

WISTOW CUM NEWTON HARCOURT PARISH MEETING

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Facebook Page - Newton Harcourt and Wistow. WhatsApp groups: E-mail for more details.

Minutes of the **Parish Meeting 28th November 2022** at **7.30pm**

Present: Rob Abraham, Richard Brooks, Jennie Andrews, John Chell, Raymond Bray, Graham Spendlove-Mason, Graham and Gina Handsley, Roger & Margaret Jones, Julie and Chris Firth, Peter and Mary Thornton, Jo Mansfield, Martin Guiver, Pam and Mike Smith, Brian Eales, Julie Guiver (chair), Celia Bates (clerk)

1. To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Cllr James Hallam, Catriona Scott, Joe Goddard

2. To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the meeting held on April 25th, 2022

RESOLVED: The minutes were signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

3. To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on this agenda for report only.

At the previous meeting there had been a discussion about a gate and bollard on Kissing Gate and whether a gate could be re-instated. Julie asked some of the residents who have lived here a long time, why they were removed in the first place, and found that it had been a matter of accessibility for wheelchair users. With barriers being removed in society making accessibility easier for all users, we will not be asking for them to be reinstated.

4. To receive and note the Chair's report:

- Condolences to the families of Zena Hester and Rachel Kellett following their sad passing.
- Thank you to all involved with the Jubilee celebrations. Maybe a new committee would like to organise the Kings Coronation?
- JG attended a Parish Nature course on Wildflowers and Grass identification.
- Biodiversity and Biodiversity Net Gain was explained in two short Natural England videos.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQZQ-benW9Yh><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVR9VZYkMLc>
- Avian flu alert
Harborough District Community Safety Partnership
 - Confer of Power update.: Harborough District Council have declined The Parish Meeting's request for Confer of Power. (*Confer of Power allows a Parish Meeting to use money from the precept to purchase, maintain and support projects within the Parish*) *It was proposed that we do not apply to HDC for a precept until the time that the Parish Meeting's bank balance requires money to fund its operational costs.*
*See point 6
- Wellbeing and Befriending Service, Steady Steps (sessions at Fleckney for over 65's)
Suzy Lamplugh Trust online training for bystanders. The training empowers you to do something without being provocative or challenging to the perpetrator.
https://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/Events/Category/events?fbclid=IwAR3XV5G9NpgsRje6GBBt37tBVi3v_DqulMh_P7xRwgGfdY5MH7EjiNXICnl
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6eTUO09A5Y>
- Railway electrification works: Another 14months of works. No specific timeline yet for works to the bridges on Wistow Rd, Glen Rd and Station Rd yet. Road closures will affect NH and W.

Please see Chair's full report attached.

RESOLVED: That the Chair's report be noted.

5. To receive an update on the Confer of Power

Update on the Confer of Power

The balance in the Parish bank account now stands at just over £10,000 with approximate current annual running costs of £650 (see item 6. Treasurer's Report). The Parish Meeting has looked for a way to legally spend the money by asking HDC to give the Parish Meeting the Confer of Power. After a long correspondence with HDC this request has been declined.

There was a suggestion made that The Parish Meeting keep the £10000 in the bank account for any legal representation costs that might be needed in the future. Without the Confer of Power this would not be a permissible way to spend the money.

There was a discussion about whether The Parish Meeting should become a Parish Council.

Alternatively, the insurance that we pay for could be updated to cover the Parish Meeting for legal representation costs. This will be looked into at the next insurance renewal.

It should be noted here that there was unanimous agreement in thanking Julie for all her hard work in applying for the Confer of Power and filing an official complaint following the way the application had been handled by Harborough District Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6. To receive and note the Treasurer's report including the Precept Application.

(See attached report.)

Currently we have a balance of £10582.33

The accounts were audited by Peter Thornton and the AGAR (Annual Governance & Accountability Return) submitted to PKF Littlejohn.

Two signatories are always required for any payment made by the Parish Meeting.

Accounts have been approved.

It was proposed that no request for a precept would be made for 23/24 with full agreement from those attending the Parish Meeting.

Please see Treasurer's report attached.

RESOLVED: That the treasurer's report be noted.

7. To receive and note a report about the Poor's Land.

After the sad loss of Rachel Kellet a vacancy for a trustee has arisen.

Mary Thornton has kindly offered to become a trustee.

This was nominated by PT and seconded by JM.

Roger Jones has agreed to be Chairperson.

RESOLVED: Mary Thornton is a trustee of the Poor's Land charity.

8. To receive and note a report from the Jubilee Committee

It was reported that the whole Platinum Jubilee weekend was fantastic and brought the village community together. Thanks to many people in the village for their work, help and donations. The surplus money from the event has been donated to the Reading Room. The Jubilee account was available for inspection.

A time capsule is planned to be buried and a Jubilee bench to go into the church yard. Ideas for what could be put in will be gratefully received (to Martin Guiver).

RESOLVED: That the Jubilee committee's report be noted.

9. To receive and note reports from village groups.

Parochial Church Council (PCC): Report noted.

Women's Institute (WI): Report noted.

Friends of Newton Harcourt (FNH): Report noted.

Poor's Land Charity: Report noted.

Jubilee committee: Report noted.

Reports were sent with agenda previously.

RESOLVED: That the reports be noted.

10. To note any planning applications and decisions since the last parish meeting.

All planning applications and decisions can be viewed at: [Harborough District Council Planning. https://www.harborough.gov.uk/view-and-comment-on-planning-applications](https://www.harborough.gov.uk/view-and-comment-on-planning-applications)

RB reported that The Solar Farm Plans, Wistow Lodge Farm, Fleckney Rd, were still undergoing archaeology investigations.

RB also reported that the Wistow Home Farm, Farmhouse plans, (behind the new retail units) would be a proposed Beauty Business.

Please see report attached.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

11. To elect a new Treasurer for the Parish Meeting

Following the resignation of Fabienne Herbert earlier this year, we had asked for a new volunteer to take over the Treasurer's role. Julie Firth came forward as she has accounting experience. Julie was nominated by GH and seconded by MG. We are very grateful to Julie and welcome her onto the Parish Meeting Committee.

Resolved: Julie Firth is the new Treasurer for the Parish Meeting

12. To consider any other business.

PS reported that it was very dangerous walking from the properties at the west end of the village to the pavement which begins at The Square. The only access to The Square is a narrow strip of grass which is slippery and contains obstacles which can't be seen in the dark. The village has no street lighting and residents are reluctant to walk to the Reading Room (the community hub) to keep in touch with other residents. It is also used by the PO, other delivery personnel and walkers/ramblers which churns up the grass in winter. Four new houses are being built at Elm's Barn which makes a greater need for a tarmac footpath to be made.

It was agreed that Highways will be contacted about this.(JG/CB)

- BE from The Canal and River Trust has reported that a request for help to deal with the mud issue on the canal towpath between bridge 78 and 79 at NH has been made to Network Rail. There have been trees taken down between the rail line and canal which has exacerbated the problem. CRT is waiting for a response.
- RJ stated that the condition of the footpath from Wistow Road towards the Reading Room was dangerous for walking on and would be impassable for mobility aids. This is a well-used path towards the Reading Room. In places the tarmac has broken up. Tree roots are pushing tarmac upwards making the surface very uneven. Once again, because there is no street lighting, pedestrians struggle to walk safely without being fed towards the kerb and into the path of oncoming traffic. A request was made, following the meeting, that residents who have hedges bordering the pavement, please keep them cut back to the property boundaries. Straggly hedges are feeding pedestrians towards the kerb, right against traffic.
It was agreed that Highways will be contacted about the state of the pavement.
(JG/CB)
- The proposed building on the land owned by Jag Gill on Wistow Rd, near to the Canal, was discussed. Were there any updates on what was proposed? Jag had given an overview of his plans at the Parish Meeting Nov 2021. It was noted that cabling work was being done on Wistow Rd near to the field.
- RB reported that he was looking into requesting Planning Permission for the conversion of a Barn into a Wedding Venue on Glen Road. This is at the east end of Newton Harcourt just after The Coppice on the right as you leave the village. He will make a decision early in 2023 whether Planning Permission will be sought.
- It was noted and agreed that it is good to see The Reading Room being used for more community events again with the hope for more new events to be added.

12. Date of next meeting

AGM - Monday, April 17th, 2023, 7.30pm at the Reading Room.