



# Rockland St Mary with Hellington Parish Council

The Annual Parish Meeting of Rockland St Mary with  
Hellington Parish Council was held on 9th April 2018

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Present:-** Councillors Kate Bevington (Chair), Daphne Howlett, Jane Patterson, Stephanie Ross-Wagenknecht, Ernie Green, Michael Hayward and Jim Wretham.

District Councillor Vic Thomson was in attendance and members of the public were present.

**Apologies for absence:-** County Councillor Barry Stone and Councillors Stephanie Ross-Wagenknecht and Ernie Green.

In attendance: Monica Armstrong (Clerk to the Parish Council).

**Declaration of interests:** None

### 1. Hellington Parish Meeting:-

Proposed by Councillor Howlett seconded by Councillor Wretham it was agreed to combine the Hellington Parish Meeting with that of Rockland St Mary.

**AGREED**

### 2. Minutes:

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 which had been previously circulated, were **APPROVED** and signed as correct.

### 3. Matters arising:-

There were no matters arising.

**NOTED**

### 4. District Councillor's Report:-

District Councillor Thomson said that he was now entering his fourth year as Councillor. During the past year there had been a "snap" election. On local issues he mentioned the following matters:-**Forget Me Not Grants** – these grants help people living with dementia to maintain suitable and safe homes by providing grants up to £1,000.**South Norfolk and Broadland collaborative working** – This is not a merger but looking at ways to work more closely and cost effectively.

**Community Governance Review (Parish Boundary Review)** – 2<sup>nd</sup> consultation ended on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and final recommendations will be made in February 2018 with implementation in May 2019.

**Big yellow bikes come to Norwich** - OFO are bringing bikes to hire into Norwich They have successful schemes in Cambridge and Oxford

**South Norfolk Design Award**

**Community Public House of the Year**

**South Norfolk Council awarded the Investors in People Platinum award**

## **Pick 'N' Mix Bitesize Learning**

### **5. County Councillor's Report:-**

County Councillor had tendered his apologies and had not provided a report.

### **6. Chair's Report:-**

Chair, Councillor Kate Bevington gave her report:-

"What follows is a concise version of some of the key things your Parish Council has undertaken and achieved in one year since last April - under various headings.

#### **Road Safety:-**

We have continued our speedwatch sessions supported by periodic police patrols. We are amazed that some people still think it is acceptable to drive at around 42 -48 mph in a 30mph zone, but the good news is that there has been a reduction in the percentage being caught doing 35 or more so maybe at long last we are gradually changing anti-social driving behaviour. We would love to have more volunteers to support us... it is not onerous so please talk to me or Monica Armstrong about it. The Parish Council were successful in applying to Highways for a grant to help us buy a SAM2 speed camera which flags up what speed a car is doing. This will soon be in operation in different parts of the village. Linked to this, we were also successful in our bid to the Members Highways Budget for money to pay for a variety of Wheelie Bin Stickers that we hope publicly spirited parishioners will put on their various waste bins.

#### **Village Caretaker- looking after the village:-**

This is Steve's second year as our village caretaker. He checks Green Lane playing field and the equipment at least once a week, clears leaves from footpaths like Star Piece, puts up signs, mends equipment, in fact he does a *wide variety* of work for us -too much to mention. He also does many things unpaid because he believes in community spirit. For example, the daffodils you see on entering the village and at the Staithe are there because Steve was kind enough to buy and plant them. We are very lucky to have someone as dedicated as him but remember too that we have him because this Parish Council was creative enough to devise the role !

#### **Floral Competition:-**

On a lighter note, the council held a floral competition last summer with the aim of making Rockland 'Blooming Bootiful' with displays in front gardens. The tubs were generously donated by Mr Shelton, and the entries judged by James Debbage of Green Pastures. Thank you too to those who look after the WI's large container near Surlingham Lane which is kept attractively planted throughout the year.

#### **Wherryman's Way:-**

You may have noticed that the path to the bird hide has been free of cows and cow "poo" for over a year. It should continue to be free from these hazards as the Parish Council held meetings with the Rockland Wildfowlers and got them to agree that the land they own and lease for grazing cattle is separated with an electric fence when cows are present.

#### **Blackhorse Dyke improvements completed:-**

A lot of further work was needed to make this area safe and nicer to use. The willow tree was checked over and subsequently cut back to make it safe. We paid for gravel to improve the parking surface and for the entrance to be made more level. The grass area at the back was levelled and re-seeded. We have installed two signs: Deep Water and No Fly Tipping. Steve has also recently fenced off the section behind the bus stop and another Deep Water safety sign will be installed.

#### **Green Lane Playing Field:-**

We are lucky to have such a large space and resource as this. However, it has been a source of great concern to the Parish Council. It was kept open and subject to repeated vandalism from stolen cars joy riding over the grass and driving into the football nets, a hideaway for drug-dealers in cars and people dumping tyres. It is our duty to do our best to protect parish assets from the threat of vandalism, fly-tipping and illegal travellers. So we installed a metal gate which is kept locked unless grass cutting takes place or we are contacted for a special event, and a separate pedestrian gate wide enough for pushchairs and wheelchairs which is kept unlocked. There is also a new sign at the entrance.

Sadly, we still have a problem with fly-tipping of tyres, and we have also had a spate of motor-bikes or off-road bikes using the hollow dips of the area. We shall therefore have to do more work and spend more money securing these parts of the site. We have wanted to improve the space, so earlier last year Councillor Jim Wretham undertook to lead a consultation exercise to gather people's ideas about how Green Lane facilities might be enhanced. Jim also met with professional Play Officers from South Norfolk for their views on how the site might be improved. The consultation included an article in Eleven Says, questionnaires distributed to a percentage of homes around the village and to all children in the village school, and the children's parents were invited to a meeting held in the parish room just after school so that they could see the suggested plans and ideas and give us feedback. Shockingly, only one person turned up. It was very disappointing. Maybe we needed our new website up and running before we embarked on the consultation.

#### **Website:-**

With the support and expertise of a parishioner and hard work from our excellent clerk, we have a new and very much improved website. If you click on the link to get updates you will always be informed of any news likely to affect your life in the village. It is also a way for you to communicate things of relevance and interest if you send information to the clerk. Please do use it so that you know what is going on.

#### **New Noticeboards:-**

As well as the new website, we have installed two new 'Parish-Council-only' noticeboards; one outside the post office/shop and another at Hellington. Again, I urge you to read what is on them so that you keep abreast of things that might be important to you.

And in relation to being informed and the problems in communicating with people....

#### **Greater Norwich Local Plan:-**

Despite the Parish Council displaying information for 5 months that included a map of sites that have been put forward for possible housing development, we were alarmed at the widespread ignorance of the GNLP and its possible implications for residents. We therefore leafleted every household in the village informing people of the two development sites and the deadline to respond. We dedicated special time in a Parish Council meeting to hear views and asked people to send us their comments to inform our Parish Council response.

It was lovely to be thanked by so many people for making them aware of the sites, to receive a high volume of responses and have more people attending parish council meetings to hear what we do.

#### **Bee Orchid Way- second part of development:-**

The Parish Council consulted with those residents who will be directly affected by the second (very delayed) part of the planned development of Bee Orchid Way. Residents were invited to a meeting with the developer to ask questions, see plans and give feedback. The Parish Council listened carefully to all views and composed a very detailed response to South Norfolk Council on legitimate areas for consideration. As a consequence, the planning application deadline was delayed twice, modifications have been made, and we have been awarded about £20K for play equipment for Bee Orchid Way and Green Lane. When the 21 new houses are eventually built the newcomers will be given one of our intended new welcome packs.

#### **Welcome Pack:-**

We decided it would be a nice idea if people new to the village were given some key information to help them settle in quickly and get to know what exists and whom to contact. Cllrs Ross-Wagennacht and Paterson have undertaken the work on these packs, and they will soon be ready for anyone new who moves into our lovely village.

#### **Thanks:-**

On your behalf, I would like to thank my fellow councillors who give up their time and work so effectively for the good of Rockland St Mary and Hellington. Between us, we take responsibility for particular things eg: I am footpath warden, Cllr Wretham is warden for Green Lane, Cllr Hayward is the warden for Blackhorse Dyke, Cllr Green is a governor for the primary school (Sapientia Trust), and 4 of us do the speedwatch aided by some other volunteers and led by Monica our clerk. Parishioner Michael Brett kindly volunteers his time as our tree warden. Finally, thanks to Monica

Armstrong, our highly professional, patient, good-humoured and pro-active clerk who is the anchor point for your council.”

## **7. Poors Trust:-**

Seb Shelton, Chair of the Trustees of the Poors Trust outlined in his report that this local charity dated back over 200 years with a charitable remit for “the prevention of or relief proverty in the Parish of Rockland St Mary by way of grants to individuals in need”.

He reported that the income for 2017.18 was in the region of £7,000 largely from staithe mooring fees. Expenditure incurred amounted to approximately £6,200 being split equally between oncoming annual costs (Staithe amenity area maintenance (essentially grass and hedge cutting) and insurance, essential long term maintenance and planning and grants to parishioners.

In the past twelve months the major undertakings have been:-

Replacement of the roadside barrier opposite New Inn Public House (joint venture with the Broads Authority) and quay replacement to north of the jetty (joint venture with local builder John Currie who gave two days of his time free of charge.

Revision and negotiation of agreements including a new lease with the Broads Authority for the twenty-four hour moorings at the Staithe (currently ongoing); the licence for the meadows on Lower Road and a review and clarification of the Trust’s objectives. (This has resulted in making 2017 the last year in which a small cash gift is made at Christmas regardless of need to some parishioners of pensionable age). A web page detailing the Charity and its activities has been added to the Parish Council website and an information sheet about the Trust inserted in an edition of Eleven Says.

Mr Shelton wished to express his thanks to Christine Hawkins, who after thirty years retired as a trustee. Christine has been replaced by Jane Wood. He also wished to thank Rockland St Mary Festival Committee for a generous donation of £300. together with Steve Gildersleeve who took over the maintenance duties for the Staithe this year and is still always the first to volunteer.

The Trustees would also like to thank the treasurer, Simon Black and Clerk Janet Hill. Also, Russell Gregory and Councillor Bevington for the voluntary work undertaken for the Trust during the year and Mr. and Mrs. Burt for contributing a more prominent car park sign to the entrance to the Staithe Car Park.

Mr. Shelton said that going forward long term maintenance of the staithe will continue over 2018/19 with the main project being the replacement of the wooden footbridge between the car prk and thye staithe.

## **8. Parish Rooms:-**

Mr. Saxton Chair of the Parish Room Committee gave the report. He explained the function of the Parish Room Committee was to manage the Parish Room/ Reading Room (‘the Parish Room’). The Committee ensures that the Parish Room is:

- available for hire to local based clubs and societies that promote social activity in Rockland St Mary and Hellington;
- available for use as a polling station at general and local elections and as the venue for Parish Council meetings;
- generates sufficient income to cover running and maintenance costs;
- maintained in a sound and safe condition.

Mr. Saxton said that they were looking to attract some new committee members to provide some fresh ideas and impetus. He said that they particularly needed a new treasurer as the current treasurer, Jim Wretham, was standing down at the end of September.

With regard to the financial situation Mr. Saxton said that the committee generates most of its income from fees charged to local groups and societies that hire the Parish Room. In addition it receives an annual donation from the Royden Trust. The Committee also received the sum of £281.00 from *The 200 Club*. A copy of the accounts for the Parish Room for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 (inclusive) has been provided to the Parish Council.

#### **9. Margaret Mack Room:-**

Daphne Howlett gave the report on behalf of the Margaret Mack Room. The Margaret Mack Village Hall is the larger of the two village halls, situated in School Lane, next door to the school. It operates as a registered charity and the Management Committee are the Trustees.

She reported that there had been very few Committee meetings this year – normally only two or three. However the electrics have all been updated. This coming year the outside needed to be re-painted and cracks in the rendering repaired, and the inside repainted and floor specially re-polished.

More people are needed to serve on the Committee especially a new secretary and in the next year or so a new treasurer.

Hire fees are as follows:- One hour £8.00; Part day 3 hours £18.00; all day & evening £45.00

#### **10. Surlingham and Rockland St Mary Community Action Group:-**

The Chair, Philip Halstead, gave his report. He outlined that the group was formed in 2011. It was agreed that this should be an unincorporated group, with a constitution that could encourage activity and action in the two villages. In the first year the group organised events and activities over two weekends in Rockland St Mary and Surlingham, which included music, art, stone masonry, printmaking, animation, walks, and exhibitions of art and shells. The group decided to continue by organising activities and events. In 2017 they had a programme with an event most months except through the Summer as they do not wish to clash with or detract from other organisations commitments. Their policy for pricing has always been to break even, whilst meeting their costs and keeping pricing for events as affordable as possible. Overall, they have maintained a balanced budget surplus for the last three years and were pleased to do so.

They have a Committee that meets on average four to five times a year and have members from Surlingham and Rockland. Jane Paterson is secretary, Stephanie Ross-Wagenknecht is Treasurer and Philip Halstead is the Chair. An Annual General Meeting is held in the Spring. They welcome anyone who would like to join the committee. Bosseln is held every season and usually attracts thirty players who strive to win, enjoy themselves and spend a pleasant three hours walking our lanes and rolling the Bosseln ball. They have a trophy and everybody takes the opportunity to meet old and new friends. They have held five Rook Rambles around the lanes and paths in the area. They construct routes that allow them to refresh participants at Village Halls and churches. The members and organisers provide food and drinks and they usually attract a group of thirty to forty. They have held various art activities. A Fabric Sculpture workshop was held in March. In May a Tour of Winbarra Vineyard is booked and includes wine tasting.

Mr. Halstead is grateful to the members of committee for effort, energy and creativity they have contributed to community activity. The community action group are proud that they encourage activity and action in the three villages. They can, and do, work in a variety of venues and respond as the need arises, they are self sufficient, with a small financial reserve, allows them a degree of independence and community commitment.

### **11. Hellington and Rockland St Mary Community Reserve:-**

The report presented by the Chair, Philip Halstead gave information about the Reserve. He said :-

#### **Who owns and manages it?**

The land is owned by the Parochial Church Council. The committee continues meet regularly and, after fully debating issues, agrees strategy and action.

The AGM will be on Tuesday 22nd May at Margaret Mack Hall. Reports including audited accounts will be presented and a talk on bumblebees will be the highlight.

#### **Where is it?**

Hellington and Rockland St Mary Community Reserve is a designated county wildlife site and comprises 6.6 acres of land, situated in a secluded valley at the eastern end of Hellington Low Common.

#### **What was achieved in 2017?**

- Invasive ragwort was managed in June, and a group of 20 volunteers pulled plants before seed set and distributed itself.
- The paths continued to be strimmed and have been well used.
- An event was held on the reserve and we attracted over 40 people.
- Signposts and an information board were installed.

#### **What is planned for the future?**

- We are considering the spread of bracken on the south eastern boundary.
- The scrub beyond the wet area will be thin to prevent spread.
- Invasive ragwort will be managed in mid summer.
- We will hold a drawing event.
- A summer event is planned in conjunction with South Yare wildlife Group.
- It is still anticipated that a web site will be launched this year.
- A new five year contract is expected to be agreed in time for the AGM. The cost will be agreed increased to take account of inflation.

#### **Stakeholders**

108 stakeholders supported the reserve in 2017 year by donating £20 annually, which we will hold as the donation for the next year.

We continue to publish newsletters, hold events, including art activities, surveys, walks, working parties and picnics which give us all an opportunity to socialise in a beautiful setting, learn about the natural environment and take practical steps to improve it.

Entry is free and open to all.

### **12. Rockland St Mary Primary School:-**

The Clerk had contacted the Head at the School inviting her to provide a report. She had received a reply stating that it was hoped a report could be provided but unfortunately none had been received.

### **13. Parochial Church Council:-**

The Clerk had contacted the Secretary of the PCC and asked whether she would like to prepare a report informing for the Annual Parish Meeting. Unfortunately, no report had been received. However, Daphne Howlett, treasurer of the PCC, said that the PCC were grateful to their financial contribution towards the grass cutting of the churchyard. £5,000 had been spent in having the

electrics updated and a new heater installed in the centre of the Church. The Church had been able to pay the parish share of £9,170.00 but this had now been increased by 15% for the current year. The Church works hard to make a presence in the village with a coffee morning taking place on the 1st Tuesday of each month. There is also a café once every six weeks held in the Parish Rooms – a church service with a difference!

#### **14. Bramrocks:-**

Mr. Saxon presented his report. He said the production of “Ill Get My Man” had been well received as had “Death on Delivery”. Their next performance would be “A Bunch Of Amateurs”, directorial debut from David Middleton, an established member of the Bramrocks for over 12 years!. Electrics had been updated costing £2,500 with more work to be undertaken.

#### **15. 200 Club:-**

**Councillor Wretham gave the report on behalf of the 200 Club. He stated:-**

1. The purpose of the Rockland St Mary 200 Club Committee is to manage the running of the 200 Club Lottery which was set up in September 2015. It is a lottery which operates under a licence issued by South Norfolk Council (no. 15/01072).
2. We are now in the third year of the Lottery. Our lottery year runs from 1 October – 30 September.
3. This year we sold 95 tickets, down from 115 last year.
4. As in previous years 50% of the proceeds from the lottery are divided equally between the Parish Room Committee and the Friends of Rockland Church. For 2017/18 we paid £281.00 to each. The remaining 50% is allocated as cash prizes with a monthly prize of £44.00.

#### **Membership of the Committee**

5. The Committee members are: Keith Saxton, who is the Chair; Jim Wretham, Treasurer; Jayne Regan and Jean Whitlam.

#### **Finance**

6. A copy of the accounts for the Parish Room for the year up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 has been provided to the Parish Council.

#### **The Future**

7. The current Committee feels that the Lottery needs a re-launch and fresh impetus. Therefore, they have concluded that the time is right for another group to take over the running of the lottery. They have announced this in Eleven Says inviting other people to take this on. If nobody comes forward the lottery will simply fold at the end of September.

#### **16. Gardening Club:-**

Monica Armstrong, the Club's secretary, gave the report. She said it was with much sadness that Club members learned of the tragic death of the President, Diane Beckley. She had been the guiding light of the Club and had made an enormous contribution.

After many years of sterling service Jean Whitlam had retired as Secretary because of her failing eyesight. Jean had been an outstanding secretary and her dedication and enthusiasm had been much appreciated. Brenda Ford had also stepped down as treasurer and the Club were indebted to her for her efficient management of the accounts. Both Jean and Brenda have been made honorary members of the club, in recognition of their contributions and have been presented with their certificates.

In view of the unusual circumstances an extra ordinary meeting was held in November when the following officers were elected:-

Ruth Everett (Chair); Monica Armstrong (Secretary); Sarah Littlechild (Treasurer); Brian Ansell (Newsletter Editor); Angela Whitlam (Programme Secretary); Jane Wood/Tracey Smythe (Joint Show Secretaries); Elizabeth Ridley-Thomas. Ray Whitewright (Committee Members); Mandy Ansell and Penny Mills have offered their assistance to help with the shows.

The Club meets every third Thursday in the month in the Parish Rooms. The programme consists of four talks during the winter, four garden visits in the summer. The Club's social in January this year was a very entertaining quiz. No meetings take place in August and December.

This summer show this year is being held on 21st July 2018.

A copy of the accounts, which have been independently audited, are attached.

#### **17. W.I:-**

Daphne Howlett gave the report on behalf of the W.I. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Margaret Mack Room, School Lane. They have 35 members. The WI in Rockland St Mary was first formed in April 1920 and therefore they were looking forward to its centenary in 2020.

There is a varied programme of speakers, demonstrations and social events each month, from questions of public importance to the lighthearted. Outside the meetings there is a "Craft Group", a "Scrabble" group, and a "Book Club". Theatre visits and day visits to places of interest are regular features during the year. Members can also take part in the many and varied social events and educational classes organised by the Norfolk Federation of WIs. The local group also takes part in the Federation Darts and Ten-Pin Bowling competitions with varying success. Classes in any subject you can name can be taken as a WI member.

There is much more to our WI but the greatest thing is fun and friendship and they believe in participation in both of these.

#### **18. Community Speedwatch:-**

Monica Armstrong, the Speedwatch Co-ordinator, presented the report. She said the community speedwatch scheme has now been in operation since October 2016 and they have nine volunteers. All the volunteers are fully trained in the use of the equipment and are supported by Norfolk Constabulary. They are always looking for new volunteers so do please contact her if you would like further information.

As a result of the large number of drivers exceeding the speed limit Norfolk Constabulary has undertaken its own surveillance and as a consequence from October 2016 to October 2017 the Police issued 50 notices of intended prosecutions. In future Mrs. Armstrong will be receiving from our Community Engagement Officer data giving the number of notices of



intended prosecutions issued in the area during each three-month period. Offenders who exceed 50 mph in a 30 mph area will now automatically receive a visit from the Police. Each driver logged as exceeding the limit (this has to be 35 mph or above) is sent a letter by the Police. If a person continues to flout the speed limit they will receive a second letter and if apprehended again could get a visit from the Police.

In addition, the Parish Council made a match fund bid for a SAM2 camera which was successful, and this will be purchased during the next financial year.

She said she would like to express her thanks to all the volunteers for their efforts in seeking to reduce speeding and making our village safer for everyone. It is clear that they are having an impact and, as a result, the Police are taking positive action to address this problem.

#### **19. Village Festival:-**

In her report Daphne Howlett said that the Open Gardens and other events associated with it last July were all very successful. Lots of people were coming to them. The three main organisations involved were the Gardening Club, The Church and the WI. £300 was given to The Pools Trust, with small donations to the Church, the Parish Room and The Margaret Mack Room funds.

No open gardens event this year as it is held bi-annually. However there will be a fete which it is hoped will be on the Playing Field.

There were no other reports:-

Monica Armstrong  
Clerk to the Parish Council

Signed as a true record at the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on the 3rd April 2019.

Chair.....