

Newton Flotman Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25th April 2017

Present: David Gibbs (Chairman)	Parish Council
Bob McKelvey	Parish Council
Christopher Remer	Parish Council
Bob Kelf	Parish Council
Jean Wilson	Parish Council
Nigel Morgan	Parish Council
Evelyn Domeyer	Parish Council
Julie King (Clerk)	Parish Council
Rev Canon Sally Gaze	St Mary's Church
Andy Pownall	Newton Flotman Allotments
Neil Tracey	Emergency Coordinator

Members of the Parish: Kirsten Remer, Charlene Matthews, Jeff Billings and Sandra Gibbs.

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 Glennis Holmes – Newton Flotman Pre-school, Wendy Adams – Newton Flotman & District Women's Institute, Barry Adams – Newton Flotman Village Centre, PCSO Darrin Sore – Norfolk Police and Colin Foulger – County Councillor.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th May 2016

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 27 allotments off Exchange Road made up of 17 allotments of approximately 30m x 7m and 10 allotments of half this size. All of the allotments have been let this year and most are kept in reasonable condition, there are one or two that have become neglected and will probably become available at the end of the year. As the people with the neglected allotments have paid the rent for this year they will be given a chance to control the weeds before their contract is terminated at the end of the year. One small allotment has recently become available but I have no names on the waiting list. If anyone knows of anyone who is interested please ask them to contact me.

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 area on the left has become a bit of a dumping ground for all kinds of

waste making it difficult for vehicles to turn and leaves very little room for tipping of manure. I have recently had six loads of horse manure delivered to the site and it was very difficult to turn the tractor and trailer around to tip the load. It is hoped that at some time in the future the rubbish can be cleared.

There was a slight problem in the spring with one of the two water stand pipes that only dripped water when the stop cock was turned on after the winter. It was thought that perhaps this was a burst pipe but fortunately it was only the newly installed non-return valve sticking – this was freed off at no expense.

On the night of storm Doris, 23rd/24th February, 12 of the allotment sheds were broken into but despite all the damage caused no significant items were stolen. The police were informed and visited the site, they came to the conclusion that the perpetrators were looking for fuel or small expensive items of machinery neither of which were kept on the allotments.

All allotment holders are members of The Newton Flotman Allotment Society, affiliated to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. The membership fee was set at £3.00 of which £2.75 is passed to the National Society. The fee is collected at the same time as the rent. 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.”

David Gibbs thanked Andy for his work administering the allotments on behalf of the Parish Council.

b. St Mary’s Church – Rev Canon Sally Gaze

Sally presented a copy of the Tas Valley Team Ministry Review of the year 2016 for the records.

She said that it had been an eventful year. The Community Lunch continued to thrive, the Parent and Toddler Group had increased from fortnightly to weekly and they had forged closer links with Olive House.

The project that would see the development of a community hub was still ongoing and the previous December lead had been stolen from the church roof. Kirsten Remer and Chris Gaze were working on grants to raise the necessary £400,000 for the completion of both projects. Consideration was being given to a ‘roof alarm’ and confirmation had been received that the church roof would have to be reroofed with lead to comply with the necessary restrictions on such a historic building. £100,000 of the necessary £400,000 had been raised and large bids to several charities were being submitted in the near future.

Kirsten Remer spoke about the consideration that had been given to including, in the project, a flagpole on the church tower. There was considerable work that would need to be done to necessitate the safe

access to the top of the church tower to allow for the changing of the flag. The grants currently being applied for only covered urgent structural work and as such the project would not be possible for the foreseeable future.

Jean Wilson added that the fortnightly Social Club meetings in Church Room continued with up to 12 members, it was hoped that this could be extended in the coming months.

c. Newton Flotman Pre-School – Glennis Holmes

Glennis was unable to attend the meeting but her written report was read out:

“We are approaching the end of the academic year 2016/17. This year, because of demand, we have opened for three full days per week which has proved very popular and most sessions are full. We have 50 children on role at the moment.

The Pre-school is committee run and relies on the support and hard work of the committee to arrange and support our fundraising events and the annual outing. This year they are going to the Dinosaur Park in May.

Most of the children on role live in Newton Flotman but we have a number of children from surrounding villages.

We try to make the very best use of the premises here in the Village Centre. We use the foyer for quiet activities and use the outdoor area every day of the year come rain or shine. The children enjoy helping with the plants in the outside area and playing on the grass in the summer months.

Everyone who visits agrees that the Pre-school is in a lovely setting. We make use of the surrounding area when we can. This week the children are all going on a sponsored spring walk to look for various items. All money raised will go towards new equipment for the children.”

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

Wendy was unable to attend.

Jean Wilson said that the WI continued to have a full programme of extraordinary, interesting speakers and had once again take part in the village fete.

e. Newton Flotman Village Centre – Barry Adams

Barry was unable to attend the meeting but his written report was read out:

“2016 has been another successful 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.

Fundraising continues to be a priority and we have staged a number of quiz nights which prove very popular and lively events. Our annual fete continues to be successful and last year there were some new attractions which proved popular.

Our priority for the coming year is the improvement and further expansion of the play area. Jean Wilson will give an update of progress.

We have recently appointed Mark Hedges in a caretaker / cleaner role. Mark will be the first point of contact for any maintenance issues and will additionally be responsible for locking and unlocking the hall and gate when the hall is booked for parties.

There are a number of internal improvements planned which will improve the attractiveness of the hall for general hire. Christopher Remer will give an update on progress of these in his report.

The success of the Village Hall relies heavily on active participation by all Committee members and thanks should go to all those who give up their time to support the Hall. We do however, continue to struggle to find support in general from the Village for the events. We urgently need new members on the Committee to provide fresh ideas on how to develop the village centre to best serve the community.”

Jean Wilson updated the meeting on the fundraising for the Play Equipment. The target for phase 1 was £57k and to date 40% had been raised. The grant applications were extremely demanding and they were being held back from making steady progress by the timescales of the grant providers.

Christopher Remer spoke of the internal improvements to the Centre. The Wi-Fi had been installed and was in high demand and a grant application for audio-visual equipment had been submitted to Big Lottery, Awards for All, a response was expected by 23rd May.

f. Newton Flotman Primary School – Headteacher Jeremy Johns

No response received.

Sally Gaze, as a Governor, said that the school was doing really well. The previous year had been a difficult one due to turnover of staff but some excellent staff had been recruited and the school had a lively and happy feel to it and the results showed that it was doing well.

In answer to a questions it was understood that the school currently had 149 on role but had a capacity of 180. It was understood that final numbers for the September 2017 intake would not be known until 8th June.

g. Newton Flotman Football Club – Mark Taylor.

No response received.

h. Long Stratton Medical Practice – Sheila Curtis

No response received.

i. Community Emergency Plan – Neil Tracey

Neil Tracey said that it had taken longer than hoped to produce the Community Emergency Plan but that it was now finished had been approved and signed off by the Parish Council and contained a list of those who had offered their assistance. He now planned to meet with the coordinator at South Norfolk Council to discuss the circulation of information, contact those who had offered assistance to check that they were still willing to be involved and issue another questionnaire this time more specifically targeting those who may need assistance. He also suggested that a copy of plan was put on Parish Council website.

David Gibbs congratulated Neil on the work he had undertaken and said that it endorsed that ‘community spirit’ was still alive in the village.

j. 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) with non-disposal assets valued at approximately £2,150.

Income derived from the assets is approx. £80 per annum and currently totals approx. £1,900.

There are three Trustees: Rev Cannon Sally Gaze, Bob McKelvey 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 and as a consequence the objective is recorded as “For the benefit of the poor in Newton Flotman”.

Despite the political rhetoric, we, the Trustees have found it extremely difficult to identify ‘poor’ needy recipients 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.

There is a reluctance to wind up this small Charity bearing in mind the historic significance and we continue to seek ways of providing support within the spirit of the initial intention.

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.”

Discussion took place on how the money available could be used to assist the ‘poor’. Suggestions included a fund for children at the school whose parents were unable to pay for extracurricular activities such as a musical instrument, Christmas presents for the elderly, donations to food banks and panic alarms for the elderly. It was also felt that Andy Cox, Community Outreach Worker may be able to assist in identifying those in need.

4. Reports from Other Bodies

a. Long Stratton Safer Neighbourhood Team – PCSO Darrin Sore

It was noted that PCSO Darrin Sore had been advised that he should not be attending Annual Parish Meetings or sending a report. He had however advised that the public could obtain information regarding crime figures from:

- a monthly report provided to Parish Councils and uploaded onto the Parish Council website
- quarterly ‘street surgeries’
- bi-annual Parish Council briefings
- the Safer Neighbourhood Team via e-mail or 101.

b. District Council – Phil Hardy

No response received.

c. County Council – Colin Foulger

Colin was unable to attend the meeting but had sent his apologies. He thanked the Parish Council for their help and co-operation during his past four years’ tenure as the County Councillor for Newton Flotman and the Forehoe Division and hoping that the friendship may be allowed to continue following the County Council elections.

5. Parish Council Reports

a. Chairman’s Report – David Gibbs

David read out his report:

“The full Parish Council meets six times a year and a Planning sub-committees as required. The latter is formed by three councillors on a rotational basis with the committee Chairman charged with the responsibility of visiting immediate neighbours to show the plans and seek their views on the proposal.

Parish Precept

Because of recent legislation and increasing demands placed on Parish Councils it was considered prudent to request an amount of £11,331 for 2017/18 which results in the annual cost for a Band D property of £24.96 (an increase of £1.19 over the previous year). This will enable us to meet anticipate demands and provide a small reserve to guard against unforeseen expenses.

Long Stratton Area Action Plan

Progress is slow although we are assured that our concerns regarding

the Flordon Road/A140 junction have been recognised. The 'Highways Network Manager' (Matt Tracey) recently advised: 'Considering the importance of this junction we are seeking to co-ordinate proposed improvements at this location with the Long Stratton bypass as it aligns well with these aims (local highway and other local transport improvements to reduce congestion at key locations). If successful, it will give us the very real opportunity of playing a far more proactive role in helping bring forward the early construction of improvements along the A140, potentially in advance of any planning requirements.' It was however agreed that if necessary, we should still consider making a joint representation with other parishes bordering the A140 at the appropriate time.

Community Emergency Plan

The completed plan prepared by Neil Tracey (Emergency Community Co-ordinator) has been adopted by the Parish Council and is now operational. One outstanding issue is the need for a volunteer to act as Deputy Co-ordinator. If this is a role you could undertake to support your local community, please contact Neil (01508 470635) for more information.

Road Safety

The SAM2 equipment has been in constant use at various locations over the last twelve months to remind motorists of the 30mph speed limit throughout the village. We are indebted to Councillor Nigel Morgan who has taken responsibility for locating the device and analysing the data which highlights the times when the speed limit is exceeded (often by a large margin). The data has been passed to the Police who have agreed to take action.

We are still concerned regarding inconsiderate parking, especially near the junctions on Flordon Road which often obscure the vision of traffic most noticeably using St Mary's Close. The Police have requested that anyone with such concerns should notify them using the 101 number and they will visit the area and investigate.

With 'Partnership Funding', a sign is being purchased for location on Flordon Road at the entrance to the village. Apart from 'Newton Flotman' the sign will include 'please drive slowly' as an aid to road safety.

Newton Flotman Tree Warden

We have been asked by 'South Norfolk Tree Wardens' to seek a volunteer who would be prepared to fulfil this role as they would like to have a Tree Warden in every Parish. If you would like to be involved, further information is available at www.southnorfolktreewardens.org

David said that notes of the Parish Council meetings appeared in Partnership and that full minutes were available on the Parish Council's website.

b. Parish Council Financial Report – Julie King

The Clerk presented the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2017 – see attached – explaining that the figures were, as yet, unaudited and unapproved by the Parish Council but none-the-less hopefully represented the spending of the Council for the year. She explained many of the payments and receipts for the year particularly where they differed significantly from the previous year or budget.

She spoke of some of the major expenses including grass cutting of Kings Green and the Playing Field, the donations to charities and towards the cutting of the Churchyard and projects such as the allotment fence, a site investigation regarding the drainage of the Playing Field, a new bus shelter panel, repainting of the Village Sign and the payment towards the new sign for Flordon Road.

The Parish Council had started the year with an opening balance of £3,807.17 and ended with a balance of £3,491.93.

In response to a question she explained that the Parish Council was able to claim back VAT for purchase made, that it varied year by year depending on expenditure and was generally claimed back in the year following the expense.

6. General Parish Issues

None.

Thanks

Bob McKelvey thanked David Gibbs for the work he had undertaken as Chairman during the previous year both for the village and the Parish Council.

David Gibbs thanked all those who undertook activities on behalf of the village as well as Julie King, Parish Clerk.

The meeting closed at 8.22pm.