

Yattendon Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6th April 2022 held online via Zoom.
Commencing at 7:00 pm.

Members Present: Gordon Robertson, Chairman
Anne Harris, Vice-Chairman
Nicky Meadows

Members Absent: Philip Bickford Smith
Adam McCormick
Georgie Rudge

Officers Present: None

In Attendance: None

Minutes

1. Welcome by the Council Chairman

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from the Clerk

3. To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 30th April 2021

Those present agreed the minutes of the last meeting be accepted as a true record. The Chairman then signed the minutes.

4. Presentation from Greenham Trust

Greenham has had military connections since troops were stationed there during the Jacobite rebellion in the 17th century. Greenham Common was an air base from 1942-1992, first under the RAF, then the USAF. The 'Common Land' is protected by Act of Parliament and is curated by the Berks, Bucks, Oxon. Wildlife Trust (BBOWT).

Following the closure of the airbase, the site was bought by the Trust (whose 25th anniversary is this year) from the Ministry of Defence in 1997 for £7m. The trust has donated £64m since its formation, to 5,000 local causes. A business park established on the site has around 150 tenants. The rents collected from the tenants are returned to the community via the charitable grants, which total £3-4m p.a. The size of outright grants is typically £2-3,000, although exceptionally, up to £30,000. More usually, funding is provided as 'matched funding' - Collaborative funding, where there is evidence of a contribution from locally raised funds, are encouraged.

Eligibility for a grant is dependent on the geographical location of the applicant or organisation: They must have an address within West Berkshire and North Hampshire. Since 2019, the Trust also have administrative responsibility for the Peter Baker Foundation which awards charitable grants for organisations situated within a 20-mile radius of the Market Square in Newbury.

The Trust also has links with other bodies such as the Miss Lawrence Trust in Kintbury, the Englefield Trust and Sovereign Housing Association- the latter via the fund-raising platform, The Good Exchange. Matched-funding initiatives with Newbury, Thatcham and Hungerford are in progress.

The Trust spear headed Covid relief funding, totalling £800,000, including a 'laptops for learning' provision for home-schooling. Housing needs for some refugee families from Afghanistan and Ukraine are being supported. The Trust is also a partner with Berkshire Youth to support the needs of young persons. The Trust has started a 'Plant a Tree' project which aims to plant 25,000 trees, (of which 2,000 have already been planted) during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year, as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

5. Report from the Managing Director of Yattendon Estates

The Report from Yattendon Estates is in Appendix 1.

6. Report from the District Councillor

Carolyn Culver sent her apologies.

7. Parish Council Reports:

Report from the Chairman

This was the 2nd year of Covid restrictions. Thanks to all in the village and, in particular, those on the council for their time in coping with and adapting to online meetings and the use of Zoom (some better than others!) and especially to Sarah, our clerk, for keeping us up to date on this.

Welcome to our new member of the council, Nicky Meadows.

We have received positive feedback from villagers about the positive 'general ambiance of the village. Our Litter Picker is doing a great job.

The Council is hoping to make improvements to the Well House in The Square to remove the internal brick wall and largely restore it to its original design. The Council had a very positive reception to the article in Broadsheet- well presented to the village, costs identified and debated – thanks to Philip for leading this project.

The Council has held more Planning Meetings than usual - perhaps people have had more time to consider alterations.

The fete takes place on Sat 4th June and links into the Yattendon and Frilsham Street Party to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Sun 5th June. Thank you to the team involved in planning and holding these events.

Financial Report from Council

The Financial Report is in Appendix 2.

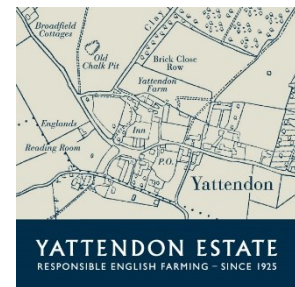
- 8. Questions from members of the public**
Nothing was discussed.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1: Report from Yattendon Estates

Just stepping back for a moment and reflecting on the world we currently find ourselves in, it is with great sadness that we watch the atrocities that are happening in Ukraine and we live in hope that peace can quickly be restored. Our thoughts and prayers are naturally with those families that are affected by the current situation.



The current situation, not just from a humanitarian point of view, has a knock on effect into life on the Estate whether that be commodity prices, transport issues, or input prices to name but a few and it just demonstrates how we are so reliant on each other for our global supply chains to function efficiently. This is on top of the previous impacts we have experienced earlier in the year. These included COVID, labour supply issues, the fuel crisis and haulage issues and bird flu, both here and on the continent, which will have a major impact on the game season and supply of poultry and game into our food chain for this year.

On the farm, last year was a difficult harvest with sub-optimal growing conditions in the final quarter with lower sunlight hours and more rain than we would normally experience, leading onto lower quality and lower yields in our crops. Establishment of autumn crops this year was hampered by a wet October and November, but spring establishment has so far gone well. We have had our first full year of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme which has seen the Estate establish:

- Over 200 acres of grass, wildflower and pollen and nectar mixes
- Just over 100 acres planted with a wild bird food or bumblebee mix
- Establishment of 30 acres of grass buffer strips, 107 acres of a rich legume and herb mix and over 100 acres of grassland out into a low input regime.
- Establishment of 500 acres of over winter cover crops prior to spring cropping to improve soil health, 350 acres of rotational legume crops and 35 acres taken out of arable production.

This has been an incredibly ambitious programme to improve the environment within which we live and improve the biodiversity that exists across the Estate. We had hoped to have started our 4.3km of new hedgerow planting & gapping up, on top of the 118km of existing hedgerows, but plant shortages have meant that will have wait until next year.

On other environmental matters, we have planted over 17,500 trees across the Estate this year following various forestry activities that have been carried out to improve our woodlands and forestry plantations.

The Christmas tree season was a busy one, not helped with the haulage and labour issues but we saw a number of local people come and work on the harvest this year and they did a brilliant job to process the trees that were required. On the retail side, we made improvements to the retail barn and saw the return of entertainment at weekends, and it was good to see customers enjoying that as well as filling up on lots of quality fayre provided by The Pantry. We also saw a trend for people to move to a larger tree from the normal 1.8m – 2.1m size and this meant that we ran short of the 2.1m – 2.4m

size quite quickly. It was perhaps a one-off trend with families wanting to ensure a good Christmas was had following a difficult year, but we will ensure that this doesn't happen again this year.

Residential wise, we continue to see demand from families wanting to relocate to the area and as usual, we will look to take tenants who would like to be in the area for the long term.

Commercially, we have seen a few changes – Precision Peripherals have consolidated their operations and handed back their unit just outside the village at Frilsham Home Farm and this has been let to Skynicare. We have also welcomed Flowers Farm Interiors onto the Estate but sadly saw West Berkshire Brewery go into administration which meant, in order to protect local jobs and keep the brewery and tap room open, saw the Estate acquire some of the assets. The brewery will have a rebrand shortly and it is good to see this important business continue to operate. We have also seen the acquisition of Vicars Game and we are working with the previous owners to put in place a team to enable them to take a step back from operations. The Wine man has also retired earlier this year and we are just refurbishing the unit to put onto the open market.

The village square continues to be a hive of activity and we are delighted to have welcomed Broadstreet Flowers into The Old Forge. The village car park was resurfaced, walls have been rebuilt and external painting carried out and all the various businesses in and around the village continue to thrive. The team in the village shop continue to work hard in making sure that we have one of the best stocked village stores in the area and as always, are only too happy to help anyone with any particular requirements they may have - please do continue to support your local businesses where you can. We saw the return of events – the classic car event held in September was a huge success with just under £2,000 raised for the Thames Air Ambulance. The event also enabled the village fete to exhibit a few stalls, as well as a cake sale and family fundraiser in May, which enabled the fete committee to raise just under £3,000 for local causes.

We have had two staff retirements in the last year, our thanks to both of them and we wish them all the best for a happy retirement.

It wouldn't be right for me to finish without saying thank you to all the staff that work on the Estate, without whom, it would not be possible to continue to improve the environment within which we all live. Thank you also to the many local residents who also put in their time and efforts into various local causes making the parish a wonderful place to live.

Appendix 2: Financial Report

Yattendon Parish Council Annual Finance Report Annual Parish Meeting 2021/22

The finance report for Yattendon Parish Council for the financial year 2021/22 is presented. Please note that all figures are provisional and will be subject to audit.

Income

The total income received from all sources of funding was £9,322. This consisted of:

- Precept £9,100,
- Refund for VAT spent during the 2020/21 financial year £222.

Expenditure

The total expenditure for the year was £8,274. Significant figures included in this total are:

- Total employment costs £3,526,
- Grant towards the costs of maintaining the burial ground £2,500,
- Insurance £493,
- Refuse disposal (litter and dog waste bins) £587,
- Courtesy lights £48,
- Audit fees £98,

- VAT (reclaimable in the next financial year) £173.

Looking Forward to 2022/23

The precept will increase by £200 to £9,300. This is an increase of 2.2%. A Band D household will pay a total of £53.04 throughout the year. That is just £1.02 per week.

The Parish Council is currently seeking grants through The Good Exchange to carry out work to the Wellhouse to remove the interior brick wall and restore the Wellhouse to its original design. The Council also hopes to install some seating inside.

The Parish Council will continue to support the maintenance of the burial ground, with a grant of £2,500. There will continue to be the usual expenses involved in running the Parish Council, such as providing the courtesy lights, insurance, employment costs, audit fees, and refuse disposal.