

# **Minutes of the Worstead Annual Parish Meeting**

**Held on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022, 7.00pm in**

**The Queen Elizabeth Hall, Worstead**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. S. Cole, R. Barrett, J. Bacon, J. Bacon, A. Bond, S. Ginn and M. Annison.

**ALSO PRESENT:** 8 members of the public, District Councillor Saul Penfold and Clerk (S. Martin)

**22.01APM: Apologies of Absence**

Apologies received from K. O'Hara and M. Smith. Also from Worstead Pre-school, Worstead Weavers and PC's Gwynn and Robinson.

**22.02APM: To consider approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

The minutes were AGREED as a true record and signed by Cllr. Cole.

**22.03APM: Police report**

Apologies received from PC Paul Gwynn and PC Emma Robinson – no report received.

**22.04APM: Reports from local clubs and committees**

**Report from the Chairman of Worstead Parish Council**

This past couple of years have been quite challenging for your Parish Council. With the lockdown, the Council were meeting online via zoom which is not the most conducive way to conduct business, so we were most thankful to be allowed to meet in person once again.

The same must be applied to our Parish meetings. Last year we were forced to meet online and now we can have this meeting all within the same room.

Despite these hindrances, your Parish Council have continued to work hard for the benefit of the Parish as a whole.

Following the passing of Sue Harris and resignation of Andy Millar due to personal commitments we had vacancies for Councillors, and we were delighted to have John Bacon rejoin the Council and to welcome our new councillor, Mike Annison.

The wildflower area in the churchyard is slowly starting to become established after a couple of years and providing much needed seeds and nesting material for wildlife together with nectar for the bees.

The pond in Lyngate now had wildlife returning both in the water and even Moorhens have been spotted.

Well done to both the North East Norfolk Conservation Volunteers: for the pond and Bure Valley Conservation Group for the churchyard together with the councillors for subsequently clearing the cut grass and pond weed.

More recently you will have noticed the "gateway" as you enter Lyngate from the Yarmouth Road.

We hope that this will promote drivers to observe the 30mph limit on this road.

The speed signs are currently deployed along the road to record the speed of vehicles along it so hopefully we should have some statistical information as to

whether the gateway is having the desired effect and thanks to Ady Bond for keeping them charged and deployed in the various areas.

Incidentally, there will be a new trod footpath from the right hand side of Honing Road just after Holly Grove leading up to Woolcomb Cottage on the left. This will provide a continuation from the trod by the school and will eventually be extended when funds permit, up to Lyngate Cottages and will provide a much needed safe route from the school.

The refurbishment of the telephone boxes in Meeting Hill and Bengate remain ongoing however as the weather improves, this should allow the painting to commence.

The one in Meeting Hill already has a defibrillator installed and the one in Bengate is yet to have a purpose decided upon. Suggestions on a post card please.

For those using the station or indeed passing by, Network Rail has started refurbishment works to the building, saving it from being demolished and replaced with a shelter.

The refurbishment will include a secure storage area for bicycles, and we have delivered a defibrillator to site which will be installed there for the benefit of the residents in Station Road and the surrounding area.

This now means that the Parish has access to three defibrillators within its boundary. The children's play area has had an ongoing situation, suffering from dog fouling and so the Parish Council has now arranged for a ROSPA approved fence to be installed which should drastically reduce the problem.

You may all be aware of the vandalism that has been happening locally both at the station, at the church and in Bengate together with the knocking on windows by individuals and groups.

This is wholly unacceptable, and your Parish online are continuing to work with the local Police providing updates and intelligence where it is available.

Littering around the shelter next to the play area has also been a problem and our thanks should go out to Ron Barret for keeping an eye open when he checks the play equipment.

It is hoped that the area at the front of the QE Hall will be finally tarmacked over this year and disabled car parking marked out providing improved access for those who find it difficult to negotiate the stones.

This will also get rid of the problem of potholes in that area.

The lease on the Salt Store land which currently hosts the Recycle Centre has finally expired after 25 years and there are negotiations currently underway to secure a continued tenancy providing additional income for the Parish.

Lastly, we hope to organize a litter pick for the weekend of 30th April / 1st May Please do try to come along. Litter pickers and bags will be provided.

And finally, I would like to thank all the Councillors for their input and help throughout the year, with special thanks to Sarah our Clerk who keeps us all supplied with information, also keeping us in check and on the straight and narrow.

### **Withergate Rifle & Pistol Club**

This last year has been quiet for the club and member numbers have declined. The club is still running and has reduced the membership fee for the coming year to £65. It is open Thursday and Friday evenings. If anyone is interested in joining or would like further information, please contact Simon Cole.

## **Worstead Weavers**

Owing to Covid we have had a fairly quiet time over the last year. The Worstead Guild has managed over the last year to resume meeting three times a week, inside, rather than sitting under the tree outside the workshop. We have adhered to the Covid guidelines and have also designated one session a week for our more at risk members, keeping numbers very low in that session even as restrictions have lifted. We will continue to operate in a Covid safe manner, as we begin to expand our activities. We have recently been able to visit East Norfolk Sixth Form College, to demonstrate Spinning and Weaving to young students, and have taken part in the Makers Festival held at the Forum in Norwich. Activities which we have missed doing during Covid. Future visits to educational establishments are planned. Locally, we are very much looking forward to being involved with the Worstead Festival, and to moving forward with a project to make a woven banner for the Church as part of our 50th Anniversary celebrations. We will be holding our 5th Woolly Weekend on the 11th & 12th June, having had to cancel the event for the last two years, we are very pleased we are able to go ahead this year.

If there are events you are planning that we could have a presence at please let us know.

## **Worstead Pre-school**

We are pleased to present our achievements and ideas for the future.

Firstly we have all been through uncertain times with COVID-19 but we at Worstead pre-school continue to do our utmost for the children and families within our care. We as a charity have to work hard to attain our fund's and at present are working towards a new contract with the village hall including an increase for the use of electricity and storage.

At present we are spending lots of time on audits around the pre-school and have found some areas that need immediate attention, fire extinguishers needed to be checked, fire plans need to be updated and fire exits will need to be freed for exits from the office (this is being addressed by the village hall). Resources are being checked and archived paperwork disposed of in the correct manner. Staff are continuing to attend courses on a regular basis and we have children and family's welfare and care at the front of our priorities.

We feel our pre-school is a good asset to the village and would be willing to get involved with other village activities and help continue to bring people to Worstead. We already have many families attending the pre-school from the village and have a good relationship with the school.

Our future plans are flexible as we work with many changing times but we strive to maintain a good relationship with the children and families within our care.

Keeping good relations with the committee of the village hall and parish council.

## **Worstead Festival**

As of last year, the festival was unable to take place due to government restrictions with the ongoing pandemic, as disappointed as we were safety of the public and the team putting the festival on was paramount in our decision to cancel.

As Trustees we all agreed that some of the finances allocated for the cancelled festival should be used, and allow small grants to go ahead.

As we all agreed that the last two years have been very difficult for everyone, especially charities and local groups.

As stated in the treasurers report we have been able to award grants to Worstead Parochial Church Council, Worstead Parish Council and The Queen Elizabeth Hall.

We have also spent some money updating and developing our website and online booking system, which will be going live very soon, as will our online ticket sales. Planning for this summers festival which will be on 30th and 31st July, is under way, as always, the festival wouldn't happen without help from all the wonderful volunteers before during and after the event. So may I ask if anyone has a couple of hours spare your help will be gratefully received, please speak to me or any of the trustees for more information.

### **Queen Elizabeth Hall**

First - I'd like to thank the small core of people who have continued to keep the village hall running during another trying year - without that dedication the Queen Elizabeth Hall could easily have been left to crumble. Second - as a quick re-cap, in April 2021 the building was yet again shut down for public use, leaving just a few sessions of Karate for those under 18 years old, this use of the large space bought in the entire 6 hours of income for April. On the last day of April 2021 NNDC came in and 'fogged' the building ready to be used for voting in May and the re-opening of the building as a whole. This came with pages of rules and regulations needing to be approved on a daily basis. This is how insecure the balancing act on the buildings finances were at the beginning of this financial year. Although the Hall had a comparatively healthy bank balance of £17,000 largely due to lockdown grants - it had been down to just over £1000 the previous year and in serious danger of ending up with nothing. At least, the incredibly expensive large improvements to the fabric of the building had been finished, so literally crumbling was no longer a threat. This year we even managed a £10,000 overhaul of the entirely electrical system and the removal of the increasingly expensive and inefficient gas supply, plus cost effective heating in the preschool area as that is the area in constant use. As manager - (I'm not sure I signed up for this kind of stress) - I now feel we are in a stable position, the regular users of the hall are back, some with limited numbers for their own health and safety reasons. The hall is also attracting more external users for one-off events and outside groups who wish to make regular use of the 'airy space' we have here. It is a pleasure to welcome community groups, celebrations and fund raising back into the building as this has been sadly missing during the previous couple of years. Our bank balance is now hovering around the £25,000 mark - which gives us the ability to ring fence a years running costs. This will all be detailed in the Queen Elizabeth Halls AGM reports via the Treasurer. Any more improvements need grants - and this is a process we are continuing with. Obviously, the vast increases in outgoings had created a very stressful end to the financial year. We have 'locked down' insurance and energy costs as best we can. The Hall has also progressed in their partnership with the Worstead Preschool creating a lease for the standard rent and a variable one for their use of heating and lights in the building. This creates stability for both themselves and the QEHW during these very turbulent times. It is now a welcome symbiotic relationship to keep the communities building on a sensible financial path. Community groups such as Cynthia's friends, Worstead Wednesday's, The Worstead Fibre Artists have started meeting again and Worstead parent Toddler and Baby Group also. These are community groups that need financial help, as their membership does not/will not ever cover the cost of the hall's rent - but the committee feel they are of utmost importance for the wellbeing of the area and its inhabitants, so, the hall has subsidised their use. We thank the Worstead Village Amenities Trust for paying for Cynthia's Friend's rent and we shall continue to look at other outlets for the others. Unfortunately, most grants pay for equipment (for which these groups are fairly well catered for) - they do not cover running costs. I shall continue to search.

The regular bookings of sporting, fitness and physical well-being are a constant on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, plus an hour on Saturday mornings, Boogie Bounce Extreme (mini trampolines) is packed, badminton occasionally needs new players and Pilates could do with a few more participants - but there's still a constant program of fitness which is good to see in the village. The Queen Elizabeth Hall received a grant from 'Magic Little Grants' for £500 that purchased extra nets and rackets for more sports - this needs weekend or daytime sessions for those that can book in those hours, as evenings are fully booked. We also have two table tennis tables too. These sessions need an organiser and community involvement. Projects achieved this year: A £10,000 entire hall electrical overhaul. New heating in Preschool, bar area and veranda. Water heaters in washrooms and kitchen. Access door from kitchen to veranda. Our projects to progress will include: Broadband. Website and Phone improvements. Bistro style tables for the veranda to create a better cafe style area. Heaters in the office and in the room above the stage. LED lights throughout - most importantly in the hall as the large halogen lights are incredibly costly. The bar area update - it is now the principal meeting room and desperately needs a refresh - hopefully including a washroom area. Acoustic ceiling panels/hanging sheets - as the ceiling no longer needs to be reduced to save heat (infrared heats the people not the space) - we just need to improve the sound (and look). Non- glowing bulbs in the infrared heaters. Kitchen update.

### **St Mary's Church**

Thanks given to the Worstead Festival for their grant for lowering the pews, walls and panels.

Thanks also to Simon Cole for his work on the graveyard extension project.

The Church has renewed its link with the primary school; introduced contactless giving; Worstead Wednesdays moved into the village hall; work n housekeeping – including updating records and inventories, which has uncovered some interesting discoveries; fire extinguishers have been renewed. There has been some anti-social behaviour in and around the Church and the Police Beat Manager has been informed and is monitoring.

Future plans include – developing school services, the Worstead Festival; jubilee weekend (4<sup>th</sup> June) with choir concert; flower festival; outdoor Christmas carol service; promoting weddings and improving and installing kitchen and toilet facilities.

Vicar David Warner introduced himself. David is the new vicar installed in February covering North Walsham, Edingthorpe, Worstead and Westwick; also a Governor at Worstead School and excited to be here.

### **Worstead CE VA Primary School**

No Report.

### **22.06APM: District and County Councillors Saul Penfold:**

Dear Friends, I do hope you are all safe and well in what has continued to be a very difficult year for us all. It is a great privilege to represent and serve the parish of Worstead as its North Norfolk District Councillor (NNDC), which I have done since February 2018 and now also as its Norfolk County Councillor (NCC). I was delighted to have been elected to serve Worstead as its County Councillor at the elections held in May 2021. During the past year I have attended monthly Worstead Parish Council meetings and have supported the Parish and local residents by providing a 'bridge'

between residents and their County and District Councils. This is something I will continue to do to the best of my ability. I have been very happy to support highway schemes in Worstead through my County Council Local Member Budget – for example the £1,500 given towards the new trod path on Honing Road. I will continue to support the Parish in any such way possible in the future. I have also been busy with a range of local casework on behalf of Worstead residents across both Councils including planning, housing, road safety issues, better broadband coverage and environmental improvements. I have represented Worstead Parish residents at Full Council meetings held at both County and at District and have voted on a range of important issues affecting Norfolk as a whole including budget setting for both authorities, the proposed Norwich Western Link road, the declaration of a County Climate Emergency (which I proposed but which was defeated) and the District's Net Carbon Zero strategy. As well as my Constituency work for both authorities, I sit on a number of committees: At Norfolk County Council I am a member of the Council's Audit Committee, of its Employment Committee and of NCC's Joint Museums Committee. At North Norfolk District Council I continue to Chair NNDC's 'Sustainable Communities Grants Fund Panel' – which provides funding to community based projects across the District that seek to deliver positive environmental outcomes, encourage biodiversity and ensure that our communities are more healthy and sustainable places in which all life can flourish. I am also Vice-Chairman of NNDC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee as well as Vice-Chairman of its Governance, Risk and Audit Committee. Thank you for reading my annual report and if you need to contact me at all, my phone number is 07501 353962 and my County Council email is [saul.penfold.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:saul.penfold.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk) and my District Council email is [saul.penfold@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:saul.penfold@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

**22.07APM: Questions, answers and suggestions.**

It was noted that the Pre-school have previously been invited to the Annual Parish meetings

A parishioner questioned the enforcement of 20 mph speed limits within the parish and if the Police can enforce them.

Cllr. Bond explained the SAM2 data analysis which the PC collects showing and the average speeds which are recorded, and the perceived speeds of vehicles.

Speedwatch cannot be carried out in a 20mph area.

Cllr. Cole thanked all for attending the meeting and hoping that next year we will be able to meet in person.

Meeting closed 19.50