

Minutes of Berwick St James Village Meeting
Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 19:00hrs

In attendance: Christian Lange – Chairman
Sarah Humphreys – Co-Chair
Bill Hiscocks - Treasurer
Hayley Burrey - Secretary

Total attendees: 25 people

Apologies received and read out: Henry Colthurst, Sophie Colthurst, Nicky Street, Charlie Street, Kate Glyn-Owen, Jane Lock-Smith, Rosie Gairdner, Martin Gairdner, Marie Perry, James Hardy, Helen Riding, Stephen Bush, Gail Lovett, Neil MacDougall, Carolyn MacDougall and Janey Campbell-Johnston.

Summary of agenda discussions, actions and decisions agreed:

1. Welcome & Apologies

Chairman (Christian Lange) opened the meeting at 19:00hrs and welcomed everybody in attendance to the meeting and expressed how lovely it was to see everyone. Christian made an announcement, that further to the email we had circulated, advising of the sorrowful passing of Cyril Emm. Who had resided in the village from the 1950's and worked on Berwick Hill Farm

- Cyril enjoyed and was hugely interested in his tractors and will be incredibly missed by all those who knew him well.
- There will be a funeral for Cyril on Thursday 25th May at 12pm at St James Church and a procession from his house to the village with a tractor.
- There will be a wake the following week, with details to follow.
- The apologies were read out and acknowledged.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Chairman (Christian Lange) said that the minutes have been on the website for a while and asked if all were agreed that they were an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Proposed by Keith Lovett and Seconded by Olivia Marchant. All in favour and no objections.

Matters arising from the last meeting covered were.

- With reference to the footpath on the walk to Winterbourne Stoke, which Alice Ridley was going to investigate and write a letter to the Estate Manager – Julian Glyn-Owen has spoken with Alice and she is in talks with the managing agent and in progress. We will review this at our next village meeting in September.

- With reference to **Bobs Legacy**. We had said we would have fuller discussion at this meeting to choose a fitting tribute for Bob in his memory, with the funds raised through donations.
- With the collection and the subsequent cheques from the undertakers – we have a total of £1050, which Bob had specifically requested go to the village Community Fund.
- Christian expressed that he didn't feel we had enough people in attendance at this meeting to decide.
- Ann Hughes commented that she has recently been in contact with Jeff Drake (Bob's brother) and he would be happy to attend our next village meeting to discuss.
- Co-Chair (Sarah Humphreys) mentioned that Toby Humphreys and Butch have also bought some large marrow seeds and the plan was to create a plant growing competition with a Bob's plaque presented to the winner. Unfortunately, only one seed developed.
- It was agreed we would discuss this at our next village meeting in September and extend an invitation to Jeff Drake to join us.

3. Coronation Party Review

Chairman (Christian Lange) referred to the recent Coronation Party that was held in the Boot Garden

- There were lots of lovely cakes and teas.
- Great BBQ where we sold 120 sausages and also submitted a profit of £50 to the community fund. With thanks to Keith Lovett.
- Thank you to all who were involved in erecting the marquees, arranging the furniture and decorating with bunting and lighting etc.
- Christian, commented that he particularly liked the fact that we had lots of children there and the bouncy assault course was a hit.
- Linda Doggrell has emailed the Chair to thank the village for agreeing to pay for the hire of the assault course.
- Keith Lovett made a special thanks on behalf on the BBQ team to Mike Riding for his assistance and also to Mike Doggrell who had assisted with the transport of the BBQ.

4. Church Garden update

Chairman (Christian Lange) moved on to discuss the update of the Church Garden.

- Christian commented that he has been really pleased at how this has all gone.
- We have had so many people who have volunteered and given their time and it was great for everybody to spend time with each other and enjoy the project.
- Anika Lange has been back several times to mow the area worked on and has kept the path visible. Anika has also sewn some grass seeds where we removed all the nettles.
- Anika remarked that we can see all the red campions, which is lovely.
- Anika and Bill Hiscocks have spoken to Greg Moss, who will be taking over the mowing / strimming maintenance from Lucy.
- As Anika has spent £40 on the grass seeds, Christian confirmed that as previously agreed, it would be paid for by the community fund.
- Gill Brasher asked how much will Greg Moss be charging. Bill Hiscocks commented that he has sent out several emails to establish this and having seen Lucy recently – he has asked her again.
- Christian referred to the fact that this would be included in the village precept which we were shortly to vote on.

- Anika commented that Bill is still going through the process of getting full permission for the garden, which will hopefully be done soon. Then we can arrange to plant the trees and place benches there.
- Anika also suggested that it would be great if we could arrange another working party in the Autumn, when we can make the decision of where to plant the bulbs/ trees etc.

5. Approval of Accounts

Chairman (Christian Lange) said it was time for the approval of the village accounts and then handed over to Treasurer (Bill Hiscocks).

- Bill Hiscocks then showed a slide with the village accounts. (Please see website for slides and figures)
- Bill said firstly, the village owes a great debt of thanks to Martin Gairdner for his work auditing the accounts. Martin has declined to accept a bottle of wine, so our thanks should be recorded.
- Martin has commented on the risks of the village overheads and consider them.
- Bill then explained that firstly we needed to approve the Annual Governance Statement to agree that we have the best financial arrangement in place.
- Bill referred to the village bank accounts and explained that everything was double signed and that currently it is himself and Secretary (Hayley Burrey) who carry this out. If the meeting continues as planned, we will be adding Julian Glyn - Owen as a third signature.
- Bill then asked for approval of the Annual Governance Statement and requested a proposer and a seconder.
- Ian Gibb proposed and Gill Brasher seconded to accept.
- Christian then asked for a vote, which was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.

6. Approval of Precept

- Treasurer (Bill Hiscocks) showed another slide of the accounts (Please see website for slides and figures)
- Bill made mention that at some stage we may need to consider organising another fundraiser to top up our accounts.
- Ian Gibb asked if we knew how much we would need to raise over the coming financial year, in order to maintain the appropriate amount to see us into the following year.
- Bill explained that the precept would cover all the essential fixed obligations. If we choose to raise money, it is for the village to decide and what we would wish to spend it on.
- Bill also covered that the only likely change this financial year, will be for the village container. John Stephenson who kindly allows the village to keep it on his land and donated the rental money to Cancer Research – has asked that we lift it. This means the rent will rise from £25 to £30.
- Keith Lovett commented that the track to the container is overgrown and should have reasonable access and could we ask for some volunteers to clear it.
- Christian Lange agreed and asked Keith if he was happy to chat to John and arrange an email from the chair - would be sent out to the village, requesting volunteers.
- Bill then asked for a proposer and a seconder to approve the 2022/2023 Precept.
- Julian Glyn- Owen proposed and Ian Gibb seconded to accept.
- A vote was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.

7. Approval of £500 grants to Reading Room

Chairman (Christian Lange) then said it was time to now agree, as we do every year and that the first was to agree a grant of £500 for the Reading Room.

- Christian asked if anybody had any questions before this vote.
- Ian Gibb asked if this money was to cover the repair for the infrastructure or just for running costs. It was confirmed that it was mainly for repair.
- Christian then asked for a proposer and a seconder to approve the Reading Room Grant.
- Bill Hiscocks proposed and Nigel Rodgers seconded to accept.
- A vote was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.

8. Approval of £750 grant Graveyard / Church Garden

Chairman (Christian Lange) then moved onto the next vote, which he remarked we had covered earlier on in the meeting too. This was for approval of the £750 grant for the Graveyard and Church Garden.

- Christian asked if anybody had any questions before this vote.
- Ian Gibb commented that the church interior has peeling paint and it is unlikely that the grant would cover the cost for that and asked if there is a plan in place for this.
- Bill Hiscocks commented that the fabric fund of the Church holds approximately £30,000.
- Christian then asked for a proposer and a seconder to approve the Graveyard/ Church Garden Grant.
- Ian Gibb proposed and Olivia Marchant seconded to accept.
- A vote was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.

9. Election of Officers

Chairman (Christian Lange) then explained that it was time for the Election of the Village Committee.

- Christian commented that as he and Sarah were now stepping down as chair and co-chair, he would like to say a few words and thank you's.
- Christian made thanks to Sarah Humphreys for being a wonderful co-chair, through thick and thin.
- Christian made thanks to Bill Hiscocks as Treasurer and for his wisdom and particularly during the Covid times.
- Christian made thanks to Kate Wood, for her earlier role as the first Secretary.
- Christian made thanks to Hayley Burrey for everything she does, not only for being the village secretary, as she also does a lot of other work for the village in organising stuff. Plus, again during the pandemic for all her work in organising Book Club, parties etc.
- Christian made thanks to Anika for being such a great sounding board and support.
- The meeting then began a round of applause for Christian has everybody wished to thank him.

- Bill Hiscocks then said a few words of thanks to both Sarah and Christian and for their commitment to being Chair, which has worked very smoothly. He stated that the village offers an enormous debt of gratitude.

Next came the proposals and votes for the Election of the Village Committee.

Chairman – Julian Glyn Owen

- Christian Lange proposed and Gill Brasher seconded to accept. A vote was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.
- Christian Lange then asked if the newly voted Chairman (Julian Glyn Owen) would like to say a few words.
- Chairman (Julian Glyn-Owen) then said a few words. Julian reiterated his thanks to both Christian and Sarah on doing such a wonderful job and especially through the difficult times of Covid. Julian also thanked Bill for being the Treasurer and commended him on holding the position for 10 years and also thanked Hayley.
- Julian expressed his affection for the village and that he does wish to facilitate and encourage people to contribute, preferably via email and he will then action things as he can.
- Julian also wished to raise our thoughts to the village website and to the vast amount of information on there.
- Julian referred to a village survey taken in 2010 and suggested that and that we should maybe now look at the next decade.
- Julian also extended his thanks for putting him into the role of chair and wishes to continue the work of all the wonderful people here.
- Christian said that we are very lucky to have this structure, whereby everybody can attend and vote together and it should be treasured.

Treasurer - Bill Hiscocks

- Sarah Humphreys proposed and Christian Lange seconded to accept. A vote was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.

Secretary - Hayley Burrey

- Bill Hiscocks proposed and Olivia Marchant seconded to accept. A vote was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.
- All voting concluded and therefore The Village Committee was elected for the next annual term.
- At this point, Christian then handed over to the new Chairman (Julian Glyn-Owen), to then chair the remainder of the meeting.

10. Reading Room Update

Chairman (Julian Glyn-Owen) stated that we would now have the Reading Room Update.

- This was provided by Olivia Marchant.
- Olivia covered that there would be an upcoming AGM for the RR – with a date to be confirmed.
- The monthly Tea and Chat sessions are going really well, with the next on June 7th.

- Brian Armstrong's talks and the yoga sessions are still taking place regularly too.
- The Christmas Fayre raised a great total of £451.
- We are hoping to have a talk in August about Insects, by a lady (Julia) in Stapleford.
- Chairman (Julian Glyn-Owen) asked if there had been any mention of Film Nights. Olivia said that it was popular, however, people seemed to be streaming at home over the last couple of years.
- Julian also mentioned that there have been suggestions for cheese and wine tasting.

11. Any other business

Chairman (Julian Glyn-Owen) asked if there was any other business or matters arising.

- Gill Brasher asked what was going to be happening with the money raised for Bob Drake.
- Julian confirmed that we will be discussing the ideas when we next convene at the next village meeting.
- Ian Gibb asked the question if there was any chance of getting a view of the longevity of the pub.
- Julian said that he is very happy to go and speak with Mike at the Boot and try to ascertain what the plans are.
- Keith Lovett raised a concern of the overhang of the Beech Tree in the Churchyard – as it is now becoming a little excessive. At some stage it will need trimming back again – could we give this a degree of thought at the next meeting.
- Julian agreed and has taken it as an action to investigate it.
- Finally, Ian Gibb wished Julian good luck and Bill Hiscocks said Julian has our support.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Chairman (Julian Glyn-Owen) stated that the next village meeting will be held in September 2023, w/c 11th of September.

Julian then asked all to put their hands together for Christian and Sarah as a thank you.

13. Conclusion

Chairman (Julian Glyn-Owen) then thanked everybody and announced the end of the meeting closed at 19:55 hrs.