

Newton Flotman Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27 April 2021, 7.30pm
held virtually using the GoToMeeting platform

Present:	Bob Kelf (Chairman)	Parish Council
	David Gibbs	Parish Council from item 5
	Bob McKelvey	Parish Council
	Paul Weeks	Parish Council
	Jeff Billings	Parish Council
	Julie King (Clerk)	Parish Council
	Rev'd Coryn Stanforth	St Mary's Church
	Adam Riley	Newton Flotman Primary School
	Richard Beach	Tree Warden
	Florence Ellis	District Council

Members of the Parish: one

Bob Kelf welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Andy Pownall – allotments, Kirsten Remer – Newton Flotman and Saxlingham Thorpe Heritage Group (NFaST) and Janice Cooper – Newton Flotman Pre-school. David Gibbs, Parish Council Chairman, joined at item 5, he had been unable to connect to the meeting due to technical difficulties.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 April 2019 (there had been no meeting in 2020 due to the covid-19 pandemic)

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

3. Reports from Village Organisations and Groups

a. Newton Flotman Allotments – Andy Pownall

The Clerk read out Andy's report:

"There are 23 allotments off Exchange Road made up of 21 allotments of approximately 30m x 7m and 2 allotments of half this size. All of the allotments have been let this year and most are kept in reasonable condition. One allotment recently become available, fortunately I had just one name on the waiting list.

One allotment has been taken over by Andy Cox who has set up a Community allotment. He and a group of others identified a need in the village, particularly during the Covid restrictions, for people to get out for a chat and maybe a cup of tea and perhaps grow a few vegetables for people with a need in the parish. There is a large shed on this allotment for people to use should the weather be wet; the shed was originally used to hold meetings of the allotment society before the Church meeting room was built.

The grass on the access track through the allotments is kept cut, a small fee is given to the lady that keeps this in good condition. 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 is dragged out onto the highway.

There has been one reported incident of crime this past year; a number of sheds were broken into damaging the locks and woodwork but no theft of any property, it appears that the perpetrators were after fuel or tools of value; these are generally not kept on the allotments. The Police were informed but took no action.

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 kindly paid by the Parish Clerk. 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 19 members.

The AGM of The Newton Flotman Allotment Society will be held in the Church meeting room during September if Covid restrictions allow.”

b. Newton Flotman Charities – David Gibbs

The Clerk read out David’s report:

“The Charity is a combination of three small bequests made by: John Pye 1647, Thomas Claburn 1815, and John William Sewell 1931. Little request for support has been received over the years however, the funds for disposal still only amount to approximately £2,000.

The trustees are currently reviewing existing arrangements and considering how better the funds can be utilised within the terms of the bequests.”

c. St Mary’s Church – Rev’d Coryn Stanforth

Coryn read out her report:

“The Church has very much been open during the last twelve months although we had to operate in very different ways. I arrived as curate in the Tas Valley Benefice during the summer of 2020 and am very grateful to those who have filled me in about the preceding months.

Church services have continued in a variety of ways. A weekly benefice Zoom service began during the first lockdown and offers the opportunity for people to participate in worship from home. Services were also live streamed from Newton Flotman to those participating at home using the Wi-Fi. In person covid-

secure services in church took place from July to December 2020, apart from November and restarted in April 2021. Additionally, Lesley Cox launched a successful, monthly, outdoor Eco service focussed on creation in August 2020. This has mostly been held in the churchyard where a wildlife area has been established in conjunction with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

Throughout the last year funerals have taken place, including during lockdowns, either in the church building or the churchyard. The church building has also been used on a weekly basis by the outreach post office, with a team of stewards welcoming customers, which has been very well used. The Quinquennial inspection of the church building took place in February 2020 and identified necessary work to the roof timbers and the windows.

Partnership magazine has been produced and published on a monthly basis. Where possible this has been in print but during lockdowns it has been published online and posted on the parish council website. Other community initiatives have included communal carol singing on the village green just before Christmas. Carols were also sung for the residents of Olive House. During the first lockdown and afterwards Andy Cox visited a number of residents in the village when he was able and distributed slices of cake as part of the Church community's response to covid.

An awareness of environmental concerns and a desire to mitigate climate change has resulted in community tree planting and a community allotment is currently being established.

I have been working with the new headteacher Adam Riley, to establish a relationship between the church and Newton Flotman Church of England Primary Academy. I have been leading online assemblies for the school. The Church also provided materials to encourage families to make Easter gardens and took part in the village Advent window trail."

d. Newton Flotman Football Club

There was no one present to report on the activities of this group.

e. NFaST – Kirsten Remer

The Clerk read out Kirsten's report:

"Newton Flotman and Saxlingham Thorpe Heritage Group April 2020 - April 2021

We have met face to face four times as covid regulations have allowed. Plans for events surrounding the VE75/VJ75 commemorations had to be postponed but materials have been retained and some material was published in November's edition Partnership to commemorate Remembrance Sunday, including photos of the Home Guard which were well received, given the feedback we received. We also had to postpone a visit to the Blundeville Manor site twice. We finished two projects that were commitments from the Heritage Lottery grant – the churchyard noticeboards and the publication of the new church history booklet.

We held a zoom meeting with the Norfolk Archive centre to plan for our involvement in their Community Archives project – we plan to focus on developing our archiving skills using the archive material passed onto us by Jean Wilson’s family.

With the support of the PCC and Parish Council we have secured a web domain and hosting via Wix for three years for our developing website. The website address is www.nfasthg.com Material is added as time allows; it is very much still a work in progress. We have had five (three directly through the ‘contact us’ function on the website), enquiries about family history that we have been able to assist with this year.

Plans for 2021

- Participation in Community Archives Project run by the Norfolk Archive Centre - July to September 2021.
- Encouraging contributions to the website to record recent events.
- 2022 calendar and to run a Memories event or two later in the year
- Planning in conjunction with other village groups for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee 2022/Norfolk Day
- Rescheduled Blundeville Manor Walk to 20th March 2022”

f. Newton Flotman Pre-School – Janice Cooper

The Clerk read out Janice’s report:

“Firstly, I would like to send my apologies and introduce myself, I am Janice the Manager of the preschool, Ria went on maternity leave in January 2020 and decided to embrace motherhood and not to return to full-time employment.

Well, what a weird year it has been for all, Covid put a spanner in the works for everybody and unfortunately, we had to close for a prolonged period of time which meant that our leavers had to miss out on the usual ceremonies and parties.

When we could have reopened in June, parents were understandable reluctant and we only had one family wishing to attend which obviously wasn’t viable, I spent most of lockdown reading various guidance on Covid and preparing risk assessments etc. to ensure when we did open, we would be fully Covid compliant and I can confidently say that, with the help of Trevor our chairperson and the staff, we go above and beyond what is expected of us to keep everybody as safe as we possibly can. Since opening again in September, we have still seen a little reluctance however numbers slowly grew with 20 children on the roll and another 10 looking to start after Christmas.

During the post-Christmas lockdown, we remained open with few children however I am happy to report that since Easter 2021 business is booming with an influx of two-year-olds and numbers are already looking good for September 2021 so let’s hope it continues.

We haven't had a chance to do much fundraising this year again due to covid, however hopefully this will all change after the Summer break and we can continue with some events to support the preschool and community."

g. Newton Flotman Primary School – Headteacher Adam Riley

Adam read out and expanded on his report:

“Annual chronology:

- School received Inadequate judgement by Ofsted in January 2020 and was placed in special measures.
- I started at the school after the Easter holiday and during the first national lockdown.
- November 2020 school academised and converted to the St Benet's Academy Trust.

Projects to date:

During the last year the majority of pupils were taught online but we remained open throughout the whole year for key worker and vulnerable children. During the most recent lockdown we had approximately 30% of pupils back at school. We have invested heavily on IT infrastructure and hardware and will have spent close to £20,000 by the end of this academic year. We have invested in books and resources, again the total will be close to £20,000 by the end of the year.

During the Summer Term our focus will be to address gaps in learning, the wellbeing of pupils and to ensure smooth transitions to new year groups (especially the younger children joining our school and the older children moving to high school).

We've started to make links between the school and the Church and once allowed, post 21 June, we want to reopen the school to the community. It's nice to have met you all and I look forward to seeing you all in the future."

In response to a question, Adam said that Ofsted had visited the school in December where they had focused on the work he was doing as Headteacher and ensured that pupils were safe, the school expected another visit from Ofsted in the near future.

h. Tree Warden – Richard Beach

Richard read out and expanded on his report:

“At the start of 2020 a group from St Mary's Church began promoting tree planting in the village. (Andy Cox, David Wharton and myself). We were pleased to get permission from the Alan King playing field committee to plant a copse of 50 trees. The plan was to have a community tree planting day in November but that was not possible because of the lock down. We finally managed to get them planted in February. It was great to have local household groups to help with the planting.

The trees are just coming into leaf - although it's hard to see because of the big guards we needed to protect the trees from deer. There has been lots of encouraging comment from passers-by – it seems lots of people share our enthusiasm for tree planting! We are grateful to local people and to Duffields for sponsorship of this year's planting.

As a result of my involvement, I was invited to become the parish tree warden which I am pleased to do. According to the tree council the task of the tree warden is to "Plant, promote and protect their local trees". I can't claim any great ability in woodland management but there is a lively local network of tree wardens who can offer support if needed.

The plan is to continue to promote tree planting in the parish – this would fit in with Norfolk County Council's plan to plant a million trees! We hope our next planting will be in November. We are investigating possible sites for planting so if you have any ideas, please let me know."

Richard was thanked for taking on the role of Tree Warden

i. Newton Flotman Village Centre

In the absence of anyone else, Paul Weeks supplied comments as a member of Village Centre Committee.

He spoke of the tree planting on the Playing Field as already mentioned by Richard Beach. He said that due to the lockdown, only the pre-school was using the hall and were keeping the Village Centre going financially. There had been no meetings of Village Centre Committee since March 2020 and with the current chairman unwell the committee was in limbo. The Parish Council were aware of the problems and he felt it was important to support and re-establish the committee as soon as possible.

4. Reports from Other Bodies

a. Long Stratton Medical Practice – Keith Burnett

In Keith's absence, Paul Weeks supplied comments as a member of the Patient Participation Group.

He said that as a result of lockdown the surgery in Newton Flotman had closed its doors to patients so that it could be retained as a 'clean place' in case of an outbreak at the Long Stratton surgery. However, the dispensary was still operating through a window of the surgery and was working well.

A new partner had joined the medical practice and would be responsible for Olive House as well as operating out of the Newton Flotman surgery. A telephone service would commence shortly with face-to-face appointments in the near future.

The Long Stratton Medical Practice supported the Poringland vaccination centre as well as supplying the vaccinations from the surgery in Long Stratton and on

one occasion in Newton Flotman. They had received a good supply of the vaccination and had been ranked third highest in the supply of the first vaccine.

b. District Council – Florence Ellis

Florence said that this had been a very strange year with everyone having to adjust to new ways of working. Whilst she would be pleased to return to face-to-face meetings, she said that the technology had served the council well to enable it to continue with its functions.

The District Council had played a big part supporting vulnerable people during this time, with the Hub working seven days a week. The leisure centres had had to close but the staff had been redeployed to the Hub or to the Norfolk University Hospital where they had supported the rollout of the vaccinations. Grants and support had also been given to businesses.

The District Council had been very appreciative of the assistance provided by volunteers in villages and she had been very impressed with those working in Newton Flotman especially the Covid-19 Facebook group which had been established. Those volunteers had been thanked and given a certificate and badge for their work.

Finally, she said that she hoped that things were starting to get back to normal and named the charities she would be supporting during her year as Chairman to the Council – Swadeston Day Centre and Norfolk Blood Bikes

Florence was congratulated on her appointment to Chairman of the Council

David Gibbs joined the meeting

c. County Council – Colin Foulger

Colin Foulger was not present.

5. Parish Council Reports

a. Chairman’s Report – David Gibbs

David Gibbs began by saying that he was sad for those who had lost their life following the pandemic and also sad to learn of the death of the Duke of Edinburgh, he had written a note of condolence on behalf of the parish.

David went on to read out his report:

“I have picked out a number of items, but I would encourage you to read the full minutes on the Parish Council website

Flordon Road/A140

As an aid to road safety, double yellow lines which include a residents parking bay have now been completed on the Flordon Road. This also includes an extension to the 30ph speed limit.

It should be noted that we regard this as a preliminary development pending a more comprehensive review of the junction when the impact of the Long Stratton bypass and additional housing can be assessed. See previous minutes.

SAM 2 Device

Unfortunately, the unit suffered a major failure and has been out of commission for some time. We are currently awaiting the results of a funding request. In the meantime, ‘Slow Down’ stickers are available for attaching to waste and recycling bins.

Saffron Housing Trust – Affordable Housing Survey

Following completion of the survey which indicated a need for a number of affordable houses, local landowners were approached but to date no areas proposed have been suitable.

Possible Access to Smockmill Common

This investigation is ongoing.

The Parish Plan 2008

A review of the recommendations detailed in the report have been assessed and it was concluded that most of the short to medium-term recommendations had been achieved.

The possibility of undertaking an up-to-date Parish survey is currently under consideration.”

b. Parish Council Financial Report – Julie King

The Clerk spoke of the parish council finances for years ending 31 March 2020 and 2021

“The parish council raises around £12,000 each year in precept, money taken from parishioners as part of their council tax, for the current year it will equate to £27.27 for a band D property a freeze in precept from the previous year. Along with income from the allotments, they use this to run the parish council, provide services such as bus shelters, grit bins, dog bins, seating and litter bins and to maintain the areas under its responsibility – King’s Green, allotments and small areas of land at the top of Alan Avenue and off Joy Avenue. In addition, they provide funding to the Village Centre for the maintenance of the playing field and to the Church for the maintenance of the churchyard. During the last two years, the parish council has also purchased a banner and flags for Norfolk Day and worked towards a VE Day celebration that sadly did not take place. The Parish Council maintains a website containing information about the council as well as other village activities (new material always welcome) and a Facebook page. The Parish council are in a comfortable position financially with around £10,000 in reserves allowing it to earmark money to support the Village Centre with the clearing of its ditches and to progress a project that will hopefully see a new pedestrian access to Smockmill Common. Full details can be found on the website or via the Parish Clerk.”

6. General Parish Issues

David Gibbs thanked the Parish Councillors and Parish Clerk for their work to help make Newton Flotman a better place for all residents. He said that they could not do this without support and encouraged those present to consider joining the Parish Council.

He also thanked those present and all those involved in other village organisations for their commitment and work on behalf of the Village.

As a final note he said that the County Councillor, Colin Foulger, who had supported the village for many years, was standing down and wished him a long and healthy retirement.

Bob Kelf thanked David Gibbs for his hard work over the last two years.

Bob Kelf closed the meeting at 8.20pm.