



Rockland St Mary with Hellington Parish Council

The Annual Parish Meeting of Rockland St Mary with
Hellington Parish Council was held on 3rd April 2019

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

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

District Councillor Vic Thomson was in attendance and 8 members of the public were present.

Apologies for absence:- County Councillor Barry Stone , Councillor Jane Paterson and Catherine McCormack.

(Councillor Green hoped to attend the meeting but was delayed at a Rockland St Mary Governing Body meeting.)

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

Declaration of interests: None

1. Hellington Parish Meeting:-

Proposed by Councillor Howlett seconded by Councillor Ross-Wagenknecht 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 9th April 2018 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:-

As the period of Purdah had begun District Councillor Vic Thomson had been advised by the Democratic Services at South Norfolk Council that he would be unable to provide a report.

NOTED

5. County Councillor's Report:-

County Councillor Stone had tendered his apologies and provided a report the headings of which were:-

- 2019/20 budget
- Caring for infrastructure
- Delivering the western link
- Norfolk ranked fourth in National Highways and Transport Survey
- Great Yarmouth third river crossing
- £11million boost for broadband in Norfolk
- £29 million in housing with care

- Celebrating the launch of the Carers' Charter
- New services to help ensure no lonely day in Norfolk
- New homes for care leavers open after £5m investment

A full copy of County Councillor Barry Stone's report can be viewed on the parish website www.rocklandstmary.org.uk.

6. Chair's Report:-

Chair, Councillor Kate Bevington gave her report:-

She hoped all residents in Rockland St Mary and Hellington had received the Parish Council newsletter which provided the opportunity to read about the work of the Parish Council over the past couple of years. Again, this has been a very busy year and Council meetings have often gone a little beyond 9.30pm as Councillors have struggled to get through the items on the agenda to ensure that sufficient time was given to things that needed action.

Councillor Bevington thanked the Village Caretaker, Steve Gildersleeve, for his care and dedication to the village. The daffodils at the triangle entrance to the village near Rookery Hill, the Staithe and by the new bench are there and have multiplied because Steve planted them through his own generosity.

The Council wished to continue to improve the attractiveness of Rockland St Mary and she asked that parishioners give this some consideration when thinking of ways in which the Council can spend the money it receives from the Community Infrastructure Levy. Those present were asked to place their ideas on the sheets at the back of the hall and the Chair said that their input would be welcome as this was their village.

One of the priorities of the Council this past year was to complete the planning and choosing of new play equipment for Green Lane. This will be installed later in the year after the first new house of the Bee Orchid part 2 development is sold which triggers the payment for the equipment. The gate installed at the entrance last year has proved a great success in preventing joy-riding and criminal activity on the site and keeping users safe.

The Parish Council had been concerned about the demise of the bird hide and a successful petition resulted in the Council obtaining the agreement of the RSPB to do short term maintenance and long-term planning to replace the hide.

She further said that the Council had continued to prioritise speed awareness and improving the accessibility of our footpaths. Wheelie bin stickers were available at the meeting for people to take and place on their bins. People would have seen that the footpath from the Staithe to the car park entrance has been cleared and thus widened. Further work is planned to improve this footpath up towards The Street in the future. The Council was grateful to those residents who have supported this by cutting back their overgrown or overhanging hedges and to vehicle owners who have stopped parking on pavements. The Council had renewed its lease of the car park at the Staithe with the Poor's Trust and further improved the surface of the car park at Blackhorse Dyke. A fenced, memorial area at Black Horse Dyke had been created and a tree planted to commemorate those from the village who served or died in World War One.

Hellington has had 2 dog bins installed and the Community Reserve was given money to buy and install a wooden bench in keeping with the surroundings. The bench at Surlingham corner which had been vandalised beyond repair had now been replaced as was the bus shelter at the Oaks which had blown down in last year's gales.

The Council had carefully listened to residents' opinions about a second round of proposed sites for housing development and submitted detailed responses which took account of those views.

Finally, she wished to thank the Clerk, Monica, for her excellent work and commitment to the two parishes.

7. Poor's Trust:-

Seb Shelton, Chair of the Trustees of the Poor's Trust outlined in his report that this local charity had a remit for "the prevention of or relief of poverty in the Parish of Rockland St Mary by way of grants to individuals in need".

He reported the income for 2018/19 was in the region of £9,000 largely coming from the Staithe mooring fees. The main areas of expenditure have been the maintenance of the Staithe (essentially grass and hedge cutting); solicitors fees; insurance and essential long-term maintenance which amounted to approximately £5,200.

Mr. Shelton reported that in the past twelve months the major undertakings had been:-

- Replacement of the wooden footbridge in the Staithe Car Park (jointly funded with the Love the Broads Charity) and adding a non-slip surface to the jetty.
- Repairs and improvements were made to the perimeter barriers of the Staithe Car Park and a speed restriction signage installed, measures which would hopefully minimize damage from careless drivers in the future. This work was in advance of the seven-year lease of the Staithe Car Park being agreed with the Parish Council in October 2018.
- A new seven-year lease with the Broads Authority for the twenty-four hour moorings at the Staithe had been agreed and signed. The Broads Authority will no longer hold the grassed area opposite the New Inn as part of this new lease.

Mr. Shelton said that only one and a half allotment plots were available and all mooring spaces were currently taken.

Mr. Shelton concluded his report by thanking Michael Albury who had retired after eight years as a Trustee and Simon Black who stood down as Treasurer. The Trustees welcomed Anita Manganaro who had agreed to take Michael Albury's place. Mr. Shelton thanked David Scott who had agreed to serve a third term as a Trustee and expressed his appreciation to Steve Gildersleeve and Andrew Burt for voluntary work undertaken for the Trust during the year.

The Reverend Mandy Ansell said she understood the name of the Trust was going to be changed. However, Mr. Shelton said the consequence of changing the name could be the Trust losing its charitable status.

8. Parish Rooms:-

Mr. Saxton gave the report and thanked all the committee members for their hard work. Chris Regan had been appointed as treasurer replacing Jim Wretham. The Trustees had also welcomed Debbie Frosdick. No major works had taken place over the last twelve months except for some improvement to the heating with more work being undertaken in the near future. Mr Saxton said it was also hoped to form a table tennis club to be held in the Parish Rooms. A copy of the accounts is attached to these minutes.

9. Margaret Mack Room:-

Daphne Howlett gave the report on behalf of the Margaret Mack Room. 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. The Bramrocks lighting had been updated. There are a few cosmetic issues to be addressed including having the outside repainted and cracks in the rendering repaired, the inside repainted and the floor specially re-polished. Mrs. Howlett reported that Debbie Sayles had been appointed as the new Secretary/Booking Clerk replacing Sarah Carter who had served on the committee for many years. New members were needed to serve on the Committee.

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

A copy of the audited accounts is attached to these minutes.

10. W.I

In her report Daphne Howlett said that meetings take place on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30 p.m in the Margaret Mack Room. There were currently thirty-one members. The W.I in Rockland St Mary was first formed in April 1920 and therefore members were looking forward to celebrating their centenary next year.

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 Norfolk Federation activities eg attending the Annual General Meeting and celebrating the Federation's Centenary this year

Mrs. Howlett thanked Brian and Mandy Ansell for looking after the WI flower container on Surlingham Corner which always looked bright and cheerful.

11. Surlingham and Rockland St Mary Community Action Group:-

A member of the Action Group, Steph Ross-Wagenknecht, gave the report. She 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, stonemasonry, 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 had maintained a balanced budget surplus for the last three years.

They have a Committee that meets 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 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. Two craft workshops are planned for this spring.

Ms Ross-Wagenknecht said the Chair, Philip Halstead, was grateful to the members of the committee for the effort, energy and creativity they had contributed to community activity. The Community Action Group were proud that they encouraged activity and action in the three villages. They can, and do, work in a variety of venues and respond as the need arises

12. Hellington and Rockland St Mary Community Reserve:-

A member of the Reserve, Stephanie Ross-Wagenknecht, gave the report and said that Hellington and Rockland St Mary Community Reserve is a designated country wildlife site which comprises 6.6 acres of land situated in a secluded valley at the eastern end of Hellington Low Common. The land is owned by the Parochial Church Council. The committee meet regularly and, after fully debating issues, agrees strategy and action.

The AGM will be on Thursday 21st May 2019 at Margaret Mack Hall.

What was achieved in 2018?

- Invasive ragwort was managed in June through a group of volunteers who pulled plants before seed set and distributed itself.
- Direction signs to reserve were installed.
- The paths and access continued to be strimmed and have been well used.
- They welcomed walkers led from the South Yare Wildlife Group to the reserve with refreshments and the opportunity to enjoy the afternoon.
- They had installed a bench by the bridge and have materials to site another near the oak tree. They were grateful for financial support of the Parish Council for this venture.
- They had received additional funding from three sources this year of £200 including contributions from Open Gardens, Hellington Church Carol Service and from fees for talks.
- They were delighted to welcome the Wheatfen Forest School Young Explorers who spent a productive time top dressing young trees and investigating the reserve.
- They had supported the proposal of Poringland Parish Council to develop a Bee-line down the Chet Valley. The project is part of a national programme with Government support encouraging diversity and movement of wildlife and, in particular, insects. It was hoped that this move will be extended across the district.

What is planned for the future?

- They were considering the spread of bracken on the south eastern boundary.
- Continue to raise the level of water on the lower northern side of the reserve.
- Invasive ragwort will be managed in mid-summer.
- A drawing event was planned, weather permitting.
- They had been approached to consider allowing a hedgehog rescuer to release animals on site.
- A new five-year contract was close to agreement. The cost will be increased to take account of inflation.

Stakeholders

108 stakeholders supported the reserve in 2018 each donating £20 annually.

Rockland St Mary 200 Club

They were grateful to previous officers that they were allowed to lead and benefit from the 200 Club. Currently the officers were Jane Paterson and Hatty Halstead, and the Chair was grateful for their efforts.

- Hellington and Rockland St Mary Community Reserve took over the running of the RSM 200 Club in September 2018.
- They have 112 members on our books and have paid out £48 per month plus £50 and £25 for December in prize money.
- £600 had been paid to The Community Reserve as half of the proceeds. This income will allow them to keep subscriptions at the present level

13. Rockland St Mary Primary School:-

The Executive Head, Julia Humphrey was unable to attend the meeting as she had a Local Governing Board meeting to attend. However, she had provided a report which in essence said:-

“Once more we have seen a good level of participation in activities and enrichment beyond the norms of our curriculum provision during the spring term. Our Outdoor Learning sessions have continued to run well with all children from EYFS through to Year 6 accessing two hours each week in 6 week blocks. During their sessions they have developed their social, collaborative and leadership skills, alongside getting closer to nature. Photo journals are produced for each child as a record of their learning and these are inserted in their inquiry books.

We have recognised Safer Internet Day, World Book Day and Red Nose Day. We held a maths and reading café with parents during which children and a grown up spend time exploring concepts found within picture books.

When it comes to PE and physical activities, Y6 completed their cycle training, Year 1 and 2 attended a gymnastics competition, Year 3 and 4 sportshall athletics and tennis. Swimming sessions continue for children in Years 3 and 4.

The Early Years children and Years 1 and 2 visited Norwich castle for a day of mythical creatures as this linked with their learning theme. Year 3 and 4 visited Amazonia and the Y5 & 6 children held their residential trip in London. During their visit they went to the Natural History Museum, spent the afternoon and night aboard the Golden Hind and the following day were given a Shakespearean drama session in the Globe Theatre. For some children, this was their first visit to the city. It certainly opened their eyes to life beyond Norfolk!

Early Years, Year 1 and 2 children combined with children from Surlingham, Old Buckenham and Ghost Hill primaries, to perform as a choir at St Andrew's Hall.

We have run a photo competition and there are Easter competitions planned for the last week of term in addition to an Easter church service. In one staff meeting we had a lengthy discussion about enrichment, SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development) and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education)

Our Modern foreign Language offer has been strengthened this term through the support of Wymondham College students who join the children each week to develop their conversational skills and participation in lessons. Sapientia Education Trust have offered our more-able mathematicians 'greater depth' maths sessions and we have 4 children from Year 6 attending a maths and English competition in the last week of March.

Children from the School Council made and presented Molly (RSM resident) with a birthday card for her 100th year! They were fortunate enough to be present when the postman appeared with a card from the Queen too!

It is fantastic that we have been able to offer all of these experiences to our children while continuing to maintain strong teaching in the national curriculum subjects such as maths, English, science, humanities and arts. The staff team at the school are determined to raise standards in the subjects the school will be judged on but are equally keen to maintain a breadth of provision so that every child may discover their interests, skills and talents and learn to be a good community member."

14. Parochial Church Council:-

The Reverend Mandy Ansell gave the report on behalf of the Parochial Church Council. She said that the Reverend John Shaw had retired last September which had a big impact on the smooth running of St Mary's and the six churches in the Benefice. At the same time both Lay Readers Evelyn and Hubert Hedges retired after over thirty years' service to the Church. These two factors had severely affected the Sunday services that can be provided as well as weddings, Christenings and funerals that she was taking throughout the year.

It was hoped that a new vicar would be appointed later in the year. She felt this village and benefice had lots to offer with local schools, shops, its proximity to Norwich and the coast besides being and most importantly a welcoming community.

The Reverend Ansell further added that there were two other benefices without a priest within the Loddon Deanery and she had been told there were eleven vacancies throughout the Diocese.

The Burning Bush Barn, "attached" to the Rectory was being used for workshops focussing on "The Cloth Of Kindness) run by Sally-Anne Lomas. It is also used for certain quiet and reflective services (with the permission of Bishop Alan).

The Church continued to be grateful to "The Friends of St Marys" for their financial and practical contribution to the Church staying well maintained.

There are a number of regular events in the village by representatives of the Church e.g. Monday girls Group and the Tuesday Drop-In and Coffee Stop.

There is a Fellowship Group that meets every three weeks in a member's home and a prayer group in the Church at 8 a.m. on a Wednesday morning. Therefore, although Sunday Services have had to be reduced there are opportunities for the congregation to meet up together regularly.

The Reverend Ansell expressed her thanks to all who volunteer their time and skills towards the upkeep of the Church and churchyard with special thanks to Paul Turrell who contributes so much in keeping the hedges tidy which it is much appreciated by those visiting loved ones' graves.

She said that sadly she does not have the time to visit the school regularly as The Reverend John Shaw did but had good communication links with them. The children with their teachers come into church for the seasonal festivals and they also come for other events such as their leavers service.

The Reverend Ansell believed that the village was fortunate to still have St Mary's Church. Its history and presence was much appreciated by many present and past parishioners. She said it would be a poorer community without it so her thanks again to all who work hard to keep it alive and it remains available for anyone in need whether for a happy or sad occasion in their lives.

Councillor Howlett also said thanks should be given for the grant received from South Norfolk to enable the west gate to be replaced

15. Bramrocks:-

Mr. Saxon presented his report. Two productions had taken place "A Bunch Of Amateurs" and "1001 Nights". "A Bunch Of Amateurs" had been directed by David Middleton a former member of the Bramrocks who now had a professional career in Scotland. The spring production in May will be "Kindly Leave The Stage", a comedy! The electrics had been updated costing £2,500 and with a grant from South Norfolk two lighting bars on the stage had been replaced.

Mr. Saxon said everyone was welcome to join the group. It was not a requirement to be a performer as many people were required back stage!

16. Gardening Club:-

Monica Armstrong, the Club's secretary, gave the report. She said the Club was thriving having recruited new members over the past year. There were thirty-seven paid up members at the present time with fifteen additional people who had yet to pay their subscription for the year or were new members.

Jean Whitlam and Brenda Ford were presented with long service awards and gift vouchers last year in appreciation of their many years of service to the Gardening Club.

The programme over the last year has been varied and most interesting. Speakers had included Simon Partridge giving a talk on the Natural History of the Broads, Rosie Ward on container plants, a demonstration by Simon White on holly wreath making and Richard Hobbs on Flowers of the Mountain.

During the summer months members and their guests visit various gardens. Last year these included a visit to a garden in Little Plumstead, one in Wymondham, an Exotic Garden in Costessey and a family country garden at Elm House, Saxlingham Nethergate.

In addition, the Club holds a summer show every year; the one in July 2018 was very successful.

Current committee members were:

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 AGM will be held on the 25th April 2019 prior to a talk by a committee member on master composting.

The Club meets every third Thursday in the month in the Parish Rooms and welcome new members.

17. Community Speedwatch:-

In Councillor Green's absence Councillor Hayward gave the report. He said that currently there were six active volunteers and more were required. He explained the procedure involved - if motorists record speeds of 35 mph or more through the village they receive a letter from the Police. If a person continues to flout the speed limit they receive a second letter and if caught again could get a visit from the Police. In addition, Norfolk Constabulary carries out its own surveillance whereby motorists caught speeding through the village receive a notice of intended prosecution or may be given the opportunity to attend a speed awareness course.

Councillor Hayward downloads the data from the SAM2 monitor on a weekly basis and this has illustrated the extent of motorists speeding through the village. Recent data from the SAM2 monitor sited near Broadfields Way for one week recorded 887 drivers exceeding the 35 mph limit; 183 over 40 mph; 52 at 45 mph; 17 over 50 mph.

He emphasised the aim of having Speedwatch operating in the parish together with the SAM2 camera was not to catch people speeding but trying to encourage motorists to slow down !

Other Reports:-

Rockland Wildfowlers Association:-

Gerry Moore on behalf of the Association gave his report. He explained that the RWA leases the shootings rights on the Broad from the Parish Council. The RWA owns various parcels of marsh/woodland in the parish. Their activities are very controlled and any disturbance to wildlife is kept to a minimum. They have approximately 60 members. Their focus is also on conservation with a large number of owl and kestrel boxes placed around the area and any nesting birds are rung to monitor their movements. GM also informed the meeting that metal posts had been put in place and the erection of a permanent electric fence below the footpath should be completed by very soon.

Members of the Association attend the Rockland Broad Management Committee twice yearly and report on their activities and also provide the Council with a summary of their returns.

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 1st April 2020.

Chair.....