

GREAT WITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting, Great Witchingham Village Hall

Thursday 10th March 2022 7pm

Minutes

Attendees:

Mrs Tracey Buckenham (GWPC Chair) Mrs Jo McKenzie English (GWPC Vice chair) Mrs Bridget Wright (GWPC) Mrs Pauline Brown (GWPC) 6 Members of the public, Cllr Greg Peck, Norfolk County Council.

Apologies:

GWPC Clerk

Agenda

1. Welcome / Introduction
2. Presentation
3. Confirmation of minutes from Annual Parish Meeting 2019&2020
4. GWPC Chairman report
5. Fuel Allotment charity report
6. Matters raised by public
7. Close

1. Welcome

The meeting was presided by Mrs Tracey Buckenham, Chairman of the Parish Council, whereby a warm welcome was given, an introduction and explanation of the purpose was presented.

2. Plaque Presentation

Presentation by Deputy Lieutenant Alex Bartram of a Memorial Plaque to commemorate the resilience of Gt Witchingham community during the time of the pandemic, Received by **JME** on behalf of the parish.

Alex gave a detailed overview of the purpose of the lieutenancy and how it represents the crown and the Queens commitment to charity and society. Alex explained how parishioners can nominate local voluntary groups and businesses that they feel are worthy of recognition for their work in the community. She also raised awareness of possible lieutenancy representation at any planned Jubilee event.

3. Confirmation of minutes APM 2019 &2022

4. Chairmans report delivered by TB

5. Fuel Allotment report delivered by BW

6. Matters raised by public:

Concerns relating to the steps leading to the meadow on Common Lane and the danger they present. One member of the public fell and broke ribs and felt this matter needs urgent attention. TB suggested this becomes an item for GWPC and invited public to stay. GP explained Cllr Bullman on annual leave and confirmed his (GP) position at BDC

7. Close 7.25pm

Great Witchingham Parish Council
Chairmans Report
2021/2022

As I reflect on 2021 I'm aware of the challenges our whole local community faced due to national lockdowns caused by the pandemic which took its toll on the residents of Great Witchingham. However, the warm sense of community in our area is something to be incredibly proud of and now we look at moving forward to a new way of living as we're learning to live alongside the virus.

Because of the lockdowns and restrictions we were unable to conduct a number of our meetings face to face and so moved to online council meetings. I'm not sure this was ideal and it precluded those who do not have access to digital services from attending. I now look forward to this year and being able to have face to face council meetings where it gives us the opportunity to come together as a proactive council and encouraging and welcoming more residents to our meetings.

As a council, this year we took a decision to reshuffle our positions between the chair and vice chair where I stepped into the chairman's role in January. I extend my gratitude to Jo Mackenzie-English who has now accepted the position of vice chairman for the wonderful work she did as chairman and look forward to our continued partnership in leading the council forward to being a more stable and effective organisation.

My sincere thanks go to ex councillors Ray Gribble & Dean Bailey who sadly retired from the council this past year. Ray has been a long standing member of the council and I'd like to thank him for his commitment and passion for the work he did supporting our local environment. Rays departure means that we are currently without a representative for the northern western link road (NDR) for the local liaison group, this therefore leaves a gap in our attendance which we hope to address in future meetings.

I'd also like to thank Dean for his work on the traffic calming measures. Additionally I'd like to thank the remaining council members Bridget Wright and Pauline Brown for their loyal service whos local knowledge is invaluable.

My thanks go to County Councillor Mr Greg Peck and District Councillor Mr Peter Bulman for their invaluable guidance and continued support to us. Both councillors regularly attend our meetings and are on hand to answer public queries and concerns with sound advice, for which we are extremely grateful.

The local police are unable to attend council meetings as frequently as they once did however, our local police representative PC Colin Bailey has offered his support should there be any pressing matters that are of concern to local residents which can be raised during the council meetings or at any time through the councils clerk. I'd like to extend my thanks to the work that our local police force do to keep us all safe.

In terms of the budget for 2021/2022, the precept we receive from Broadland District Council is £16,102 We have found ourselves in financial decline over the past few years and have seen our reserves run very low and therefore have had to make difficult decisions where the money is spent. With the installation of the play area an increase in our public liability insurance had to be considered as well as providing litter bins. We have therefore had to make an increase in the precept this year to cover our existing financial commitments as well as looking to help with positive projects such as a local defibrillator.

In my new role as Chairman I am committed to look at where we can streamline our outgoings to save on costs as well as looking to adopt an environmental policy which will allow us to be more aware of the environmental and financial cost of things such as printing where digital technology may be implemented instead.

Despite the restrictions and regulations we were able to make some positive steps forward in the village, and here are some of the highlights:

I am delighted with the commitment of the play park committee led by Jasmine Hague, their dedication enabled the installation of both phase one and two of the play park. It is a delight to see after a long 9 years of fundraising to now see the children of the village enjoy this outside space. I'd like to give a special mention to the Howlett family who's extremely generous donation enabled phase two of the play area to be completed, leaving a family legacy for a wonderful open space for all children and families to enjoy.

Earlier last year myself, Jo and a resident spent a sunny Sunday afternoon clearing brambles and undergrowth away from the jubilee seating area on the piece of land beside the river Wensum. Our future aim is that this can be a usable space for the community to enjoy and to be able to sit beside the river. We will be looking to organise a regular clearing party with volunteers to keep the area in order.

We were very lucky to have a wonderful Angler living in our Parish. John Wilson was a broadcaster and writer as well as running his well-loved tackle shop in the centre of Norwich. He was famous for his television programs inspiring generations of anglers far and wide. We were sad to hear of his passing a couple of years ago and have been approached by his family who would like to donate a memorial bench in his honour. The council gladly agreed that this would be a wonderful tribute to such a well-loved man and hope to be able to use the area by the river to site the bench.

I'm also delighted to say that this year we are now in a position to continue to donate a sum of money that will help towards the costs of maintaining St Marys churchyard. I'd like to thank Mrs Sally Alcoque and the PCC for working with us to resolve the misunderstanding regarding the grass cutting donation. It was a pleasure to witness how passionate the residents are about our local church and how much the grounds are used.

Furthermore, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the many parishioners who continue to make Great Witchingham a welcoming, friendly and safe place to live. I sincerely hope the days of lockdowns are now behind us and that zoom meetings for Great Witchingham Parish Council are a thing of the past and we are all able to return to much needed face to face interaction with our friends and neighbours.

My sincere thanks goes to my fellow councillors and our Clerk for their committed work and the benefits they have helped to make over the past 12 months. I'm looking forward to the year ahead being part of Great Witchingham Parish Council as its new chairman.

Tracey Buckenham
Chairman
Great Witchingham Parish Council

email: greatwitchinghamparishcouncil@gmail.com
Tel: 01603 860671 (answer machine)
<https://gwpc.org.uk>

GREAT WITCHINGHAM FUEL ALLOTMENT CHARITY

Registered Charity No.: 210554 A/1



Trustees' Annual Report March 2022

Charity Report

The Charity was formed in 1811 by the provision of land under the Act of Enclosure and has provided residents of Great Witchingham, who are in need, hardship or distress, with charitable benefit in one form or another. Since that time, benefit has taken the form of a winter fuel payment in money or kind and applications for benefit are sought from September onwards. Charitable benefit is not limited to this period as need, hardship and distress has no such calendar boundaries. The Trustees will consider any written request for relief at any time.

Income is derived from the Charity's land, which is vested in The Charity Commission and governed by the Trustees. Contrary to popular belief, the land is private. Access to Charity land is, and has always been, by permission of the Trustees. Presently and for the foreseeable future, granting of that permission, by way of an annual permit, is delegated by a Management Agreement issued to the Fishery Manager.

Once the core aim of the Charity has been satisfied, The Charity Commission permits the Trustees to grant aid to groups or individuals in the Great Witchingham Parish to satisfy a particular need, which may exist in the Parish. The Charity is not permitted to relieve rates, taxes, or any other public funds but may supplement relief provided by public funds. The Charity is also not permitted to commit to repeating or renewing benefit granted on any occasion. The Trustees will consider all individual applications upon their merit.

2021, like 2020, also proved to be a challenging year. Fortunately, our fishery was able to remain open for much of the time with named storms proving more of a problem than Covid 19. The pandemic has clearly changed peoples habits and their importance toward leisure activities. As a result, our income was little affected and continued to provide income for our charitable purpose. Our ability to support the people in greatest need within Great Witchingham remained unaffected. The Trustees were pleased to make beneficial payments to 43 eligible applicants, the local playgroup and the new village playground, totalling just over £21500.

This financial year gave rise to a net income from the sale of fishing permits of £27425, from which a 20% share is paid to Great Witchingham Church Lands Charity. The Charity also holds a permanent endowment in the form of COIF shares, which provides an income of approximately £1,900 p.a.

It was again necessary to carry out some unplanned emergency tree works due to storm damage. Such damage continues to be an annual event as the climate changes and we are working towards pre-empting the problem with pro-active maintenance. The Trustees are considering the viability of improving on-site facilities for the benefit of members which will allow our fishery to compete favourably with other high quality venues in the county. The Charity continues to maintain contingency funds to withstand a prolonged loss of income without detriment to the benefit to those people and organisations we serve.

The work of our Fishery Manager and his team of volunteer Bailiffs continues to be invaluable to the Trustees, managing both the land and the fishery in accordance with the Trustees rules and wishes and in a wholly professional manner. The Trustees are exceedingly grateful to our team of bailiffs who have worked so hard in providing members with a Covid safe environment to enjoy under the most difficult of circumstances.

Despite a another year of financial turmoil which at the time of writing sees no prospect of stability, the value of our COIF investment shares increased over the last twelve months and dividend yield remains very much at a premium compared to ordinary investments.

The Trustees would like to thank all the people who give their time freely, particularly those who act as volunteer Bailiffs, without whose contributions the benefits that our charity is able to offer would be greatly reduced.

We look forward to being able to enjoy a normal year, which we very much hope will allow us to continue and indeed improve upon our good work in the Parish.

Our thanks to Clare Morton, Chair of Weston Longville Parish Council, for kindly carrying out the annual audit of our accounts. A copy of the Charity's audited accounts is appended.

Fishery Report

The fishery at Great Witchingham provides the Charity's main source of income for the distribution of benefit. 2021-22 has again so far been a good year for the fishery allowed to operate normally with sensible precautions around ongoing Covid concerns.

Members have yet again enjoyed some superb fishing and have been using the opportunity to spend as much time on the bank as possible and enjoy the surroundings.

Our fishery remains arguably one of the best mixed-specimen syndicate fisheries of its type in this region and especially for big carp. We continue to see year on year gains in our big carp with many fish over thirty pounds and several now very close to forty pounds including our established forty-pound fish now around 45lbs and 41lbs respectively.

Investment has ensured that stocking the fishery with high quality pedigree fish, has provided our members with the fishing they look for when choosing the waters, they want to join season after season.

The fishery is managed as a traditional mixed species fishery, and on any day, members can not only catch large carp, but large Bream, huge Tench into double figures, or large catches of smaller fish. The fishery has something for everyone, and an enjoyable day's fishing can always be had. We endeavour to continue with our aim to grow the fishery in stature and prominence as a superb place to fish.

The fishery will continue to be developed on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide an excellent outdoor experience and most importantly, meet the aims and needs of the Charity in supporting the community and many local families who benefit from the charitable donations, which the fishery income provides. This will ensure that the Charity will have a long future in its core provision of local welfare and allow the opportunity to expand further to assist the wider community. We hope our patrons will continue to support us in this goal.

Susie Thomson
Chair of Trustees

Gt. Witchingham Fuel Allotment Charity - Statement of Accounts - 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2021

INCOME

OPENING BALANCES

CASH ACCOUNT £592.95
 CURRENT ACCOUNT £1,117.28
 COIF ACCOUNT £46,679.55
 BP ACCOUNT £6,287.50

£54,677.28

INCOME

FISHING 2021

£48,232.00

INTEREST

BANK INTEREST
 COIF DIVIDEND
 COIF INTEREST

£1.57
 £1,895.71
 £6.66

£1,903.94

EXPENDITURE

DISTRIBUTION £21,519.00
 ADMIN EXPENSES £337.00
 BAILIFF GRATUITIES £675.00
 BAILIFF REFUND £180.00
 CHURCH LANDS PAYT £3,175.59
 FISHING 2021 £770.00
 INSURANCE RENEWAL £617.00
 KEYS & LOCKS £2,176.54
 MAINTENANCE £1,785.62
 MANAGEMENT FEES £10,315.33
 TOILET HIRE £3,528.34
 VAT ON GOODS AND SERVICES £423.08

£45,502.50

CLOSING BALANCES

CASH ACCOUNT £72.95
 CURRENT ACCOUNT £1,262.49
 COIF ACCOUNT £50,686.21
 BP ACCOUNT £7,289.07

£59,310.72

INVESTMENTS HELD: SHARES IN CHARITIES
 OFFICIAL INVESTMENT FUND (INCOME UNITS)
 2889.84 @ £18.2517 = £52744.49
 695.10 @ £18.2517 = £12686.76
 Value as at 31/12/20 £65431.25

£104,813.22

£104,813.22

Signed.....Treasurer Dated.....

Signed.....Chairman Dated.....

Signed.....Auditor Dated.....

I HAVE EXAMINED THE BOOKS AND BANK STATEMENTS AND CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENT REFLECTS A TRUE RECORD OF THE CHARITY'S ACCOUNTS.