

Fenny Compton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Of Fenny Compton Parish Council Held at Fenny Compton Village Hall, Fenny Compton on Monday 3rd April 2023 At 7.00pm

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: Jon Dutton in the Chair, Emma Briscoe, Samantha Parkes, Alan Payne, Derek Carless, Roly Whear and David Johnson

IN ATTENDANCE: Parish Clerk Lydia Cox and Councillor Nigel Rock (District Council)

2023_04_PM_01: Apologies

Apologies were received from and Councillor Chris Kettle (County Council) and were **accepted**

2023_04_PM_02: Acceptance of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish meeting held on 20th June 2022 were approved at the Ordinary meeting held on 18th July 2022

2023_04_PM_03: Parish Council Chairman's Report

The Parish Council spends about £25,000 a year; most of this goes on maintaining the facilities in the village, including cutting the grass and repairing streetlights. During the course of the year, we have replaced all of our lights with LEDs to reduce our ongoing repair bill as well as the cost of electricity. This has been the main enabler to reduce our budget by 7% this year.

We are responsible for various community facilities such as play equipment, allotments, bowls club and sports pavilion. The village hall is maintained by a separate group of trustees who you will hear from later.

Many of the facilities in the village have been here a long time, and are approaching end of life. In particular the sports pavilion, the bowls club pavilion and the play equipment all need significant investment to make them suitable for ongoing use and to meet the aspirations the community identified in the Neighbourhood Development Plan. We are currently in the process of developing plans to do this and have started engaging with the various groups in the village to get their input into this. Work on this has been much slower than I would like and we will need to accelerate our focus on this this year given the worsening condition of some of the facilities.

Responding to planning applications only 20 in the past year, much less than last year, these can be anything from pruning a tree in the conservation area to applications to build 100 houses.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan is virtually complete bar the shouting but I will let Derek provide a more detailed update on that.

Flooding remains a worry for many but we are grateful for the work of Aqueous in pushing forward the latest project to improve flood defence measures in the village, more on that shortly.

Traffic and speeding are also a concern. We have tried and tried to get a Speedwatch group up and running but this hasn't happened due to a lack of interest by the relevant people in the police. We understand that as part of the Compton Locks development the footpath will be widened and the speed limit will be reviewed downwards on the road between the village and the A423 but it is unclear when this will actually happen.

Construction is well underway at the development and we understand homes could be occupied as early as June. We are starting to plan what we need to do as a Parish Council to integrate the new residents into our community. Orbit, the company who are developing the site, should be able to help us with this but communication with them continues to be difficult.

I want to end by saying a sincere thanks to all the councillors who fit in a lot of work between meetings, balancing this with work and home life and everything else, for which I am very grateful. Special thanks go to Derek and Alan who are standing down and for whom this will be their final meeting. And final thanks have to go to our Clerk Lydia who does a sterling job in keeping us organised and compliant with our ever-increasing list of obligations.

Signed _____ Chair May 2023

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2023_04_PM_04: Annual Accounts of Fenny Compton Parish Council for 2022/23

For the year 2022/23, the Parish Council received income of £29.5k. £27k precept, £2k VAT Reclaim and £800 cemetery income.

Expenditure for the year was £35k. The biggest expense being £11k for upgrading the streetlighting stock to LED. Other significant items being £4k street lighting (which is a significant reduction from prior year), £6k grass cutting and general village maintenance, £6k Clerks salary, £2.5k tree works and £1k on electrical improvements at the bowling club.

The Parish Council made no donations to village groups in the year.

Year End Reserves were £28k, a reduction of £10k from last financial year due to the expenditure on street lighting.

The Parish Council was able to reduce the precept requested for the following financial year due to the expected lower cost of street lighting going forwards. Budget has been set aside for further work at the bowling club, sports pavilion and for upgrading noticeboards in the next financial year.

Question from parishioner – Will there be more street lights due to the new development? Clerk answered that, yes, there will be. A number within the development and 6 new street lights on Station Road (WCC will be responsible for these).

2023_04_PM_05: To receive reports from Local Organisations

(i) Village Hall Committee:

The following report was given by Paul Brand:

Apart from the regular bookings by groups (monthly: Anglican Church and Just a Bite, weekly: Tots and Toddlers, the Violin School, a sewing group, the WI and the Scouts, Beavers, Explorer Scouts, and Cubs) and at longer intervals the Parish Council and some one-off birthday parties we had a special event at the Village Hall, namely the South Warwickshire Literary Festival, organized by Jacqui Gooding. It was held for the first time on 24 September 2022 and with considerable success. The Hall was used as a venue for speakers as well as for catering and workshops were held in the church. The next Literary Festival is being held at Harbury Village Hall on Saturday, 23 September 2023 but we hope that it will return to our Village Hall in the future.

The other fundraising event for which the Village Hall is partly used is the Church Fete which was to have been held on 17 September 2022 but was cancelled following the death of the Queen. A much-slimmed down version took place on 1 October followed by a Jumble Sale and teas on 6 November in the Village Hall.

It was also used as a venue for the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum on 2 March 2023.

The main fundraising events run by the Village Hall trustees themselves are the Cinema and the Lottery.

While no upgrades have been done since the last report, a new (second-hand) cooker which is more energy efficient was donated by a member of the community and is now in use. No major repairs are needed at this stage and the financial situation of the Village Hall is alright (but that does not mean that we don't welcome donations – quite the contrary).

Q from parishioner – Could we re-run an event on how to use defibrillator, what it is for, etc. Councillor Parkes will look to set up.

(ii) Fenny Compton Colts

The following report was given by Jason Page:

Squads - Currently Fenny Colts have a total of 35 players (Minis: 9, U8s: 14, U12s: 12). After a couple of years with only

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1 team, we are now in a position to start filling groups, and offer training, from U8 down. Both U8 and U12 are in the Mid Warwickshire league. The club is affiliated to the FA through their affiliation with Birmingham FA. Public liability insurance paid by club and private liability paid by club through affiliation with Birmingham FA.

Reach for community -The players come from the Fenny Compton including local villages such as Farnborough, Boddington, Avon Dassett, Long Itchington, Wellesbourne. In addition, the away teams come from Coventry and Rugby and everywhere in between. Both of these aspects bring potential revenue (e.g., Co-op mainly) and interest in to Fenny Compton village.

Committee training - All coaches are FA level 1 trained, with additional safeguarding and first aid training. All full-time volunteers are DBS checked and welfare trained. All members of the committee are volunteers and not paid for any aspect, or take advantage, of their time in the club.

Clubhouse/Pavilion & Sports field - Fenny Colts have utilised the pavilion in two ways: Storage of club assets and Kitchen & toilet usage. Since the last structural survey (paid by Fenny Colts) and the COVID lockdowns, parents have less confidence in the safety of the pavilion. Roof panels have been identified as asbestos by some parents and walls and floor have increasing cracks. Currently, the only use of the clubhouse is for storage of club assets. The club shares some assets with the local community, such as goals posts and nets and pays for upkeep of the pitches which are line marked by club groundsman.

Issues:

1. The post to keep the gate open has been removed for no reason, making it difficult to leave the gate open for training or match day parking
2. Dog poo checks are required for every training and match due to dog owners not picking up and risk to children's health
3. If pavilion is no longer safe for use, storage facility is required for club assets
4. No functioning toilets reduces ability for tournaments and makes it difficult for mixed sex teams or supporter

Club day and community - This year the club will be celebrating 25 years. Fenny Colts have volunteered to support the Avon Dassett Fete this year. The club greatly appreciates the support from the local community.

(iii) Playground:

The following report was given by Parish Councillor Sam Parkes:

This year we have continued to develop plans and source funding for our playground redevelopment. Following our online survey, we obtained designs and quotes from a variety of specialist companies which we shared with the community during an open session in September. This resulted in giving us a good idea of the type of equipment, materials and layouts people, including young people, would like to see. It also gave us some guidance of costs which look like upwards of £100,000. We have then started to apply for grants and are awaiting results from an application to the National Lottery Community Fund.

We would like to thank Fenny Compton Scout Group for their work on improving the wall in the court area and to County Councillor Kettle for his grant to enable us to buy new basketball equipment.

(iv) Bowls Club:

The following report was given by Parish Councillor Alan Payne:

The club had a good year with membership maintained at 22 playing members. This is slightly down on the Covid years as some new members have not renewed. We again played competitive matches in the Kineton & District League where we finished fifth out of 15, down one place from 2021 but still a great achievement for one of the smallest clubs

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in the league.

We also enter numerous competitions and were represented in both the South Warwickshire & Kineton Finals Day.

We are always looking to attract new members we held an open day in May to coincide with nationwide initiative known as the Bowls Big Weekend promoted by Bowls England. Maintaining membership is key to our sustainability and anyone interested is welcome to join for our club social nights held on Friday evenings throughout the season.

The facilities are generally in poor condition and it very challenging to raise significant funds for refurbishment. The club house itself is owned by the Parish Council and will require some investment over the next few years to maintain it as safe and usable. In 2022 we updated the electrical system thanks to funding provided by the Parish Council. Future allocation of £1000 a year is planned to maintain the facilities to a usable standard. Where reasonable work is undertaken by club volunteers to keep costs to a minimum.

(v) Aqueous:

The following report was given by Parish Councillor Alan Payne:

In many ways 2022 was a frustrating year. Having secured funding of £800k for individual property protection scheme we are yet to see any delivery. WCC have appointed a project management organisation, Wardell Armstrong, and a contractor, Whitehouse Construction.

After the initial consultation 28 property owners expressed an interest and a more detailed survey was undertaken for costing purposes. The complexity and increasing costs have proved problematic as a number of the properties at risk are listed and require consent from Conservation Officer at SADC. This has led to delays in finalising the design and gaining legal agreements with the owners. As a consequence, no installation has yet taken place.

The current plan is for work to be carried out in two phases, firstly for the non-listed buildings followed by the listed buildings once consent has been achieved. Each property owner will need to sign a legal agreement with WCC. Once done the programme is as follows:

Activity	Duration (Days)	Start	Finish
Bespoke measurements for timber doors, drawings produced & further boundary works assessment	35	16/05/23	20/06/23
Listed Building Consents applications	?	ASAP	31/07/23
Installation Non-Listed (start delayed to close gap to listed)	82	31/07/23	25/09/23
Procure Listed Building Materials	60	31/08/23	22/11/23
Installation Listed	40	23/11/23	20/12/23
Post-Installation Surveys	5	21/12/23	08/01/24

In addition to the property investment there remains a number of other issues to address.

As part of the Ridge Way development a payment was made to WCC for off-site works to divert flood water from Station Road to the watercourse. This would also protect the surgery from flooding. Again, this has not yet been undertaken but WCC have now produced a design which should be delivered in 2023. It should be noted the existing drainage around The Ridgway is complicated with no overall responsibility so complex to resolve. The WCC scheme will not seek to resolve these issues but deal with the problem.

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Concern also remains over why flooding continues in Memorial Road. WCC are planning undertake further investigations into why the water does not drain freely. This remains outstanding issue.

A key part of the flood management strategy is to continue to maintain the watercourses through Aqueous volunteers and riparian owners. Clearance over recent years has improved flows and lowered general water levels.

Overall, the flood risks to properties has been reduced considerably and we look forward to completion of the property protection scheme this year.

(vi) Allotments:

The following report was given by Parish Councillor Roly Whear:

The association continues to thrive with all plots currently let, though the current wet weather may delay the start of the growing season. Something of a change from lack of rain last year and over the winter.

We have hosted visits from the primary school and look forward to doing so again this year.

The main improvement work has been to fit a second water trough, at the top of the site, which helps with a downhill walk with a heavy load.

(vii) Neighbourhood Development Plan:

The following report was given by Parish Councillor Derek Carless:

Aside from SDC 'making' the Plan (on 24th April), the NDP is complete. It was supported by over 90% of those that voted. Councillor Carless thanked Hilary Birkbeck for his persistence at the beginning of the project to get the NDP up and running, along with John Wickenden who has seen the project through to the end. Michael Guest and Cherie Southgate, who have since left the village were also thanked for their hard work and support.

(viii) Footpath Group:

The following report was read on behalf of Brian Peers:

The Footpath Group is continuing to thrive. Membership is stable and we always welcome new volunteers. We have maintained most of our 3 hour work sessions every 4 weeks over the last year during which time we have replaced and maintained bridges, stiles and marker posts in addition to strimming and other general maintenance to the footpaths and bridleways in Fenny Compton and the surrounding parishes.

We continue to maintain a good working relationship with the local landowners.

WCC operates the 'CAMS' system for reporting issues and so far its effectiveness has been very poor. The reason given by WCC is lack of staff and funding.

We are reimbursed by WCC for our materials and other expenses and will not be asking for additional funding from the PC for 2023. However, for the financial year 22/23 Rights of Way at WCC has zero funds allocated for materials so each project is individually assessed. There is some money available though from a Section 106 payment but there are limitations on where this can be used.

We have been asked by Avon Dassett PC to do work in their footpaths, we have surveyed the parish and are reporting issues online to WCC via CAMS.

We very much intend to continue through the next year and beyond.

(ix) Violin School:

The following report was read on behalf of Veronique Matarasso:

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Village Violin School has flourished this year. We currently have a mixed age range from 7 years to what is best described as 'very grown up'! From my experience with the group (about 25 players) I can see that the mixed age group is of benefit to everyone and we all enjoy the atmosphere it brings. We have started a new group of Beginners this year, all from The Dassett School. We ran a few taster sessions at the school, thanks to Ms Corry and Sarah Boyle who organised our visits. All these children wanted to continue and have joined us at VVS practices on a Monday afternoon in the Village Hall.

We have had regular workshops and concerts, recent visits from two Slovenian folk violinists and other professional colleagues of mine who come and support the teaching and learning by giving varied musical experiences to the players. We are planning to support and entertain the village community by playing at the Street Party to mark the Coronation in May. Our village friends help VVS out in many practical ways – notably Sarah and Paul Grant who record our activities by videoing and keeping up the website. <https://villageviolinschool.weebly.com>

Some of our young players have now moved on to join the County String Orchestra or to specialist music school in Manchester. This fulfils the aim of VVS, which is to give all participants opportunities to develop their skills in any direction they wish. Some players are still coming to Monday practice since starting in 2015. Some return for occasional visits and we are still in touch with many past players on a regular basis.

We value our enjoyable relationships with the Scouts who follow us into the Hall, with Daphne from The Merrie Lion and with the Parish Council who have helped enormously with some grant funding. This helps me to buy new sheet music and to cover the cost of the hall, and the project continues to run free of charge to all the children, to provide free instruments to all, sheet music and all other accessories free of charge. I now make a small termly charge to adult participants towards photocopying costs. Thank you also to WCC for their recent grant towards the Village Hall costs.

Thank you to all in this community for continued friendship and support.

(x) Fenny Compton Scout Group

Chris Revitt sent through a report which is attached as Appendix A.

(xi) The WI were invited to send a report but declined

2023_04_PM_06: Report from Trustees of Charities

The following report was read on behalf of Keith Distin:

Fenny Compton Relief in Need - There are just two trustees: Reverend Nicki Chatterton (ex-officio) and myself. Nicki will leave the parishes at the end of May. The Parish Council may appoint two trustees if they so wish, and would therefore like to ask if anyone would be prepared to become a trustee.

There were no applications for support and therefore no payments made during the last year. The charity holds 67 investment units with the CCLA's COIF Charities investment fund. These were valued at £1216.00 at 31st December 2022. The realised dividends have been paid into the charity's bank. The account balance at 31st December 2022 was £694.93

2023_04_PM_07: District Councillor and County Councillor Reports

The following report was read on behalf of Councillor Nigel Rock, District Councillor:

During the past year there have been a number of changes, or attempted changes at the Council.

MERGER - During 2022 Warwick and Stratford District attempted a merger. There were a number of influences driving this. There was already close cooperation between the Councils in a number of activities and central Government had signalled they wanted to see fewer, larger authorities. There were also moves to establish a combined County and District Council across the whole of Warwickshire which I judged would not be good for our residents – it would have

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put us in a group of communities of quite different characteristics. So, exploring a more local merger was a sensible move under the circumstances. However, at the last minute the political leaders of the two Councils found they had substantial differences and the merger was abruptly cancelled on 14 April. The whole episode took up much time and effort and much should have been known earlier, but at least we did not dismantle the joint working that was already in place. The Leader of the Council has conceded that mixed signals from the government also made things difficult with the multiple changes of government ministers with different ideas.

RECYCLING - Whilst much of the activity described above will have passed residents by, the change to waste and recycling did not. The previous service was well regarded by residents, but in a number of aspects there were significant problems. I believe it could have been better handled. It was probably not a good idea making changes to teams, routing, some collection days and adding food waste collection, all at the peak holiday time. In this council ward it took many months to settle down and I am still working to help people disadvantaged by the change, who through no fault of their own (such as health needs) struggle with grey bin capacity.

PLANNING - A number of Parishes across the District (including Napton and recently Fenny Compton) have created Neighbourhood Development Plans, which should give more local control. I have been trying to ensure that such local plans are given much more significant consideration at the Distinct Council. In planning there are limits to the scope of local authorities set by central government. Some changes (not always for the better) have started to be problematical here. The government has changed 'permitted development' to make it easier to do things like converting barns (sometimes inappropriately) and even add another floor to a house without need for permission, with risk to neighbours' wellbeing. Rules for Self-Built housing have created some loopholes and I was asked to chair a review of this, but the recommendations have been very slow to come into effect. Where planning rules are not properly followed the council should be dealing with those. The Council cut the resources for planning enforcement last year, but the ruling administration accepted a Lib Dem opposition amendment to improve resourcing this coming year. The new local plan which will set policy for many years to come, is a major effort in progress.

HS2 - This is the biggest single project in the area (and in the country) which has had effects to greater or lesser degrees on many villages. Not many weeks go by without councillors such as myself having to intervene over issues such as construction traffic, diversions, lighting, drainage, and tree and hedge removal.

POLICING - I attended a recent scrutiny meeting and questioned the police about resources in our area. The Police and Crime Commissioner conceded that the Southam Beat has been under resourced and indicated that steps will be taken to address this.

CASE WORK - I have been working on a number of issues that might affect individual villages or residents. In Fenny Compton the Orbit home development in Station Road is significant for the community and I have been working closely with the Parish Council and Orbit on that.

ELECTION - The election in May will bring my term, and that of South Warwickshire's Parish Councils, to an end. I am seeking election with a colleague for the new ward which will be the largest in the Distinct - with two councillors. It seems that fewer people are coming forward to be parish councillors in some villages. Parish Councils are a key level in local government I am always pleased to work with them. I gather that some parish councils in South Warwickshire will not be able to function if not enough people come forward. AND yet another reminder that you need an official photo ID to vote at the polling station.

I thank everyone for their kind words and support over the last four years.

2023_04_PM_08: Other Matters Raised by an Elector of the Parish

No matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 19:30

Signed _____ Chair May 2023

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Appendix A: Scout Group Report



AGM report 22.pdf