

Upper Hardres Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting

Tuesday 06 June 2023, 7pm at Bossingham Village Hall

Minutes

1. Chairman welcomed those present and recorded attendance and apologies

Attending: Chairman Nick Waldron, Cllrs Mick Broughton, Angela Waldron, Parish Clerk Clare Hamilton, and 2 members of the public.

Apologies: KCC Cllr Mike Sole, CCC Ward Cllrs Mike Bland & Alister Brady, Gabby Fisher BVH, Simon Warner, John Pitcher.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17 May 2022 were accepted and signed

3. Chairman's Report

see Reports

4. Presentation

A Kent Association of Local Councils Community Awards 2023 certificate will be presented to the Bossingham Village Hall Management Committee at the next parish council meeting

5. Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

see Reports

6. Reports from County and City Councillors

see Reports

7. Public participation session

Parishioners raised issues with a refused planning application and subsequent lack of response from CCC. The Chairman requested they forward information about the application to the clerk and he will escalate matters with a planning officer and, if necessary, ask a ward councillor to intervene.

8. Any other information

SignedNick Waldron *Chairman*, 14 May 2024

Reports

Chairman's report 2023

Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting.

At our Annual Meeting of the Council held on 22 May, Rob Quincey stood down as Chairman and Councillor. He had been on the parish council since 2016 and will be very much missed. Rob drove a lot of projects forward and his proactive attitude is certainly one we wish to build on.

There was an Uncontested election for parish councillors in May where unfortunately only three of us stood. I was elected Chairman, and Mick Broughton as Vice Chairman. Simon Warner will be co-opted at the next meeting which means we have a vacancy for a councillor.

I am Nick and I joined the Parish Council because a previous chairman told me my home was a retirement village and needed to be viewed as such and I felt a younger voice was required. The grey hair tells you this was quite a while ago!

I was born and grew up in this village, went away to university and returned to live and work in the community. I have, however, taken the big leap to leave the village and managed to move as far as Stelling Minnis.

To deal with the elephant in the room, I have had some involvement in some of the recent development in the area and am frequently amused by the rumours I hear about myself. I have always been open with the Parish Council and would encourage anyone here to ask me direct questions if you wish to know something. I will always either answer honestly or tell you to mind your own business. Either way this is better than some of the tales I have heard.

County and City Councillors

Mike Sole is KCC councillor and we are grateful for his assistance on a couple of matters this year. Our new CCC ward councillors are Mike Bland and Alister Brady who were invited to this meeting but were unable to attend.

Planning applications

Since April last year, the parish council has commented on 15 planning applications. These are certainly the part of the Parish Councils activities which get the most engagement from parishioners.

The Parish Council have the right to comment on planning applications and we look at every one we are consulted on. Parishioners also contact us to express their views which we can discuss and reflect in our comments. Several visits to concerned neighbours have been undertaken by councillors this year. Parishioners can also comment directly on the CCC website which we would encourage you to do if you feel strongly about things.

The planners do read all of these comments but planning is decided against strict national guidelines and frameworks with CCC planners ever fearful of getting overturned at appeal so some of what we all think is logical is unfortunately not able to be considered.

The largest developments have been at The Street and Great Bossingham Farm with the addition of nine properties to the village. It is hoped these new residents will get involved in village life.

Poor water quality levels at the internationally-important nature reserve in Stodmarsh have stalled housing developments across east Kent. The wetlands at Stodmarsh outside Canterbury, which are a haven for wildlife, are deemed to be suffering from high levels of nitrogen and phosphorous. Locally, this has delayed planning applications for Two Acres on Hardres Court Road and Court Lodge on Manns Hill.

We wait to hear from Canterbury City Council with any progress.

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) payment

Following the development at The Street the parish council has received a Community Infrastructure (CIL) 'Neighbourhood Portion' payment from Canterbury City Council of £30,000.

This sum can be spent on improving local infrastructure, eg, the village hall, roads, restoring the bus shelter at the Hop Pocket. We did ask Parishioners for any suggestions and engagement on how these funds should be spent but received a disappointing response. We have five years to spend the money.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

A big vote of thanks is due to Cllr Mick Broughton who formed the Neighbourhood Plan steering group to explore the idea of creating a plan for this Parish. Successful adoption of this plan would have enabled the village to receive a greater proportion of the CIL money to spend in the area.

After a fantastic evening showcasing the village history and how it has evolved over time the committee was formed and lots of work was undertaken. It was unfortunately disbanded due to no support for any further development in the parish. A Neighbourhood Plan is not to prevent development wholesale, but to identify areas where development *could* take place.

Village Hall

The Village Hall Committee continues to make welcome improvements to the building. Capital Grants were obtained from Canterbury City Council for the new double doors and the new patio which are a great addition and improve potential hiring of the hall for weddings in particular.

The Village Hall Committee communicates openly with the parish council and we support their endeavours.

CIL funds will be provided for plumbing improvements within the hall.

I would like to thank the committee for their hard work.

Roads

Councilors continue to report potholes to KCC - everyone is encouraged to do so. It is easy to report faults online, and the more complaints KCC receives, the more likely we are to get the problems repaired.

Playing Field

The playing field continues to be an asset to the village but does need regular inspections, ideally by a parent or grandparent of children who use the facilities. Any volunteers?!

Parish Grant Fund Awards 2023

At the Annual Meeting of the Council in May, it was agreed to donate £250 to Scouts for a new BBQ or table tennis table, £125 to the School's Gardening Project, and £125 to the village hall for equipment.

We only have grant funds remaining for one, possibly two more years, so if your local group needs funds, don't forget to apply before the end of April next year.

War Memorial garden and Village Hall flowerbed

Thank you again to John Pitcher for his dedicated work on the war memorial garden and village hall flowerbed which we can all agree always look superb. As John has informed us of his impending retirement in the next couple of years we either need to find a willing assistant or we will need to look at some less labour intensive planting moving forward.

The war memorial is a fitting tribute to those villagers who gave their lives in the great wars and the work John has done to restore the surrounds are much appreciated.

Email List

Clare sends out meeting Agendas and Minutes, notices of Planning Applications, Highways information, and any other useful information relating to the parish to people registered on our Parish Email List.

Requests to join the List can be made via a Consent Form which is available from Clare.

Clare

A big vote of thanks is due to Clare as ever, without her the Parish Council would not operate and her hard work is much appreciated by all.

Recruitment

We really do need some new faces on the Parish Council. We have approximately six meetings a year and try and pick up various side projects to move forward between meetings but the time commitment is not onerous.

If you would like to apply to join the parish council, we'd be very happy to talk to you about what's involved. You really can make a difference to things.

Conclusion

We are very fortunate to live in a fantastic area which is enhanced by everything we do as a community. The more involvement we all have, the greater we can achieve.

Nick Waldron, Chairman, Upper Hardres Parish Council

Parish Clerk/RFO report

End of year figures on 31 March for 2022/23 stood at £1,077 in the current account, and £25,065 in the deposit account – thanks to the receipt from Canterbury City Council of the £15,147 'Neighbourhood Portion' of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL for short) following the development of the houses at The Street.

The Precept, funded by a small charge on each household's Council Tax bill, increases slightly year-on-year. The Precept covers the costs of running the parish council, and includes meeting increasing costs for grounds maintenance.

We received annual Concurrent Functions Funding of £1,750 from Canterbury City Council; this goes a small way towards the cost of Grounds Maintenance for the Playing Field and the Village Hall, and the annual playing field safety inspection. This funding has been under review for some time now, we're still uncertain how much we will receive after 2025.

Our Reserves Policy includes Restricted funds for - any contested election expenses; emergency repairs to the village hall and the car park; long-term maintenance of the playing field equipment; and the annual Parish Grants Fund. We aim to keep a healthy amount in Reserves to meet any unexpected expenditure.

Clare Hamilton, Parish Clerk & RFO

Balance Sheet 2022/23 next page...

Upper Hardres Parish Council Balance Sheet for year ended 31 March 2023

	£	£	Budget 22.23	note
RECEIPTS				
CCC: Precept	6,145.00		6,145.00	
CCC: Concurrent Functions Funding	1,750.00		1,750.00	
CCC: Capital Grant for Village Hall	4,241.00		0.00	
CCC: CIL Neighbourhood Portion	15,147.00		30,000.00	
HMRC: VAT repayment	745.45		650.00	1
Barclays: Interest on deposit account	44.72		14.00	
Donation: Footpaths	75.00		0.00	
Total receipts	£28,148.17			
PAYMENTS				
<i>from Precept:</i>				
Clerk's salary	3,900.00		3,600.00	2
Clerk's annual expenses	356.12		370.00	3
Insurance premium	389.83		440.00	
Subscription to KALC	225.31		250.00	
Training/literature	0.00		25.00	
Annual website domain name renewal	14.39		15.00	
BVH defibrillator electricity	25.00		25.00	
PCC donation (s.137)	150.00		150.00	
Meeting costs	19.62		30.00	
Contingency Fund	77.50		200.00	4
<i>from Concurrent Functions Funding:</i>				
Grounds maintenance	3,656.80		3000.00	5
Playing Field annual inspection	186.00		186.00	
<i>from Reserves:</i>				
Parish Grant Fund Awards 2021 (s.137)	375.00		500.00	6
Defibrillator aftercare	37.80		0	
Defibrillator battery replacement	238.80		0	
Jubilee tree and plaque	170.00		0	
<i>other payments:</i>				
Playing Field materials and maintenance	436.00		500.00	7
CCC Capital Grant for Village Hall	4,241.00		0	
Contribution to planting	100.00		0	
Total payments	£14,599.17			
Receipts less payments	13,549.00			
Balance brought forward	12,593.52			
Balance carried forward	26,142.52			
<i>Represented by:</i>				
Barclays deposit acc	25,065.15			8
Santander current acc	1,077.37			
Total carried forward	£26,142.52			

Bossingham Village Hall – May 2023 Update

Over the last couple of months, there has been more work carried out to ensure the Hall received a satisfactory Electrical Certificate and repair the female toilets which had blocked and were not working properly. This has had an impact on the Hall's financial situation and the Committee are looking to run some fundraising events to cover some of these costs.

The Committee would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued support towards the Village Hall. It has been a challenging year with getting all the necessary improvements made to the hall and hopefully the work will be completed on upgrading the toilets and lighting in the next few months. This will ensure the hall is in a strong position to attract more regular bookings and increase the number of larger bookings such as weddings etc.

The Village Hall A.G.M is due to take place on Tuesday 20th June at 7.30pm and all users of the Hall will be invited to attend. There is a note in the parish magazine asking for anyone who is interested in joining the Committee to come along and help keep the momentum going with new ideas etc.

Gabby Fisher, Bossingham Village Hall Committee

Hardres & Stelling News report for 2023 APMs

Firstly, a big thank you to all who have written articles for inclusion in the Villages Community Magazine for without you there would not be a magazine. I know that many readers look forward to the regular contributions and the occasional letters from readers.

Contributions regularly include community news from County, District/City, and Parish Councils together with the two Parish Churches and a message from the Parish Priest; as well as those from SM Primary School Headteacher's, Bossingham Pre-School, History Group, Gardening Society, Johns Haffenden's Farmers notebook, Minnis Managers, thoughts from Steve Hardman, a brief weather report as well as information on the mobile library dates and tea & natter afternoon. With occasional articles from other clubs, societies and individuals these all go to make what I hope is an interesting and informative Community Magazine with something for everybody. Steve Hardman decided it was time to hand the quiz reigns over to a new quizmaster in December 2022 – could that be you?

The magazine was entered again into the National Parish Magazine of the Year competition and gained 11th place out of 450 entries in the A5 category for 2022.

The Children's front cover art competition has not been run since 2019 because of Covid restrictions. The art group provided superb art work for the December 2022 and January 2023 magazines – thank you Jenny Morgan and Jenny Maxted.

A big thank you to Bruce & Margaret Crawford and their band of delivery agents for getting the magazine to you; to Ann Day for handling the finances and selling all the advertising spaces, not forgetting Xinyang and Sijia at Stelling Minnis Stores for willingly continuing to allow some readers to collect their magazine from the shop. Advertising spaces remain at 23 pages to allow for the increasing demands of the regular contributors and a limitation on magazine size placed by the printer of a total of 64 pages because of machinery capacity.

Any photos for the front cover should to be in Portrait format, please.

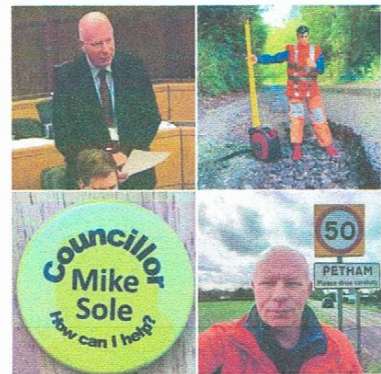
Nick Smith - Editor

Mike Sole

Kent County Councillor -Canterbury South

Canterbury City Councillor – Nailbourne

May 2023 Update



Well, it's been a pretty interesting and busy month!

Firstly, I was delighted to have been re-elected as the Canterbury City Councillor for Nailbourne, and especially pleased to have received 84% of the vote, which was very humbling and record for the district. I was also brilliant to see my good friend Lee Castle elected in **Little Stour & Adisham**. Across the district there are now 9 Liberal Democrat councillors, 18 Labour, 8 Conservative and 4 Greens.

There is now a Lib Dem/Labour coalition running Canterbury City Council, and that I have been appointed at the cabinet member for finance. Over the next few weeks, you should hear more about the new council's plans. My priority remains to do all that can be done to revise and remove the most controversial aspects of the Local Plan.

Potholes continue to be a big factor in my life. I found out that there has been a threefold increase in the number of claims made to KCC for pothole damage, yet only on 6% do KCC admit liability and pay out. I remain hopeful that Valley Road in Barham will soon be scheduled for work.

Work on the 40mph limit at **Stone Street Petham** will start in June, which is good news.

I enjoyed a fantastic bluebell ramble with Riding for the Disabled in Chartham, with Clare Balding.

In order to try to push things along with revising/pausing/stopping the **Wincheap** gyratory scheme, I had a meeting with Rosie Duffield MP and other councillors that represented the affected area.

At the annual meeting of Canterbury City Council, Cllr Jean Butcher was elected as Lord Mayor. I know that she is keen to get out into the villages, so if there are events that you would like her to attend, I'm sure she would be keen to be invited.

At KCC I attended the Growth & Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee where I was keen to talk about village hall grants, and also Kent Vision Live.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 then finally found me, and I had a much more subdued final week of the month and had to miss the KCC Annual Meeting.



(KCC) : mike.sole@kent.gov.uk

(CCC) : mike.sole@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk

CCC

New CCC ward councillors Mike Bland and Alister Brady did not submit a report but hope to attend a future meeting.