**Ogbourne St Andrew, Ogbourne Maizey and Rockley Parish Council**

Minutes of the AGM

 **Monday 22nd May 2023 at 7pm at Southview, Ogbourne St Andrew**

**Present:** John Hetherington (JH) (Chair)

 Jan Whitehead (JW) (Clerk)

John Edmunds (JE)

Brian Dean (BD)

Carys Gregory (CG)

Nicky Place (NPL)

**Apologies:** Nick Parsons, Alan Brown

1. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

JH has not been able to contact Julie Hussey.

**Action: JH to contact David Dudley**

Trees overhanging the A346 are the responsibility of the landowners

**Action: JH to contact landowners to make them aware**

Footpaths to be walked on Sunday 4th June.

1. Chair’s Report

I would like to start by paying tribute to the work of my predecessor, Mr Nick Parsons, who handed over the role of Chairman at the beginning of 2023. Nick made a significant contribution across the board, but in particular by revising and updating our procedures and policies. We are pleased to note that Nick continues to serve on the council as an ordinary member. We were sorry to say good bye last year to Yvonne Parsons, who made a significant contribution over a number of years. She left to pursue a number of new interests and we wish her well with her new ventures.

The good news is that we have been fortunate enough to recruit two bright new members to the council…..one to replace Yvonne, the other to fill a position which had been vacant for some time. Carys Gregory will take a particular interest in planning issues, footpaths and rights of way. Nicky Place will focus on community engagement. We are delighted to welcome them on board.

A great deal has happened in the last year, particularly to The Royal Family. We celebrated The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in The Parish with an afternoon’s fun and games in Ogbourne St Andrew and a barn lunch in Ogbourne Maizey. The funeral of Queen Elizabeth was a sombre occasion but we were able to celebrate again a few weeks ago to mark The King’s Coronation. Nicky Place organised an excellent, fun-filled afternoon in Alex and Margaret Matthews’ field, followed by a few drinks in the pub.

Which brings me on to another major event in the village. After more than 18 months of planning, negotiating, fund-raising and an enormous amount of physical work, The Silks on The Downs reopened last autumn as a community pub. We pay tribute to all of those in the Parish, and beyond, who invested money in the project, to all those who gave freely of their time and skill to renovate the buildings and, in particular, to the Committee, led by Stuart Williamson and Simon Basford, who masterminded the whole project. A particular thank you goes to our clerk, Jan Whitehead, who handled all of the administrative details which kept the project on track. Not only is the pub a beautiful and valuable asset for the Parish, but also the process we have been through has created a new sense of community in the Parish and fostered many new friendships amongst the villagers.

Based around the pub, many new interest groups have grown up, including a book group (wittily called the Silk Worms), a dining club for gentlemen of a certain age, quiz nights, pie nights and a gardening group. There was even a Christmas wreath-making course run in the pub. And I am sure there are many more to come.

So I think the Parish can pat itself on the back for seizing this opportunity and making a success of it.

Other projects are afoot too. Carys has started a “use it or lose it” project to get us all walking (or running) the numerous footpaths and bridleways in the Parish, with the first outing planned for 4th June. And after a biblical length of time, The Parochial Church Council has finally obtained the go-ahead from Salisbury Diocese to re-fashion the interior of the Church to provide a new vestry, a kitchen, a servery and toilet facilities. This will make the Church a very welcoming and useable centre for a range of village of activities. We now need to bring the verve we mustered for the pub to this latest project. A vote of thanks and congratulations to the PCC who have pursued this project relentlessly for over a decade.

Success does come with dogged perseverance, though, as was evidenced by the eventual creation of a 20 mph zone through Ogbourne Maizey. The road through Maizey is used as a bit of a rat run. So, with no footpath in the village, children, horses, dogs and the ageing population were all at risk. Only two 20 mph zones per year are created by Wiltshire Council, so for our parish to get two (Andrew and Maizey) in the last five years is quite an achievement.

Thank you to all of the councillors who have given their time generously to support The Parish over the last year, and a particular thank you to our clerk, Jan Whitehead, for all of her work for the Council. We would be lost without her! A quick glance at the news makes one realise how lucky we are to live in such a safe and happy community…long may it last!

Cllr John Hetherington

Chairman

JH then stepped down as Chairman.

JH agreed to stand again. Proposed; NPL, Seconded: BD. Approved unanimously

1. Village Maintenance

Nettles outside Crawlings Piece are being removed currently.

The footpath outside Crawlings Piece towards the bus stop has now been cleared.

1. Roads and Footpaths

7 villagers have submitted forms raising issues with traffic using Ogbourne Maizey as a cut through during periods where the A346 is blocked for some reason and issues with traffic on the A346. This is not really something that WCC LHFIG can assist with as this is for road improvements. The Chair will write to the Police Authorities to seek a discussion on how issues are managed in Ogbourne St Andrew and Ogbourne Maizey.

**Action: JW to advise JH on contacts at Wiltshire Police.**

The path outside Riverside is overgrown but some work has been done recently. The path is also uneven.

**Action: AB to investigate this issue further and report back.**

1. Community Engagement

Thanks to Nicky Place for the Coronation celebration.

A duck race and boat race are being considered. The boat race will be next Easter to ensure that there is enough water. Ducks will be purchased to use in the race and will be available to villagers.

Coffee will be available prior to the footpath walks. Maps are being printed this week. As many routes as possible will be walked and there will be one community walk which will be led.

1. Planning

The Parish Council is now only required to respond if they have an objection.

An extension has been proposed for Tuffits in Ogbourne Maizey. The Council has no reason to object.

NPL has seen a copy of the neighbourhood plan for the villages online.

**Action: JW to find a copy of the plan to make villagers aware**

There is also a planning application in Sheepridge to which the Parish Council have no objections

1. Finance

JW ran through the finances to year ended 31.3.23.

The council showed a deficit of £2615 to 31.3.23. Significant variances resulted from payments for 3 projects undertaken during the year, namely the bus stop repairs, the Ogbourne Maizey road signs and the parish defibrillators.

During the year the council also agreed to write down a number of fixed assets and write off the accrued depreciation.

JW would like to thank Carolyn Davies who agreed to be the independent examiner for the Parish Council accounts. The accounts have been checked and verified.

Due to the level of income and expenditure of the Parish Council it was agreed that we should declare ourselves exempt from the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and publish our financial records on the Parish Website as per previous years. The Council approved the accounts and agreed JW to send relevant paperwork to PNK for external auditing compliance purposes.

**Action: JW to send submission to external auditor before deadline of 3rd July.**

Current account on 22.5.22 £7,106 Savings account £5,959 TOTAL: £13,065

The Parish Precept has now been received.

The Parish Council normally makes a donation at this time of year of £500 to the PCC for the maintenance of the churchyard. This is approved in principle.

**Action: JW to check this process with NP**

The 2 defibrillators are ready for installation. These will be installed in Ogbourne Maizey and St Andrew Church

1. Correspondence

Forestry England have contacted the council to advise that they have published the final version of the Land Management Plan for Savernake Forest. They will be in touch again to offer an opportunity to site walk in the Forest to discuss the upcoming work.

Will Rahder of Ogbourne Down Farm has been in touch to advise that they are supportive of a proposal by “Action for the River Kennet” to re-divert the Og away from the A346 north of Ogbourne St Andrew, back to its original course through the Watermeadows. The project manager will be in touch with the Council direct to discuss further in due course.

1. AOB

There are 3 drains which regularly block in Ogbourne Maizey. These have been cleared.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 20:03

Date of next meeting: 03/07/2023 at 7pm at Southview, Ogbourne St Andrew