

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF WHILTON

Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 15 April 2015 at 6:30pm

14 Parishioners attended the meeting, with Mr Peter Wingrave, Chairman of the Parish Council in the chair and Mrs Erica Fothergill, Clerk to the Parish Council, as secretary. Mr Wingrave welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for taking the time to attend.

Apologies for absence were received from Roy Haynes and Brian Melling who submitted reports for their village groups, which were shared with residents at the meeting.

Copies of all village group reports; the approved minutes of last year's annual meeting as well as the draft minutes of this meeting, is available on the new parish council website <http://www.parish-council.com/whilton/>

1. Minutes of the 2013/14 Annual Parish meeting held on 19 April 2014 were unanimously approved.

2. Matters Arising – None

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked parish councillors for their hard work behind the scenes and he raised the following points:

- The Parish Council was very grateful to those residents who joined councillors in the annual litter pick this year and would like to invite more residents to join them next year ;
- Whilton is honoured to be the birthplace of a WWI war hero who was awarded the Victoria Cross. The Parish Council is collaborating with the History Society to arrange a fitting ceremony for the laying of the stone in September 2017, 100 years after Captain Reynolds was awarded the VC. It is planned to involve some of the village groups and residents in the ceremony to make it truly memorable. Regular progress reports will appear in the newsletter to keep residents informed.
- The next parish election will take place next year (2016) and some of the current councillors have indicated that they will not be available for re-election. The Chairman urged residents to become more involved in the running of Whilton's affairs by joining the parish council and invited them to contact him if they have any queries or wanted to discuss the matter further.

4. County Councillor's Report - Cllr Steve Osborne reported as follows:

He was proud to represent Whilton where he was always assured of a warm welcome. He currently serves on two committees at Daventry District Council (DDC), namely the Strategy Group and Audit Committee and he still chairs the Planning Committee.

- Northamptonshire County Council (NCC), launched their "Race to the Top" strategy this year to raise educational attainment in local schools. They are aiming to make Northamptonshire one of the highest performing counties for education by 2020 by encouraging schools to strive for excellence;
- In December 2014, the leaders of Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire County Councils made an alliance, to work together with the three Local Enterprise Partnerships, (LEPS), to focus on their common economies of innovation, science, technology and creative industries;
- NCC is in the middle of the largest infrastructural investment programme in its 125 year history. In the last five years they have spent over half a billion pounds. During the next five years they will be investing a further £600 million upgrading and building new schools, roads and Superfast broadband, including the A45 Daventry Link Road;
- The pressures on Strategic Local Authority services are immense. Their new strategic direction means that by 2020 they will be a far smaller retained organisation, the right-sourcing and commissioning of services from a new set of accountable organisations and social enterprises which may be owned, managed and run by current council staff. They will be using the Community and Voluntary Sector more in delivering vital local services and most importantly giving their service users more choice and control in the services that they use. More information is available on the NCC's website: <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Council/performance/Pages/plans.aspx>

5. District Councillors' Reports

Cllr David Smith reported that he was fast approaching the end of his first year as a District Councillor, which has been a whirlwind learning experience. He further reported that:

- He will continue to strongly represent the residents of the ward in the coming 12 months;
- District Councillors have dealt with a large number of major planning applications, a good proportion of which were speculative, taking advantage of the lack of a 5-year land supply within the Daventry District;
- DDC now has a land supply in excess of the 5-year requirement and it is hoped this will stem the flow of speculative applications in villages;
- During the past year he has attended meetings to promote a District-wide energy switching scheme, new affordable housing schemes, social housing, and a credit union;
- He has not claimed any expenses in discharging his duties as District Councillor but used his allowance to represent the villages in his ward.

Cllr Kevin Perry reported that his health had been poor in the last year and he made the following comments:

-	He serves on the Scrutiny and Improvement Committee which he enjoys;
-	DDC's funding had been reduced by 15% in the last year, forcing them to find innovative ways to supplement their income in order to protect services e.g. the income from Daventry/Rugby Crematorium;
-	2014/15 Community grants amounting to £85,000 had been fully subscribed. He urged community Groups to make use of this grant;
-	DDC have paid in £200,000 towards provision of broadband in the district;
-	The planned work to conservation areas, e.g. the local canals has come to a halt due to the influx of planning applications and a review is much needed.

6. Report from Brington and Whilton Pre-School – Not represented and no report received.

7. Police Report

The new PCSO, Kevin Thompson who has recently replaced Sarah Gray, sent his apologies as he was unable to attend. He submitted a short report saying that there have been no recent incidents or crimes in Whilton and that crime and antisocial behaviour were low across the entire beat.

8. Report from Whilton's Spinney Management Committee – The Chair, Anthea Hiscock, reported that:

- 2014 had been a quiet year in the Spinney and work parties were poorly attended;
- More granite chippings have been laid on the paths, although more was needed;
- Pre-school children have been making regular use of the Spinney for activities and gardening in their raised bed;
- Two members attended the funding fair in Daventry last spring, although no grants were available for on-going maintenance;
- The Parish Council, as residual trustee of the Spinney, provides a grant to pay the annual insurance;
- They are very appreciative of the financial support towards maintenance received from three parishioners and for Gordon Emery's assistance in moving the granite chippings.

Anthea closed by saying that their Annual General Meeting will be held in May, and they invited everyone to attend. There is a need for a more energetic group to take part in leadership and to provide man/ woman power as current members are ageing. Please contact the Committee if you would like to assist in any way.

9. Report from Whilton's Neighbourhood Watch - The representative did not attend the meeting did not submit a report.

10. Report from Whilton's Gardeners' Association – The Chairman, Roy Haynes, reported as follows:

- The Association continues to thrive, with an average of about 20 members attending each meeting.

The following guest speakers addressed them during 2014:

Apr. - Dr Twigs Way, who gave a very entertaining talk on the 'Digging for Victory' campaign of WWII;

Jun. - Mr John Lee, who talked about growing Penstemons;

Oct. - Mr Steve McKee, who gave a talk on Bonsai trees.

- For their August meeting they visited the gardens at Dormer cottage and the Old Rectory before making their way up to Roughmoor where they enjoyed a buffet supper;
- In December their usual Christmas meal and social evening was attended by 24 members;
- This year's membership has increased by 5, after recruiting several of the recent newcomers to the village;
- The 2015 membership fee is £15 per head.

11. Report from Whilton's Village Hall Management Group Maurice Clements, reported as follows:

- Use of the hall for local group activities remains at about the same level as last year, although there were fewer private bookings;
- Village Hall bookings can be made with Mary Kane, on 01327 842618;
- Club 200 continues to provide an income. The past year's proceeds paid for heaters fitted in the kitchen and WC areas as well as a microwave oven and misc. kitchen items;

The Chairman thanked all those acting as collectors of subscriptions to the 200 Club and everyone who have contributed, in any way, to the running of the village hall during the past year.

12. Report from Whilton's Parochial Church Council – The Treasurer, Jon Brierley, reported as follows:

- Church Attendance: There are 29 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll all but 2 residents within the parish. The average attendance counted during October 2014 was 5 but this number this increased at festivals. The PCC met 4 times during the year with average attendance of 70%;
- The service schedule provides a joint Benefice service on the first Sunday of the month at different locations round the benefice. On the remaining Sundays of each month St Andrews had either Holy Communion with Hymns, Worship for All or Evening Praise;
- There had been 1 Wedding and 2 funeral services;
- The churchyard is kept tidy and mown and the small conservation area maintained. They are very grateful for the continued work of Roy Haynes in maintaining the churchyard to such a high standard;
- Bellringers: Monday evening practices continue and they were pleased to welcome ringers from Fawsley in February 2014 and in July the evening ringing of the Daventry branch meeting was held at St Andrews. On Friday July 25th, they rang for the wedding of Pamela Brierley daughter of Jon, (churchwarden) and Sujana Minhas. Throughout 2014 they welcomed several bands of ringers from as far as Wiltshire, Dorset, Norfolk, Wales and the Northampton Town Churches Together group.

13. Report from Whilton's Local History Society – The Chair, Anthea Hiscock, reported as follows:

- They met five times in 2014. In May they heard about Whilton on the eve of the First World War in 1914; In September there was an introduction to the story of Captain Harry Reynolds, who was born in Whilton and who won the Victoria Cross in 1917 and in November the subject was 'The Water Gardens of Brockhall in the 18th and 19th centuries';
- January was the time for eating, when they enjoyed hotchpotch and apple cake, followed by a hotchpotch of questions about Whilton's history. In March the title was "The Mills on the Stream : stories of Brockhall, Muscott and Whilton Mills";
- This was also their first Annual General Meeting. They have existed on an "ad hoc" basis since 2006, but now have a committee and from January 2016 will have a subscription of £10 a year. The committee will soon be meeting to produce a programme for the next 12 months;

- Meanwhile work continues on the story of Captain Reynolds.

14. Allotments - The Chairman of the Whilton Allotment Group (WAG), Brian Melling, reported as follows:

- There are 14 half plots at Whilton allotment gardens. Throughout the year some of their members were incapacitated through illness and could not take full advantage of this valuable village amenity. However, all plots have now been taken up and several folk new to allotment gardening have taken the plunge;
- The winter has been relatively mild, though there was a setback in March which held things up and late frosts were a problem for some. Watering was necessary later in the Summer and WAG acknowledges the fact that the parish council allow for a notional 12 Cu metres consumption per year which appears reasonable to all concerned;
- The boundary fencing on the Southern perimeter needed attention and contractors were brought in last Spring to tidy up the accessible hedging and renew the wire fence;
- Allotment holders continued to mow and strim between plots, taking turns as much as possible and meeting the cost of servicing and petrol from the group members;
- In the early part of this calendar year it was noticed that the mostly holly hedge in the south east corner had grown considerably. They expressed their thanks to the adjacent neighbour who has reduced both the height and thickness of the hedge;
- Members of WAG meet regularly, approximately every two months, taking it in turns to play host. The group is affiliated to the National Allotment Society which offers advice on horticultural and contemporary issues and also provides Public Liability insurance at a reasonable cost. This was one of the conditions required by the Parish Council at the start of last year.

In 2015-2016 WAG looks forward to working with Whilton Parish Council in maintaining this valuable local resource as an attractive part of the environment, assisting if possible, in ensuring the lease with DDC is renewed.

15. Report from the Editors of Whilton's Newsletter - The Editors, Anthea Hiscock and Karen Whitcombe

- Rochelle Lye is having a break and they would welcome another to their team; so please contact them if you are interested in joining them;
- They apologised for omitting the "apple" from the apple cake recipe in the last Newsletter which will be remedied in the next issue, but they were happy to have proof that people do actually read their newsletter;
- They thanked all those who send in articles and reports, especially those that arrive without a reminder. If you feel like contributing something, please do. Apart from regular reports, they depend on information from you, their readers, and they hope that the Newsletter serves as a reminder of activities and a form of connection within the community. The village website www.whilton-village.net is also important for this, and they appreciate the work of Gerry Heeley, who runs it.

They thanked the Parish Council for their financial support, and the group of faithful volunteer deliverers of the Newsletter.

16. Whilton Parochial Charities - Keith Hiscock, the Parish Council nominee, reported as follows :

There have been two successful applications for grants this year. One assisted an elderly couple, the other a family. One required an amount beyond their normal limit but the addition was met by a generous loan to the Charity. They had to sell £200 worth of shares to meet the grants. These events led to the Trustees considering appealing to the Parish Community to consider making charitable donations to build up the funds they still hold from previous generous residents. They have been given HMRC's permission to treat all such gifts as eligible for Gift Aid from the Treasury and will make it known on the Parish website and in the Newsletter to make residents aware of it.

This fund is available to anyone normally resident within Parish Boundaries and residents are urged to mention the possibility to those who should benefit from the forethought of previous wealthier generous parishioners.

Trustees to be approached, if financial assistance is sought, are:

Community representative, Ann Gilbert at Langton Cottage,
Rector Reverend Sue Kipling at Brington Rectory, and

Keith Hiscock, Parish Council nominee, at Langton House.

17. Tuesday Chat & Social Lunches report - Anthea Hiscock reported as follows:

They have organised three Social Lunches on Tuesdays in April, July and November 2014. The next will be on Tuesday 28th April. The cost has remained at £5 per head, for which they provide two courses followed by tea and coffee. Please book by Saturday 25th April, if you wish to come.

The afternoon gatherings of Tuesday Chat continue on a monthly basis (excepting months when there is a Social Lunch). This is an occasion for a chat over tea and home-made cakes. There is no age barrier; they have been joined by those from under one to 90 plus.

The next Tuesday Chat will be from 2.30 – 4pm on 19 May. All are welcome - there is no need to book for the chat, just come to the Village Hall.

18. Whilton Warblers Choir Rochelle Lye presented the report on behalf of the Chairman, Linda Treacy

Since holding last year's AGM the Whilton Warblers Choir has celebrated its first birthday, which was held in September. They are still very much a community choir, with existing members residing in both Whilton Parish and the surrounding villages. Linda Treacy has been elected as the Whilton Warblers Chairman and Sarah Hawkins as Treasurer. They have yet to elect a Secretary, which will be voted on later this year.

The past year has seen a number of changes. They have purchased new equipment, are growing more confident in how to read music and have grown into a more self-assured Choir, attempting difficult and varied pieces, which they look forward to performing in their next concert, to be held on Saturday 27 June.

They have already achieved three sell-out concerts, with fantastic feedback, which has given the choir a longing to hold even more in years to come.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:00pm and thanked everybody for attending.