups and incorporate them into their emergency planning.

Village Hall - Tony Wright, Secretary

The pandemic has inevitably had a severe impact on the Hall's usual programme of events and we are now slowly making our way back to normal. This puts an onus on the Management Committee to comply fully with Government requirements and create the safe environment that will encourage residents to join us in the weeks and months ahead. We have a programme of future events which will go ahead if the Government's timetable permits.

The Hall was closed for most of the past year but we have continued to arrange takeaway meals, our traditional fish and chips with the addition of pizzas on other Fridays. These continue, the bar has reopened and the mother and toddler group has resumed meetings.

There has been a significant loss of income but this has been mitigated by funding to support village halls. Prior to the pandemic the Committee had embarked on a programme of improvements and maintenance work. This is ongoing and we are currently investigating the possibility of installing solar panels to reduce our energy bills.

As we emerge from the current lockdown, the Hall has plans for a number of events. These include a village party, wine tastings and barbecues. These are all subject to the current lockdown restrictions being lifted along the current planned timescale.

Footpath Warden – Mick Ryder

The last 12 months have seen increased usage of the footpaths, by residents and visitors alike due to the pandemic. There has been a noticeable increase in dog mess and plastic bags "decorating" hedges on all paths. The volunteer who has maintained the entrance to the loke in Wymondham Road is no longer cutting the grass due to dog mess getting into their mower.

Despite being spoken to on more than one occasion, horse rider(s) continue to use FP7 footpath opposite the church in Church Road and FP3 opposite the thatched cottage on Hethel Rd towards Long's wood. The land owner of FP7 has not given permission. Noted in meeting that the trespassing can be observed, however it is down to the landowner to bring civil action.

The Kett's Country footpath revamp has been announced and a circular path around the village has been identified. An additional route map location agreed with Alex Brake at the Bird in Hand. Kett's team to be contacted regarding signage. Cllr Liddington confirmed in her walks in other areas she has seen the new signage and will email photos of these.

Footbridge on FP4 (from the loke in Wymondham Rd towards Long's Wood) has been replaced. Steps across the railway cutting in Long's Wood have yet to be repaired.

Wreningham Annual Parish Meeting 2021

Highways will not action the uneven surface on FP8 where it joins Church Rd between The Old Rectory and Wren's Cottage. Residents have paid to improve the quality of the surface by addressing the drainage issues.

I have requested that the parish council consider approaching landowners for new Permissive Path to run alongside Church Rd from the junction with FP7 (opposite the church) to the junction with Hethel Road. This is a particularly narrow stretch of road & would provide a short, but safe route for pedestrians.

Feedback from Rachael Long-A plea to keep dogs on leads during nesting season and she has had a meeting with the Kett's Footpath manager and walked the circular route with them. They are prioritising the footbridge and steps repairs.

Further meeting comments - The warden asked if anyone has any suggestions for new circular paths to make him aware. Also confirmed that NCC are happy if the new Kett's Footpath signage is also used to share local news.

Heritage Group - Mick Ryder

Confirmed group have been doing work where can during the past year, which has involved archiving and recording, and members have undergone relevant training. Group has been given new laptop, recorder, and hard drives and software provided by Norfolk Records Office.

Heritage lottery have agreed to delay funding for the exhibition now due to take place in October 2021. Chair highlighted that Norfolk records office has asked local history groups to join them with using AtoM software so made Heritage group aware and invited them to take advantage.

Wednesday Coffee Club – Jean Lambourne

The Last Wednesday coffee morning has been sorely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in the past year – 2020 events were suspended from March to June, resumed under strict conditions from July to November and finally restarted again this April, in outdoor form under unseasonably chilly circumstances. Our regulars are hardy and loyal and we hope to reward them with some fun get togethers this summer.

Despite everything, we managed to have a successful and well attended coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Nurses in September, from which we were able to send a total of £319.00 to the charity, thanks to the generosity of those who donated cakes, raffle and competition prizes and of all who attended the event.

We have ended the year with a healthy balance of approximately £100 after payment of rent for the hall.

All Saints Church - Christine Minns

Wreningham All Saints church is one of 7 churches within the Parochial Parish of Upper Tas Valley All Saints and along with Fundenhall PCC we make up the Upper Tas Valley Benefice. Our Priest- in-Charge is Rev. Lydia Avery who is about half way through her 5-year appointment. She is with us in a full-time capacity but is expected to concentrate much of her time working with the 4 church schools in the benefice. I know that Wreningham school staff have welcomed the support she has given them, especially over the past difficult year.

Due to "lockdown" plus the "stop – start" building work we have not been able to hold services in Wreningham church over the past year, and most of the time we have not been able to open it for private prayer. The repair to the East Wall was supposed to be completed October 2019 but following a "Bat Survey" we were told that we had to wait until the spring. By then all churches were in lockdown and work was then programmed for September 2020. Work started but the builder, firstly had to isolate for 10 days, then he was concerned that the wall was less stable than originally suggested by the Structural Engineer

Wreningham Annual Parish Meeting 2021

and a further inspection was carried out. At the time of preparing this report, we have now had 3 lots of extra scaffold erected and much of the top of the wall has been removed. The original quote has already been increased by at least 3 times as much and I am still waiting for a final quote. Obviously, there is no going back at this stage, but I am concerned about funding this work.

I would like to record my thanks to the volunteers who manage to keep the graveyard tidy with the grass cut regularly. There has also been a certain amount of low boughs and dead wood removed from the trees recently. We are grateful to the parish council for their grant towards the cost of fuel and spares for cutting the grass.

We have had a number of burials during the year and when offered a service in an alternative church or a graveside service most have opted for a graveside service and these have worked well in this time of limited numbers.

The building work will be completed by the end of July at the latest and the church will then be open for private worship each day and regular Sunday services re- instated.

Meeting comments- Chair asked if Lydia's time will be renewed, due to end September 2023. Christine confirmed not expecting this, uncertain if will be re-appointed a replacement for paid clergy to work with schools, many Diocese are cutting back and implementing redundancy due to funding issues.

Wreningham Fuel Trust - Christine Minns

For the past year the twice-yearly meetings have been replace and conducted by email with the 4 trustees. Decision made by the trustees to not make the trust usual payments and distribution, and only support those who make direct requests in case there are more hardship cases following economic after effects of the pandemic. Trustees confirmed as – Parish Council appointed trustees Ivan Howlett, Hilary Gaultier, co-opted trustees are Christine Balaam, Irene Jackson. The Chair to revise and update entry on website.

Closing – Michael Hill

Michael thanked all for attending.

Meeting closed at 7.11pm.