

Newton Flotman Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30 April 2019, 7.30pm

Present: David Gibbs (Chairman)	Parish Council
Bob McKelvey	Parish Council
Christopher Remer	Parish Council
Bob Kelf	Parish Council
Jean Wilson	Parish Council
Eve Domeyer	Parish Council
Julie King (Clerk)	Parish Council
Andy Pownall	Allotments
Revd Austin Uzoigwe	St Mary's Church
Caroline Wolfe	Partnership Magazine

Members of the Parish: two

David Gibbs welcomed everyone to the Meeting. He explained that it was a relatively informal meeting to enable representatives to report on the past year's activities and to respond to questions from the floor.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Rev. Dawn Davidson, Jan Flower and Wendy Adams – Women's Institute, Keith Bennett – Medical Practice, Nigel Morgan – Parish Council, Ria Mickleburgh – Playgroup.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 April 2018

These were agreed as a true record of proceedings with no amendments.

3. Reports from Village Organisations and Groups

a. Newton Flotman Allotment Association – Andy Pownall

Andy read out his report:

"There are 26 allotments off Exchange Road made up of 18 allotments of approximately 30m x 7m and 8 allotments of half this size. All of the allotments have been let this year and most are kept in reasonable condition. Two allotments recently became available, fortunately I had two names on the waiting list and both have now signed up.

The grass on the access track through the allotments is kept cut. At the top of the allotments there has always been an area of land either side of the track left free for vehicles to turn and for allotment holders to have manure delivered and barrow onto their respective allotment. The available turning area is very restricted for a tractor and trailer particularly when wet so a tipping area has been created at the bottom of the allotments, by using this it is less likely that mud will be dragged out onto Exchange Road.

All allotment holders are members of The Newton Flotman Allotment Society, affiliated to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure

Gardeners. The membership fee is set at £3.00 of which all £3.00 is passed to the National Society. The fee is collected at the same time as the rent. Minor expenses of the Society are paid for out of the discount received from the seed scheme. There are 24 members. The AGM of The Newton Flotman Allotment Society, as previous years, will be held in the Church meeting room during September.”

Andy passed two, recently signed, allotment letting agreements onto the Parish Council.

b. St Mary’s Church – Revd Dawn Davidson, Revd Austin Uzoigwe, Caroline Wolfe

The Clerk read out Revd Dawn Davidson’s report:

“I very much appreciate being invited to submit a report for this annual meeting and am sorry I can’t be with you in person this year. However, many thanks to Julie for offering to read the following on my behalf:

2018 was something of a challenge with me being the only ordained minister available to cover all six churches in our group and the associated pastoral work in the parishes. This was managed with amazing support from our churchwardens and lay ministers as well as the occasional visiting priest ‘on loan’ from neighbouring churches. We now have an additional priest, our Team Vicar, Revd Austin Uzoigwe living in Tasburgh.

The church building was closed for a significant amount of time last year for essential repairs. Not unexpectedly this had an adverse effect on our numbers – despite Swainsthorpe taking us in while our building was closed. Having lead stolen from the roof posed further setback but the PCC has worked hard to get us back on track. Café Church takes place in the school hall on the first Sunday of each month – and this has been well supported.

We aim to show God’s love in the community and to make a positive difference for those living here. Andy Cox continues his outreach work throughout the village, taking a small team into Olive House on a regular basis and running the monthly Community Lunch. Andy’s wife, Lesley is currently training to become a licensed lay reader and she also takes services as well as running Café Church.

We regularly run Alpha courses and have evening groups for those wishing to explore Christianity and grow in their faith. These groups offer space for questions and discussion in a way that isn’t possible at Sunday services.

The Church Room is used regularly by church and other groups – and we are delighted to have a weekly ‘Outreach Post Office’ as an additional benefit for the village. Events happening in the Church Room are advertised in Partnership. Our website (www.tasvalley.org) is another source of information although it is currently in need of

updating and re-organising.

A few months ago a visitor looking around one of our churches, asked the churchwarden there how much we are paid by the Diocese (i.e. 'head office' in Norwich) to keep our village churches open and running.... the churchwarden had to explain that it is the other way around. The Diocese charges us a significant amount each year (something called the 'Parish Share') to cover the costs of clergy and other expenses involved in keeping these ancient buildings open for the benefit of all.

While there is no member of the clergy in residence, the Diocese will offer Newton Flotman Rectory for rent - but the parish church receives no income from this at all. We hope to be given a Curate at some point in the future (this won't be before 2020) and if so, he/she would live in the Rectory here.

It is our constant prayer that others will feel able not only to support church events and activities but will want to become more involved in the day to day life and worship of the local church and come to know God's love for themselves. I would like to thank the Parish Council personally and on behalf of the PCC for your ongoing support and friendship."

Revd Austin said that he and his family had settled in well in Tasburgh and he was looking forward to getting to know the people in the parishes and joining in the social events on offer.

Caroline Wolfe read out her report:

"Partnership is the village magazine for Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe. 900 black and white copies are produced each edition, and it is delivered to every household in Newton Flotman, Swainsthorpe, Newton Greenways and part of Saxlingham Thorpe. Additional copies are left in the churches and at the primary school.

The magazine is available in electronic format (full colour) on the Newton Flotman Parish Council website, and via email on request.

I have been compiling and editing the magazine since April 2009. It's grown in size during this time, and now currently averages 36 pages. I spend approximately 12 hours each month to complete it (I get August and December off as these are joint editions).

The revenue collected from the business adverts, together with contributions from Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe Parish Councils, covers the cost of printing by the team at Sir John Leman High School in Beccles.

Partnership production is very much a team effort. Several people provide me with regular copy (I don't always have to chase for it!). I

have four eagle eyed volunteers who proof read. Kirsten Remer brings the printed magazine and passes it on to distribution co-ordinator, Evelyn Binns. We have nine volunteers who cover delivery, come rain or shine.

I am always looking for new ideas and contributors to the magazine, and welcome any feedback that anyone might have to offer.”

c. Newton Flotman Pre-School – Ria Mickleburgh

The Clerk read out Ria Mickleburgh’s report:

“Newton Flotman Preschool is a committee run Preschool that runs at the village centre over 5 days of the week. Our opening hours are between 9-3:30 Monday to Thursday and 9-1 on Fridays. At the moment we do not have any plans to change the Preschool hours however this is reviewed regularly. We care for children between the ages of 2 – 4 years and provide a fun and stimulating environment where children can play and learn. Preschool continues to be busy. Morning sessions are nearly full, we do have some spaces in the afternoon sessions. We offer 15 hours of funded childcare to all 3 and 4 year olds and 30 hour funding to families that are eligible. We are also able to offer 15 hours of funding to 2 year old children that meet the criteria set out by the government. We are part of the tax free childcare scheme and aim to ensure that all families are aware of the funding that they are entitled to.

The staff team have been very busy over the past two years reviewing the learning environment that we provide for the children. We have increased opportunities for children to access toys and resources that interest them independently. We have considered the layout of furniture to encourage children to become settled during their play and ensure that they are able to spend time engrossed in the activities that we provide. We have purchased new resources to implement a sensory area within preschool that children can use to take a break from the bustle of the main area, this has been successful and ensures that we are meeting the needs of children that attend.

We have reviewed all of our policies and procedures to make sure we are meeting current legislation and have implemented changes to our paperwork to ensure that we are compliant with new General Data Protection Regulations.

We now have a subcommittee that focusses their attention on fundraising and have been successful in our events. We have organised events that are aimed at Preschool families only and have also organised a successful Easter Hunt that everybody in the village is invited to take part in.

Staff have attended training by Early Years Pioneer Elizabeth Jarman and we are busy making plans to make further improvements to our environment based on her Communication Friendly Spaces approach.

We hope to improve our garden area to reflect the changes that we have already made indoors to encourage children to use the outside space as a learning environment just as they do inside.

We hope to make some further links with groups and childcare providers in the local area to encourage children to gain an understanding of themselves in the context of the larger community. We would like to make links with local toddler groups, childminders and also with Olive House care home.”

d. Newton Flotman and District Women’s Institute – Wendy Adams

The Clerk read out Wendy Adams’ report:

“Newton Flotman & District WI has had another interesting year. Our membership has stabilised at about 15, which is lower than we would wish, but we are still able have a very full programme for our monthly meetings with lots of interesting speakers.

Members supported events in Newton Flotman, Flordon and Swainsthorpe.

Members continue to be involved with the Norfolk Federation of WIs, and several attended the Federation Annual Meeting, and the Federation Autumn Meetings held around the county.

We are looking to our future, but as with other organisations within Newton Flotman support seems to be waning.”

e. Newton Flotman Village Centre – Barry Adams

Jean Wilson as Vice-Chairman read the Village Centre report on behalf of the Chairman Charlene Matthews:

“2018 has been another busy year for the village Centre and the hall continues to be supported by regular and individual bookings. The use of the hall by pre-school on a daily basis in particular provides a valuable source of regular income.

Fund raising continues to be a priority and we hope to continue with more events in the near future. Our annual fete continues and will take place this year on 14 September. The monthly cinema nights also continue.

However we do struggle to find support in general from the village for the events so if lending a hand is of interest please do not hesitate to contact a member of the committee. We also need new members on the committee to provide fresh ideas and develop the village centre for the community.

I will be standing down as chairperson and from the committee this year but I will continue to support them with fundraising events if and

when needed.”

f. Newton Flotman Primary School – Headteacher Jeremy Johns

It was noted that Jeremy Johns was on long-term sick and that the head of Trowse Primary School, Stuart Odell, was assisting.

g. Newton Flotman Football Club – Mark Taylor

No response received.

h. Long Stratton Medical Practice – Keith Burnett

Jean Wilson, as a member of the Patient Participation Group, said that the Practice Manager, Keith Burnett, was very busy looking at the infrastructure needs of Long Stratton in light of the future housing expansion. She said that the defibrillator, situated on the outside wall of the surgery, was easy to use. It had been given to the Patient Participation Group by the Co-op and was maintained by a local paramedic. Finally, Jean said with regards to the car park the surgery were very happy for it to be used when the surgery was not open and that visitors to the theatre school appeared to be using it a bit more, however they had had to put in CCTV as some cars were being parked before the surgery opened and the motorist catching the bus into Norwich.

i. Newton Flotman Charities – David Gibbs

David read out his report:

“This is a combined Charity amalgamating the small Charities of John Pye (1647), Thomas Claburn (1815) and John Sewell (1931)

Two of the Charities were of small financial bequests whereas the third was for a fixed annual rent set at the time of the bequest from an acre of land somewhere on the Shotesham Estate. Despite the best efforts of Jack Alexander and myself, the location of the land could not be established. In view of the small amount of money involved, this was commuted to several years rent.

The total amount of money involved was very small, so it was agreed to combine the assets in to one as Newton Flotman Charities. To meet the requirements of the Charity Commissioners the entry appears on the Register under John Sewell being the most recent bequest. The objective remains the same as specified by the three bequests namely, ‘for the relief of the poor in Newton Flotman’.

The combined money is invested in non-disposal assets with the Official Custodian for Charities in COIF income shares giving an annual return of approximately £80. The fund now stands at just over £2,000.

There are three Trustees: Bob McKelvey, Caroline Wolfe and myself. We are grateful to William Ball who has agreed to audit the annual accounts in June each year. (Copies of the accounts are on the Parish Council website)

All three Charities were formed when residents had no access to Social Services or financial support hence the objective being for the benefit of the poor in Newton Flotman.

Despite the political rhetoric and rise in 'food banks', we, the Trustees have found it extremely difficult to identify 'poor' needy recipients in the Village who would benefit from what little support is available from the Charity. Initially the Charity was to provide the 'needy with a sack of coal at Christmas' which is no longer practical.

If you have any suggestions, regarding potential beneficiaries (in confidence) or how best we can achieve the Charity's aim, please talk to one of the Trustees."

4. Reports from Other Bodies

a. District Council – Phil Hardy

Phil Hardy was not present.

b. County Council – Colin Foulger

Colin Foulger was not present.

5. Parish Council Reports

a. Chairman's Report – David Gibbs

David read out his report:

"The Parish Council is concerned with local issues affecting Newton Flotman and Councillors are elected every four years in May. On this occasion, three of our members have decided not to seek re-election and consequently, we have three vacancies which we now need to fill by co-option. We need your support so, if you, or anyone you are aware of is interested in local matters and prepared to represent Newton Flotman, please talk to any of the Councillors or our Parish Clerk (Julie King).

We meet six times a year as the Parish Council and as required, three of us meet on a rotational basis to consider and comment on planning applications. In this respect we consult those likely to be affected.

Following a meeting of the Council, a brief note on the major topics discussed is published in Partnership although the complete minutes are available via the website. Some of the current Issues are:

Pedestrian Safety

We investigated the possibility of a trod path on Flordon Road but unfortunately, we had to abandon this project because of the difficult terrain and the high estimated cost. As an alternative, Highways have provided Pedestrian Warning signs.

Flordon Road/St Mary's Close Junction

Approval has been given to 'no parking' yellow lines at the junction

which will be painted shortly. South Norfolk Council will be responsible for enforcing the lines via Penalty Charge Notices issued by their Civil Enforcement Officers.

Long Stratton Action Plan (Bypass)

Consultants have recommended some changes to the draft plans which include the reduction in the number of roundabouts from four to three and the inclusion of an overpass at Hall Lane. We are advised that the updated plans will be available in the autumn to enable us to comment prior to seeking formal planning approval.

Traffic Access/ Egress at the Flordon Road/A140 Junction

As part of the proposed Long Stratton bypass, the Highways Principal Engineer has been made aware of our concerns regarding the impact of the potential increase in traffic flow. He has confirmed that feasibility studies are being undertaken to assess the most appropriate solution, whether by right turn lanes, traffic signals, a roundabout or some other alternative. Unfortunately, any potential improvements may well be long term as they would be subject to funding being secured.

SAM 2 Device

This is moved every six weeks to remind drivers of their speed and it has been at 'The Poplars' on Flordon Road (from Flordon) during the previous six weeks. During that time, it has recorded a total of 42,000 vehicles, over 100 vehicles in excess of 50mph and a maximum speed of 60mph. Although a detailed analysis of the speeds and times involved are regularly submitted to the Police, it is frustrating that there is a lack of action on their part to follow this up. This was highlighted in a recent report in the local newspaper and on TV.

Saffron Housing Trust – Affordable Housing Survey

Following the analysis of the leaflets which were distributed to all residents of Newton Flotman, the local need was identified for a further 19 properties of which 11 would be for 'affordable rent'. Saffron are now canvassing local land owners for potential sites.

Community Emergency Plan

Collation of the survey results have now been completed and will be incorporated into the plan for use should an emergency arise in the future.

New Website

The Parish Website is being updated by our Clerk to a more modern user-friendly platform.

General Thank You

It would be invidious of me to single out individual Councillors who have all worked on behalf of Newton Flotman but to say a big 'Thank You' on behalf of you to all of them.

However, one person who should deserve a special 'thank you' is Julie

King, our Parish Clerk. She provides exceptional support to the Council in both legal and financial matters for which we are truly grateful.”

Those present, felt that the SAM 2 speeding device did have a positive effect on the speed of traffic.

It was noted that once the Hempnall roundabout was completed, this would give the parish a better understanding of the potential effect of the roundabouts proposed as part of the Long Stratton by-pass.

b. Parish Council Financial Report – Julie King

The Clerk presented the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2019.

She spoke of the payments and receipt lines where the actual had differed significantly from budget, such as the savings seen in audit fees and dog bin emptying but the increased costs associated with the new council website. She explained the costs involved in the purchase of a replacement dog bin and grit bins and the donation given to the Parochial Church Council towards the cost of the refurbishment of the War Memorial. Additional income had come from the renting out of the SAM 2 speeding device to Swainsthorpe Parish Council but the parish council no longer received an income from the hosting of the bottle bank in Relish car park.

The Parish Council had started the year with a balance of £3,820.82 and ended with a balance of £4,526.84 which once the VAT for the year had been reclaimed would be over £5,000. Councillors had set an aim for reserves of £8,000 and when setting their budget for the current year had agreed on a 5% increase or an extra 76p per year for a band D property.

Discussion took place regarding the bottle bank on St Mary’s Close, it was understood that it was commercial and it was noted that the parish did not receive any income from it.

6. General Parish Issues

Kirsten Remer spoke on behalf of Newton Flotman and Saxlingham Thorpe Heritage Group, asking if they could be added as an invitee for future years. She said that they were coming to end of reporting to the Heritage Lottery Fund, however they were hoping to use some remaining funds to assist with the setting up of a website. She said that they may be approaching the parish council in the future for assistance with the purchase of a domain.

She thanked the parish council for their support towards the funding for the refurbishment of the War Memorial. It had been reinstalled in the church and there were plans for a rededication service on 23 June (within the week of the centenary of the signing of Treaty of Versailles). A name had been added to the Memorial and they had been in contact with the EDP regarding the rededication. They were keen to get those who had ties with those listed on the Memorial involved. Colin Self, a lay reader affiliated to armed forces, would be leading service.

There would be another memories event on 11 May and several videos had now been uploaded onto YouTube.

Andy Pownall said that his wife had undertaken some research and had found that at least 84 dogs every day were using the playing field.

Thanks

David thanked all those who had taken part in the meeting and the contribution they made to enhancing the life of those who lived in the village and Sandra for serving the refreshments.

Bob McKelvey thanked David Gibbs for the work he had undertaken, as Chairman, during the previous four years.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.