

# DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Doddington Village Hall on Monday 10 May 2021 at 7pm

Present: Cllr Steve Coates (Chairman), Cllr Colin Jones (Vice Chairman), Cllr Kevin Attwood, Cllr Graham Cuthbert, Cllr Peter Duckworth, Cllr Kevin Fraser and Cllr Alison Shaw and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present was Ward Councillor David Simmons.

### 1. WELCOME

Cllr Coates welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded attendees of the COVID-19 rules in place.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING DATED 11 MAY 2020

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11 May 2020 as a true record. Cllr Coates signed the minutes as a true record.

### 3. REPORT FROM CHAIRMAN

Cllr Coates gave his report, a copy of which is attached.

### 4. FINANCE – YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, copy of which is attached. No matters were raised.

### 5. VILLAGE HALL REPORT

The Village Hall Committee had submitted a written report, copy of which is attached.

### 6. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

The Neighbourhood Watch coordinator had submitted a written report, copy of which is attached.

Cllr Coates said it is important that residents report incidents to the Police and not just on Social Media

### 7. DODDINGTON ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT

The Association had submitted a written report, copy of which is attached.

### 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No matters were raised from the floor.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.10pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Dated: 9 May 2022

## Chairman's Report

This is the end of my first year as Chairman of Doddington Parish Council and, because of measures implemented to control the Covid 19 pandemic, this is the first physical, as opposed to virtual, meeting which I have chaired.

We have a full complement of Councillors and I should like to thank them and our Clerk for their hard work and the support and advice they have given me during my first year as Chairman.

Mrs Licence, our Clerk, has worked very hard to adapt to the concept of virtual meetings, ensuring that we are acting lawfully, preparing papers in advance, keeping us informed of correspondence and taking accurate minutes during these "online" sessions.

Thanks go to County Councillor Andrew Bowles and David Simmons, our Ward Councillor for their support and interest during the last year. Councillor Bowles has recently retired and I should like to place on record our wish for him to have a long, healthy and happy retirement.

**Covid 19.** During this most difficult of years, the Parish Council responded to challenges presented to our more vulnerable residents by offering to collect shopping and medical prescriptions on their behalf. Councillors Fraser and Jones readily agreed to be our nominated contacts for this and Councillor Fraser was called upon on several occasions to help out, thereby making a real difference to the lives and wellbeing of those residents.

**Public Question Time.** A small number of members of the public have attended our virtual meetings and raised a variety of issues.

**Planning.** The Parish Council continued to receive planning applications during the pandemic, the most contentious of which was an application to extend the care home at Ellens Court. Both myself and Councillor Attwood represented our and residents' concerns about the scale of the development and access issues at Swale Borough Council (SBC) planning and working group meetings, but the application was subsequently permitted.

SBC published their revised Local Plan in March amidst a great deal of controversy about the timing and the lack of time for public consultation. A small sub-group of councillors met to discuss the plan and draft a response and I am immensely grateful to Councillor Attwood for his wise counsel during this process. Our final response to the plan was copied to Newnham and Lynsted with Kingsdown Parish Councils, both of which commented on the high quality of our submission.

The Parish Council successfully applied to SBC to have the "asset of community value" status of the Chequers Inn renewed for another 5 years and I am grateful to Councillor Shaw for her work in support of the application.

**Finance.** Is covered in the Clerks Finance report.

**Highways.** In anticipation of us having to prepare a Highways Improvement Plan for Kent Highways (KH), we distributed a public consultation asking residents to list their road priorities. These were subsequently ratified by the Parish Council as; road surfacing, white lining and drainage. As a direct result of pressure from the Parish Council, KH has now resurfaced part of Chequers Hill and Brewster Road and white lines have been re-painted throughout the village. More needs to be done, but our positive engagement with KH has begun to bear fruit.

The Parish Council received a large number of complaints about a haulage company's vehicles using the road through Doddington and Lynsted as a cut through. As a result, we

complained to the company on several occasions and liaised with the police, Kent Highways and Lynsted with Kingsdown Parish Council. We have recently lodged a complaint with the Traffic Commissioner about this company and we await a satisfactory resolution.

**Flooding.** Councillors have pro-actively pursued potential solutions to this major problem, working with Kent County Council and local landowners in order to try and find a way to stem the flow of rainwater in the Old Lenham Road before it gets to the village. Whilst this is still ongoing, a great deal of progress has already been made with regular road cleaning and drain emptying and I am very grateful to Councillor Jones for his perseverance and diligence in pursuing this with Kent Highways.

**Playing Field.** Cllr. Duckworth has continued to report monthly on the playing field and is assisted by Cllr. Fraser. A resident has suggested modernising some of the play equipment and is currently researching options for us to consider.

**War Memorial.** I would like to thank the gardening team and in particular, Ken Seyler, for their work in keeping the grass mown and the hedges trimmed.

**Neighbourhood Watch.** I would like to thank Sally Mills, our Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, for her work in keeping us all informed of local incidents.

**Community Speed Watch (CSW).** The village CSW group is led by Cllr Fraser and supported by Councillor Jones, myself and 4 residents. As a result of restrictions placed by Kent Police, CSW deployments were limited throughout the peak of the pandemic. We have now been able to resume our activity fully but, given this year's disruption, I have decided to omit the yearly information figures from this report as they have been somewhat distorted by the limited number of our sessions. Nevertheless, strong evidence indicates that CSW activity does have an effect in reducing road speeds within the village.

**STEVE COATES**

## Finance Report

### 2019- 2020

The Independent Internal Auditor completed the audit of year-end accounts to 31 March 2020 remotely due to the coronavirus pandemic. Under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, the Parish Council certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review and the Certificate of Exemption was submitted to the PKF Littlejohn immediately after the July meeting, the deadlines for the audit were extended in 2020. Changes in legislation had been made in order to help smaller authorities in the performance of their duties as a result of the restrictions of movement and limitations on social contact necessary to limit the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Full details of the Annual return and finance documents can be viewed on the Parish Council website

### 2020- 2021

The Precept for 2020- 2021 remained at £8,732 which and the additional council tax for band D properties in the parish remained at £38.20, an increase of 0.42%.

The forecast budget requirement for the year was £8732 (ex VAT).

Total receipts were £9,209 which included a VAT reclaim of £191; a contribution of £143 from Newnham Parish Council towards the insurance of the War Memorial; and £137 from KCC towards the website.

Total payments were £9,449 (ex VAT)

The bank balance at 31 March 2021 was £16,591

### Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Independent Internal Auditor will conduct the audit of year-end accounts to 31 March 2021 on 8 June and the Council will sign off the AGAR at its meeting on 14 June.

### Donations made in 2020-2021

The Parish Council made donations of £100 to the Swale Citizens Advice Bureau; £100 to the Kent Sussex and Surrey Air Ambulance Trust; £35 to the Royal British Legion for a poppy wreath for Remembrance Day; and £2,500 to Doddington Village Hall.

### 2021-22

The Precept requirement for 2021-22 is £8,734, an increase of £2 from the previous year and, due to the way Council Tax is calculated by Swale Borough Council, the additional Council Tax for band D properties in the parish remains the same at £38.20.

Wendy Licence

Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer to Doddington Parish Council

## Village Hall Report

Well, I think you will all agree that 2020 was a very fragmented year. Just as we appeared to be coming out of lockdown we were hit by another rise in Covid infections and everything ground to a halt.

Despite this all the necessary precautions and safety/social distancing measures were put in place should the hall be able to open.

Thanks to the grant of £10,000 from Swale Borough Council we were able to remain solvent to counteract the loss of letting revenue and fundraising.

Thanks to our Secretary Sara Jones work and various opportunities to apply for grants from KCC members we were able to benefit from this good fortune.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parish Council who were also very generous in granting us the sum of £2,500.

This financial input has continued into 2021 and I know Sara has been surprised at the funding that has been available to us. Thank you once again Sara.

During the year we were able to complete the final phase of the heating upgrading. There was an initial complication which has since been rectified. (A faulty thermostat was the issue). The lobby decoration has been completed.

We have at last completed our much disputed contract with Trans Fire Protection and have had our first visit by our new contractor.

I would like to thank Sara Jones, Marianne Allen and Pam Cowan for all they do as committee officers and beyond. Many thanks also go to Chris Thompson for being so available to meet various people at the hall when I am unable to get away.

Our next improvement phase will start soon in the replacement and upgrading of curtain/acoustic material on the windows.

Window repair and refurbishment will follow next. We have applied for provision of electric vehicle charging points through a KCC scheme and are awaiting the result of the application. We hope in due course to open the hall once again for our regular users and have a program of fund raising events planned.

Les Roberts  
Chairman of Village Hall Management Trustees.

## **Doddington Neighbourhood Watch Report**

It has been a busy year for Neighbourhood Watch, despite the country being in lockdown due to COVID-19 for months at a time.

The most notable type of crime that has been reported to me over the year, and which is increasing, is the use of the internet and mobile phones in attempts to scam residents into either handing over money, or to garner personal details for fraudulent purposes. The most common of these have been scams regarding National Insurance details and bank details, but the more sinister of them tapped into people's fears over COVID-19, with scammers trying to get people to pay for COVID tests and vaccines.

When I first started reporting on these incidents, residents were contacting me, often quite distressed at the types of threatening phone calls received. My strategy with these calls was to get residents reporting every call, text and email so that I could share details in the hope that people would feel less threatened by understanding how very common these are. By sharing, residents now have more confidence in recognising scam calls or texts. Residents were also encouraged to report to Action Fraud, the Police's fraud service.

Small-scale vandalism has also affected the Villages, with car crime and anti-social behaviour being top of the list. Windows of cars being broken with ball-bearings (also a greenhouse), tyre damage and people searching around gardens and private property were pretty common. A break-in at Doddington Service Station (with the theft of several small items and some charity collection boxes) and the theft of catalytic converters from several vehicles were on the more serious end of the scale.

Residents were also reminded to report all crime and incidents of anti-social behaviour to the Police, even if no crime had been committed, to enable them to build profiles of suspicious individuals and types of crimes.

I have been the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator for just over a year, having started in late 2019. In that time, the mailing list has grown to 49 residents and, as there is currently no NHW contact for Newnham, I have also been reporting on incidents to the residents of Newnham who have joined the list. Going forward, I will encourage more reporting of incidents so that we all have a better chance of protecting ourselves and our property against criminals.

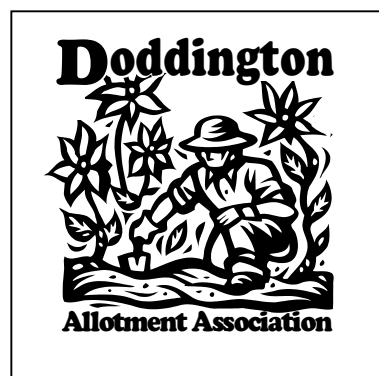
Anyone wishing to join the mailing list can contact me at:  
[neighbourhoodwatch.doddington@yahoo.com](mailto:neighbourhoodwatch.doddington@yahoo.com)

Sally Mills  
Doddington Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator

# Doddington Allotment Association

## Annual Report - 2020 to 2021

Doddington Allotment Association has had another busy year despite pandemic restrictions, and we are all now looking forward to our eighteenth growing season at the site.



Doddington Allotment Association is grateful for the support of both our landowner Richard Oldfield and to Doddington Parish Council for their continued support of the allotment site. Our small committee of officers and ordinary members (see below) continues to oversee the running of the site. We have delayed our (April) 2021 AGM due to the Covid-19 outbreak but have sent an annual summary to our membership. Plot rental for 2021 remained at the same level as that in 2020.

Following government advice and that from the National Allotment Society we are continuing to work at the allotment site, but within national guidelines. The continued access to allotments during the pandemic has allowed people to enjoy time outdoors and the site has probably never been so regularly tended!

The allotment site is currently fully occupied with plot holders from Wychling, Doddington, Newnham and Frinsted. (see membership list below). There was a change in membership with three people leaving compared with last year's report and three new members taking their place. In addition, there is now a waiting list of three. Our committee is now up to full numbers with a new ordinary committee member being co-opted during the last year.

A grant received from the Swale Eastern Area Committee, supported by Swale Borough Councillor David Simmons, paid for a new entrance gate and noticeboard for the allotment site with only a small top up from our own funds.

There have been no other changes to the running of the site compared with last year's report.

Many thanks

Kathy Friend (Secretary), 2 West End Cottages, Doddington.

Doddington Allotment Association Committee Members List (as of 28<sup>th</sup> April  
2021)

2020 - 2021 committee (awaiting AGM for 2021 - 2022 election)

Matthew Jevons	(Chair)
Kathy Friend	(Secretary)
Ann Dixon	(Treasurer)
Joy Dean	(ordinary member)
Chris Thompson	(ordinary member)
Jan West	(ordinary member)
John Wood	(ordinary member)



**Doddington Allotment Association Membership List (as of 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021)**

<b>Plot number</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Parish</b>
1	Kathy Friend	Doddington
2A	Christine Adams	Doddington
2B	Pat & Bob Fryer	Doddington
3	Kathy Friend & Richard Moyse	Doddington
4	Chris & Alli Thompson	Doddington
5	Matthew Jevons	Doddington
6A	Ann & Robert Dixon	Doddington
6B	Paul Mills	Doddington
7	Ann Dixon & Jan West	Doddington
8A	Sally Mills & Uwe Bottner	Doddington
8B	Jan & Barry West	Doddington
9A	Christine Adams	Doddington
9B	Alison & Lenny Jago	Doddington
10	Carol & John Wood	Doddington
11	Nigel & Jemma Sharrocks	Frinsted
12A	Rob Wanmer & Harriet Butterly	Doddington
12B	Kirsty & Tony Clark	Doddington
13	Judith & Robert Stacey	Wychling
14A	Heather Parry	Doddington
14B	Les & Barbara Roberts	Doddington
15A	Kevin Fraser & Annette Jelf	Doddington
15B	Les & Barbara Roberts	Doddington
16A	Kirsty & Tony Clark	Doddington
16B	Simon Jones & Angie Corcoran	Doddington
17A	Kevin Fraser & Annette Jelf	Doddington
17B	Kathryn & Des McLeish	Doddington
18A	Pippa Pawlik & John Barker	Newnham
18B	Kathryn & Des McLeish	Doddington
19A	Pippa Pawlik & John Barker	Newnham
19B	Joy Dean & Debbie Cripps	Wychling
20	Joy Dean & Debbie Cripps	Wychling