



Toppesfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 28th April 2022 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm



22/61. Welcome

Councillor Collard welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting, the first face-to-face meeting in three years due to the covid-19 pandemic.

22/62. Attendance and Apologies for absence

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard
Councillor Chris Neale
Councillor Trisha Roberts

Also in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken
Nick Hasler – Toppesfield Cricket Club
Brian Moody – Toppesfield Community Pub
Caroline Brown – St Margaret of Antioch Parish Church
Trevor Wyeth – Pumphouse Community Brewery
Frances Winter – Village Hall
Jean Bagnall – Village Hall
Wendy Ames – Toppesfield Community Shop
Sue Chapman
Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

Apologies were received from:

County Councillor Peter Schwier
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Andrea Chinery
Councillor Kitty Bourlet
Margaret Dyson – Doctors Car Service
Stephanie Newland and Helen Kent-Jackson – St Margaret's School
Zoe Hughes – Fit Fun
Ann Read – Parish Path Partnership and Village show

22/63. Approval of Annual Parish Meeting Minutes 2021

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting from 29th April 2021 were approved and signed. This was proposed by Councillor Neale and seconded by Nick Hasler.

22/64. Reports from village Organisations / Groups

Reports were received from various organisations.

Wendy Ames gave a report on behalf of Toppesfield Community Shop – see Appendix A
Frances Winter gave a report on behalf of the Village Hall – see Appendix B
District Councillor Richard van Dulken gave his report – See Appendix C
Rev Caroline Brown gave a report from St Margaret of Anitoch Church – See Appendix D
Brian Moody gave the report on behalf of Toppesfield Community Pub – see Appendix E
Trevor Wyeth gave the report from Pumphouse Community Brewery – see Appendix F

Nick Hasler gave a report on behalf of Toppesfield Cricket Club - see Appendix G
Trisha Roberts gave an update on WASC – Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee – see Appendix H
Councillor Alan Collard gave his chairman’s report from Toppesfield Parish Council – see Appendix I
Reports were also received from:
Ann Read sent reports in regarding the village show and the Parish Path Partnership - See Appendix J
Andrea Chinery sent a report in on behalf of Little Chestnuts Preschool - see Appendix K
Steph Newman send a report in for St Margaret’s School – see Appendix L
Paul Thompson sent a report in for Toppesfield & Gainsford End Allotment Society – see Appendix M
County Council Peter Schwier sent in his report – See Appendix N
Zoe Hughes sent in a report on behalf of the Fit Fun Club – See Appendix O

22/65. Questions or comments

No questions or comments were raised.

22/66. AOB

No other business was discussed.

22/67. Close

The meeting was closed at 9pm

Appendix A

Wendy Ames reported that the shop committee had the idea to possibly move into the section of the Green Man barn which is not currently used, unfortunately this project is not progressing as the TCP are yet to decide if they are willing to sell the barn to the parish council. So, grants are being applied for to improve the shop where it is. The shop is doing well at the moment, but it is not being used as much as it could be. New lines are regularly introduced to encourage more customers. Ruth Hammond is doing the window displays and they look amazing. Wendy expressed her thanks to all the volunteers for everything they do. However more volunteers are required as some people are currently doing multiple shifts each week.

Appendix B

Report to Annual Parish Meeting 28/4/22 from Toppesfield Village Hall

The hall is now back to full operations after a long and difficult 2 years now formal Covid restrictions have ceased. We have lost some clubs as a result, but things are picking up and we are getting new bookings from various organisations, clubs, and individuals, particularly for children’s parties. Lovely to have a booking back for the village flower show this Autumn.

Financially we have benefited from the pandemic as we had to remain open due to the presence of our pre-school Little Chestnuts and were also able to receive a number of grants for various covid related lockdowns. The pre-school staff and in particular Andrea Chinery did amazingly well to manage all the safety and practical problems and worked closely with our committee to ensure all the legal assessments and practical issues were covered. As trustees we were quite nervous ourselves on re-opening, but all worked out well, as people were understanding and willing to abide by the rules we had to impose. The guidance from the RCCE (Rural Community Council Essex) was invaluable during that time – we definitely got our monies worth last year.

We have used some of these funds to make a number of improvements that have been on our wish list for a number of years. A racking system for hall chairs has made the storage area safer and allowed more room. The main hall floor was sanded and resurfaced, with new skirting boards installed. The stage area resurfaced, flooring threshold issues between doorways resolved. Instantaneous hot water heaters have been installed in the kitchen and both cloakrooms. This should be more hygienic, convenient, and economical for energy use. *No more remembering to turn the switch on 2 hours before needed!*

We invested in a table tennis table, new ladders, and a new fridge to be safer and more energy efficient. All outside lighting is now in place including the lamppost at entrance.

Current works include our 5 yearly electrical condition report which is due and has identified electrical improvements needed as there is still some original wiring in place which is showing signs of degrading.

The removal of the hot water cylinder and associated pipework in the loft has allowed the opportunity to make better use of this area for storage. To do so safely we are installing lighting, loft hatch guard rail, repaired floorboards, put in head protection and have insulated the wall voids amongst other improvements. It is still a restricted space as any loft area is, but when completed we will be allowing local groups and organisations to use this area for some of their storage – it is not a vast area but hopefully will go some way to relieve some of the village storage issues. This will need to be done in an agreed, organised and recorded manner so doesn't become a dumping area, but so invited users can safely access their archived material. The use of strong plastic storage boxes will be needed as recent vermin problem has proved- really don't want to deal with that mess again!

Future works are still to be decided by new committee, but we know the roof apron area at the end of the storage area is a concern with rotting timbers showing. We are expecting to have fast fibre broadband installed shortly, which will be available to hirers including the parish clerk and ensure our app-controlled heating is more reliable.

At our recent AGM we have had a few changes with some long-standing committee members standing down, and now have some renewed interest with an enthusiastic committee with officer roles filled. The new committee is as follows

Chair	Jean Bagnall
Vice-chair	Frances Winter
Secretary-	Sue Chapman
Bookings secretary	Wendy Ames
Treasurer –	Frances Winter
Key holders –	Linda Bowen, Maureen Dimmock and Vicky Wyeth

Bookings - these will now be managed by Wendy Ames so please note new contact number of 07933 743724 for all enquiries and we would also encourage hirers to use our email address of Toppesfieldvillagehall@gmail.com when making enquiries

Appendix C

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported he has been District Council for six years and is now a cabinet member for the Waste & Recycling Department. Braintree District Council have experienced difficulties over the past year or so due to covid but waste collections have continued throughout the pandemic and the teams have done well.

Grants have been made through Braintree District Council for covid support from central government.

The Manor Street project is progressing and should be opening shortly and Braintree High Street has been pedestrianised.

Horizon 120 (Near Notley Tesco) is progressing and half the building works are complete. Braintree DC are selling plots of land, buildings and apartments to help fund/invest in the Manor Street, Horizon 120 and other projects.

The Share Prosperity Scheme (levelling-up) identified six areas in Essex to concentrate on. These included Jaywick, Basildon and rural Braintree. Underlying issues such as loneliness, connectivity will be looked at. The Sible Hedingham Medical Centre plans have now been approved and it will hopefully be operational in Summer 2023.

Braintree DC are administering the government Energy Rebate Scheme of £150 for Council Taxpayers in band A-D properties. There is a discretionary fund for other properties, but conditions apply.

The Councillors Community Grant Scheme is available again this year with a fund of £1250 available for groups and organisations to apply for small grants. This scheme is no longer available to Parish Councils. Richard also reported the planning application from Toppesfield Hall for 6 holiday lodges has been refused.

Appendix D

Curate's report for St Margaret of Antioch.

I was ordained Sept 2021 and Rev Liz Rector of the Benefice, decided that at least part of my curacy should be served at St Margaret's of Antioch Toppesfield.

I have been enjoying getting to know the village and some of you who live here.

Our services continue weekly with a variety of services and clergy leading, including me.

It will take time but I am trying with a band of happy and willing! volunteers to build up the community of St Margaret's and what we offer as activities.

My 1st event was Messy Church last October when we had 7 children and their respective families and carers attend, it was a marvelous morning with craft and activities around the theme of Creation.

My next big event was the Supper Auction of which I had been informed was the social event of the year, it was an amazing evening with some interesting auction items and was our most successful auction fundraising event to date, all down no doubt to the fact the curate wore a dress and heels.

Prior to Christmas we had the tree festival and the Church looked stunning, we were not able to do as many events over Christmas as we had hoped due to ongoing COVID restrictions.

But at the Christmas tree festival the children and their families decorated their own tree, and also made a gift to take home.

Christmas morning service was a real blessing with many attending including some children, and I found out that Father Christmas does not come and see you if you are old!!! Oh, the joy of children.

We held a Christingle service and the Church was filled with light.

In February we had another Messy Church based on love, and the children made and decorated wooden hearts, and various other crafts, and shared how we give and share love to others.

Easter brought me the gift of COVID, but the brilliant team led an Easter Messy Church and the children planted seeds, made crosses and an Easter Garden.

We are now looking forward to the Queens Jubilee weekend and the school summer holidays.

If you want to get involved in anyway, please get in touch, and I enjoy meeting and taking with you, so if you want a visit from me just let me know.

Appendix E

Toppesfield Community Pub Ltd Report to Annual Parish Meeting 2022

Covid continued to make life difficult for the Green Man in 2021. The pub was closed for the first few months of the year, then restricted to outdoor sales, and only able to operate more normally later on. Even then many customers were reluctant to risk mixing in close proximity to each other. This meant lower sales and even for

those customers who were prepared to take the risk the reduced numbers led to an atmosphere not particularly conducive to meeting friends and having a good time.

As a result, David and Paul our tenants decided to give notice in December. They came to Toppesfield in August 2019 and only had eight months of normal trading before the first lockdown. Many people in the village had cause to be thankful to them during 2020 for providing meals and helping in other ways, but the continued low level of business through 2021 eventually took its toll.

This meant that TCP also suffered a shortfall in income last year because of the beer tie and made a small loss in the year. Hopefully 2022, with new tenants and a general pick up in hospitality business, and of course with the support of the village, we look forward to the Green Man returning to happier times as the social hub of our community.

Appendix F

Pumphouse Community Brewery Limited

REPORT TO ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

TOPPESFIELD AND GAINSFORD END, 2022

Despite the financial hurdles presented to us by the coronavirus pandemic, we managed to keep going throughout the difficult months of October 2020 to June 2021. During that period, sales to pubs and other outlets were at zero, and the only outlet for our beer was bottle and low volume draught sales through the brewery shop, together with wine from the award winning Toppesfield Vineyard. During this period our brewer, Aaron was on furlough.

An Appeal to Shareholders in February 2021, resulted in increased sales from the brewery shop. Also, early in 2021, we gained our first order from Poplar Nurseries in Coggeshall for our bottled beer, and they remain a loyal and valued customer. We also registered with two on-line outlets, but although we initially received a small number of orders, these have not proved fruitful.

Two shareholders, Paul and Wendy Cook, who live in High Easter, began to be involved in the work of the brewery in February 2021, and were elected to the Committee on 6th May. Wendy took over the role of Treasurer from John Fitch and Paul has been spearheading the sales effort of keg beer to pubs and clubs. Both took to their roles with gusto and continue to make a very positive contribution to the work of the Committee.

John Fitch stood down at the Annual Member's Meeting in April 2021, but he is still a volunteer and is always available when there is bottling to be done and when the technical gremlins strike! Alan Collard also resigned from the Committee in August. Alan was a founder member of the brewery, being involved from the very beginning, and had been a leading member of the team ever since. Graham Kent Jackson left the Committee in October due to changing commitments in his working life.

During promotional discussions with potential outlets it was commented a number of times that our labelling lacked a consistently identifiable brand image. Increasingly pubs and drinkers are attracted to modern, eye catching and professional looking label and pump clip designs.

A grant from SEBCOR, a Government backed scheme supporting recovery of businesses from the effects of COVID-19, enabled us to use the services of a professional design company. The new branding, which we introduced during 2021, is modern and eye-catching, the basic colours being black, white and gold, the graphics referencing our rural location in a stylised form. Montserrat font, our 'signature' font, has been used throughout this report.

As pubs and clubs began to re-open fully in June 2021, sales to these venues began to increase. Through the sterling efforts of Committee members and volunteers, we were soon receiving regular orders from the White Hart, Yeldham, the Railway Arms, Saffron Walden (who serve our beer under their own label), the Black Lion, High Roding, The Globe, Clare, the Spotted Dog, Barnston, Leather Bottle, Pleshey, the Saracens Head Dunmow, not forgetting The Green Man, Toppesfield. Our beer was also on sale at the East Anglian (Chappel) and

Cammas Hall Beer Festivals. From many outlets we have been receiving excellent feedback anecdotally regarding taste and quality, with several requests for 19 Elms to become an all year round regular.

As sales began to increase, we focussed production on our 'core beers; namely, 9th's Havocs, 19 Elms, Allied Amber, Black, Gold, Pale Oktober and St Margaret's Ale. We also ran one brew of a rich chocolate stout, nominally for Christmas.

Other points of note during the year:

- In June we had a chiller unit installed in the insulated store in the middle section of the barn, to ensure that our beer is not adversely affected by the hot weather during the Summer months. We also painted the inside walls of the store and completed floor-laying in the loft.
- We purchased a trailer, which has proved very useful in disposing of brewery waste.
- In September we reached a formal agreement with the Prince's Countryside Fund to use their logo on our labelling.

Finally, we are not out of the woods yet, and our financial position is still not as secure as we would like it. Nevertheless, as we hopefully leave memories of the pandemic behind us, we are confident that we are entering a new and successful chapter in the story of the brewery.

Trevor Wyeth, Chair
25th April 2021

Appendix G



Founded 2013

President: Brian Moody

TCC Club Report 28.04.22

Last season.

- With the easing of Covid restrictions somewhat, we managed to three games of cricket in, Gestingthorpe away, Halstead High Street Rangers and Rayne both at home. Lost 1, Won 2.
- Practice nets continued most Thursdays throughout the season.
- The return of our renowned 'Crinders' on the 25th September closed the season on a high with the club hosting the event. Huge thanks to Kat Waterhouse for her organisation skills, the after event in the pub with included entertainment for the children, and live music in the evening was very well attended, and I am sure generated some welcome funds for pub.
- Despite the lack of 'on field' activity last season, plenty going on behind the scenes with the start of our project to introduce an artificial practice wicket to the field.
- This project all part of our vision to attract more people to play cricket.
- With some very generous individual donations, grants (including the PC and shop) plus support from several local businesses this project has finally come to fruition.

- Groundworks and concrete slab laid at the back end of the summer – Thanks to Danny Smith.
- Also, thanks to Arminhall Engineering, Lifestiles and Mint Floorcoverings for their financial support and to the other donors to make this possible.

Season ahead.

- We have an exciting season ahead of us, with some welcomed new and enthusiastic members to our committee.
- We held a work party in early April where the artificial wicket matting was secured down to the concrete base completing this project. Our first practice session was this evening and will continue every Thursday throughout the summer (weather permitting). We also painted the pavilion.
- Last Friday we had our first ever pre-season bash. Great night, some superb food served up to us by the new tenants of the Green Man (Kevin and Janet), well attended and we even managed to raise a bit cash for the club coffers.
- We have several fixtures planned and hoping for more home matches this season which helps us to generate funds providing refreshments & BBQ but also brings revenue to the pub.
- Several social events planned – We have been asked to be involved in the Jubilee celebrations and the Pre-school circus day, we have our annual family Crinders planned plus this year we will be holding a charity cricket match on the 28th August verses Rayne C.C. to raise funds for Young Lives vs Cancer (formerly CLIC Sargent). Watch this space.
- To finish the season off an end of Season Dinner will be held in the Green Man.
- If you know of anyone who already plays cricket or would like to give it a go, get in touch!

Our needs.

A water supply in the pavilion. We spend a huge number of hours preparing and creating the wicket and if we are going to attract teams to play at Toppesfield we must have a safe and suitable wicket to play on. We suffer with lengthy dry spells, as we did the year before last and not surprisingly currently experiencing cracks starting to open up with the lack of rain during April. As you can imagine that creates a safety issue when you have a cricket ball whistling down at you! Only one way to stop this, and that is to water the wicket. As we do not currently have that ability to do this, this could unfortunately lead to matches being postponed or playing the fixture away instead.

Remember, the Cricket Club has been a good revenue stream for the pub over the years so that's not an ideal scenario. If the club can grow this can only be good news for the community ventures in the village.

Improved storage is a need. We currently store all our ground equipment inside the pavilion, which is far from ideal, after all this is ultimately a community building and if we were able to get better facilities i.e. water, maybe even toilets, then this building could have far more appeal for other community groups to use.

So that gives you a flavour of where the Cricket Club is at present. Any questions please feel free to ask.

Nick Hasler

On behalf of Toppesfield Cricket Club.

28.04.22

Club Committee

*Andy Bull, Nick Hasler, Kat Waterhouse, Rob Sullivan, Dave Osborn, Rob Stafford-Baker,
Chris Ruggles.*

Appendix H

Wethersfield Airbase Prison

There has been several pieces of good news recently.

Firstly, the petition against the mega prison proposal for the Wethersfield Airbase has been endorsed and re-tweeted by Chris Packham, the well-known nature enthusiast, on Twitter. Signatures for the petition are now only a couple of hundred away from reaching the goal of 10,000 at which point, the petition has to be reviewed in Parliament. Of course, the review will result in a statement something along the lines of “no Planning Application has been made and if one is, then it will be reviewed by the local authority in line with Planning Laws and procedures” but it will have signalled that there is substantial opposition to the proposal.

On the topic of opposition, there are now 12 Parish Councils on WASC – the Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee - representing more than 12,000 residents. The latest member is Sible Hedingham.

Braintree District Council (BDC) has responded to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping proposal put forward by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The EIA is a necessary report to support any planning application for a development of this size. BDC insisted that issues such as lighting (and light pollution) and air quality be scoped into the EA, including establishing a local baseline for air quality (the MoJ has suggested not including lighting and using the air quality measurements taken on the main road in Sible Hedingham as a baseline). This all means that any planning application is unlikely to be submitted until toward the end of the year. Allowing for the processing of any application plus the inevitable requests for further information, this means that a decision on a planning application is unlikely to be made until later in 2023. Of course, if planning is refused, there can be an appeal and the process continues.

WASC has recently met with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), the Part of the Ministry of Defence responsible for the disposal of surplus MoD assets including Wethersfield Airbase. They have been tasked with disposing of Wethersfield by 2025 and have stated that 2 years are needed for due diligence and legal work. Given the above, the MoJ might be running against the clock, so it was not a surprise that the DIO were happy to meet and discuss possible alternative uses for the land.

WASC has also recently met with the two senior planners at BDC to discuss the planning legislation that will be used to evaluate any planning application and also the work being done by WASC on road use/traffic, probable visibility of the proposed development, and so on.

A recent Freedom of Information request uncovered a response by Essex County Council (ECC) to the MoJ’s initial consultation last September. It was a full and robust response, citing the relevant ECC policies and guidelines to be followed.

Finally, news that planning permission for three prisons of the same design as proposed for Wethersfield (but half the size) have been turned down in other parts of the country does show that the proposal for Wethersfield is NOT a done deal, Some of the three planning applications refused were for new prisons on land belonging to the MoJ and adjacent to existing prisons.

Appendix I



Toppesfield Parish Council

Chair's report to Annual Parish Meeting 28 April 2022

First, welcome to everyone; it's good to see you at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Annual Parish Meetings are statutorily required meetings. And there are specific rules covering them. In England, the annual parish meeting of a parish with a parish council must take place between 1 March and 1 June, both dates inclusive, and must take place no earlier than 6pm.

In areas where there is a parish council, the parish meeting has none of the powers of the council. It acts primarily as an annual democratic point of communication on activities and plans across village organisations. It's an opportunity for groups to say what they have been doing and what they would like to do.

As the Annual Parish Meeting is not a parish council meeting it is not conducted in the same way or governed by the same rules as a parish council meeting.

Basically, it is the parishioners' meeting.

This Annual meeting is the first held in person for 3 years; 2020 was cancelled and 2021 was held online.

Despite the constraints caused by covid, the parish council has had a busy year.

Some of the things which have been done over the past 12 months include, in no particular order:

- Repair of the signs at the entrances to the village;
- Introduction of quarterly 'cake and coffee mornings' which are open to all residents. The cost of this has been covered by funding from Richard van Dulken, our District Councillor, from his discretionary grant fund, so thanks are due to him;
- Almost 400 native shrubs and trees have been planted around the playing field in Toppesfield;
- Substantial tree maintenance at the playing field with support from Braintree District Council tidied up and made safer the mature white poplars and lime trees around the field;
- Arranged and funded the village Christmas tree lighting event in December;
- Two new pieces of play equipment were installed in the playing field and seem to be very popular;
- A litter pick was again organised, and again a fair bit of rubbish collected from roadsides and hedgerows;
- Organised the hire of a household waste collection vehicle for Toppesfield and Gainsford End last summer;
- The PC joined the Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee along with a number of other local parish councils to scrutinise the plans for the future use of the base. This included a grant of £500 towards any professional costs incurred by the group;
- Continued to develop the Neighbourhood Plan which was commenced just before this council term. Because of covid, we are probably about 18 months behind the original schedule but we hope to have a draft plan to present to the village later this year. An open day in the summer showed the progress to date and provided some initial ideas. I would like to thank David Oxnam for the work he is doing in leading the exercise;
- Tidied up the car park in Park Lane and (eventually) managed to have a dumped vehicle removed;
- Provided a grant towards the cost of Toppesfield Cricket Club's new practice pitch;
- We arranged a meeting for all village groups to talk about their own plans and aspirations to see how activities could best be coordinated. It was agreed to follow this up shortly;
- Oh, and we should not forget the installing of another dog poo bin. Again, though it is sad to note that there still seem to be some dog owners who think they are in place for aesthetic rather functional reasons.....

So, all in all, quite a busy year.

Some of the continuing projects include:

- Preparing for the Platinum Jubilee events in June. Andrea Chinery is leading the group arranging the activities and I am confident we will all experience a memorable time to mark this historic event;
- Improvements to the playing field, to include installing running water and toilets in the pavilion, adding storage to the building and generally improving the interior. Much of the work being looked at is based on work done a few years ago by a number of parishioners.
We are also looking at repositioning and resurfacing the petanque court. Initial discussions have been held with a builder to get ball-park costs. The result of that will determine our actions regarding funding sources and timings. Of course, competitive quotes will be sought;
- Establishing a village charity to promote a range of activities in the village. This is a painfully slow process, unfortunately, not least in trying to open a bank account prior to registering with the charity commission. A document has been produced and an initial 4 Appointed Trustees are in place. We do however expect to have things finalised during the year.

Briefly, with regard to finance, the council financial statements can be found on our website or please ask our clerk for a copy. The parish precept for last year was £17,493 and for the coming year will be the same. However, given the way in which council tax and precepts are calculated, this will in fact result in a decrease in the annual Band D parish precept from £80.83 to £79.25 – a decrease of £1.58 or 1.2% compared with the previous year.

During the year specific personal reasons led to 2 of our councillors, Daisy Watson and Gemma Mackman, standing down to be replaced by Trisha Roberts and Kitty Bourlet. At the last meeting of the council, Boyd Page announced his decision to step down. Boyd has for some time been planning to spend the whole summer sailing around Great Britain and felt that given his absence it would be proper for him to resign. I would like to pay tribute to all the work that has been done by Boyd around the parish since he became a councillor; his heart is truly in wanting this village thrive. Fortunately, he is keen to stay involved and I know will be supporting the parish council's activities in the future.

This does mean that we are short of our full complement and we would welcome interest from any parishioner who may be interested in joining us.

I would like to thank all my colleagues on the parish council for what that they do; they are a pleasure to work with and a special thanks to our clerk Kaaren Berry. As we all know, Kaaren is responsible for keeping the village going; I don't know what we would do without her. She is now in addition to all her other activities, well underway in adding the parish clerk's CiLCA qualification to her arsenal of skills; this will be of great benefit to the PC when she completes the course.

Thank you Kaaren.

Finally, don't forget that the PC meets every month and the first 15 minutes is reserved for the public. We would be pleased to see you.

Appendix J

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Village Show

The village show has been part of the history of the village for such a long time and so many villages have lost their shows. So, it was with a very heavy heart that I did not organise a show in 2020 nor 2021. Because of Covid 19 restrictions I did not feel we could hold the show safely.

But hopefully we can be more optimistic now and I have booked the Village Hall for the show to be held on Saturday 17th September 2022.

I of course am looking for some help and would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to be involved in organising, running the show or helping in any way. Some new ideas would be very welcome.

Ann Read

25th April 2022

Parish Paths Partnership

Report for Annual Parish meeting 28th April 2022

The footpaths continue to provide a wonderful facility for everyone. We are so lucky to have such a beautiful parish and have access to the countryside. During the Winter the paths were so muddy that some routes became rather a challenge but now it has all dried up and cross field paths have been marked out by the landowners walking is much easier again.

Last year the bridge at the back of Ollivers was repaired but unfortunately all the rain has taken its' toll and the bridge has moved again and is quite precarious to walk across. I did report it to Highways last year and have just heard that this has been repaired.

The footpath sign at the Stambourne Road end of Berwick Hall Farm concrete road has been replaced but as yet the new signs for diverted footpaths have not. I will keep on!

The churchyard has been a wonderful sight this Spring first with snowdrops and now primroses, violets and cowslips. Berwick Hall wood has taken over this last week with a blue haze and perfume of bluebells. Our enjoyment of these only enhanced by the bird song.

I would again like to thank our landowners in the parish for marking out cross field paths and maintaining access to the footpaths.

Ann Read
P3 officer for Toppesfield Parish Council, 24th April 2022

Appendix K



Good evening since the beginning of the school year back in September Little Chestnuts has been very busy. We welcomed 14 two-year-olds at the beginning of the term which was challenging as most of these hadn't socialised outside of their homes/families because of the lockdowns. We needed to make changes to our daily routines, toys and equipment and our expectations to enable these children to settle and learn to play. In November we appointed Neve who is on an apprenticeship to complete her level 3 in childcare and education, she quickly found her feet and has become an invaluable member of our team. To finish the term, it was fantastic to hold our Christmas party and concert, the children did fantastic sitting on the stage singing to parents and family, especially as most were under the age of 2!

In March we were Ofsted inspected and we achieved a GOOD outcome which we are delighted with. One of the reasons we achieved this was our ongoing development and plans for the future to provide support, for parents with issues like speech and language, behaviour and children with additional needs, this could be parenting groups or training opportunities, provided by other outside companies and professionals.

We are now preparing the children who will be leaving to start primary school this September, it is a small group of only 6 children, and we will be working with the schools to ensure they have a smooth transition.

We are excited to go on a summer trip to the farm and end the year with our sports day and graduation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have supported us over the last two years, and for your lovely comments when we were being inspected.

Andrea Chinery and the Little Chestnuts Committee

Appendix L

St. Margaret's C of E Primary School Report for the Parish Council AGM – April 2022

When I wrote a report this time last year, we were hoping that things would be returning to normal following a year of covid. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case and the last twelve months have proven to be just as challenging, and possibly more so. We were unlucky to have covid hit the school with a vengeance in January and February and there were days where we had up to 35% of pupils and 75% of teachers absent. Despite it all, the staff and pupils carried on and we managed to remain open to all that were well enough to attend. I would like to offer huge thanks to our staff, who have continued to show dedication throughout all of these challenges to make the school run as 'normally' and effectively as possible.

This year, we have seen some trips and events start to take place again including a trip to the Ipswich Museum, a star gazing event and an in-person Easter Service in the Church, supported beautifully by Reverend Caroline, to whom we offer our thanks.

Over the last year we have had to work hard to support pupils who are finding it difficult to manage their emotions. This is an area in which we have seen the impact of covid on our young people, particularly for those in the lower part of the school who have missed a lot of the social interactions, and therefore social development, they would usually be exposed to. However, with the support of parents, staff and outside agencies we are seeing this improving now and we know our pupils will leave us as respectful young people who have a huge amount to offer society.

Over the last 12 months, work has begun on our nurture room and on our sensory and reflection garden, although these are to be completed. We have also updated our reading schemes for both key stages 1 and 2 and have purchased a large number of books.

Our governors have been working hard to support the school through these challenging times. We are delighted to have welcomed George Trebess, a local village resident, to our governing body. We would welcome anybody else who may have an interest in supporting the school through governance to make contact with our Chair of Governors, Helen Kent-Jackson, via the school office.

We have missed the regular interactions with Little Chestnuts at the school during COVID and hope that now normality is returning we will be able to foster this relationship again.

Next steps:

As always, we have lots of plans for the next 12 months. Some of these are:

- To complete our garden
- To complete our nurture room
- To create an appropriate intervention space in school
- To build on our current redesigned curriculum offer to include more visits and immersive experiences for the pupils.

All of these projects will help support the children both emotionally and academically. We look forward to updating you on our achievements again next year.



Appendix M

Report On Allotments

Community Orchard is now in blossom, we have lost a couple of trees due to the high winds in March including the old greengage which lost a big limb. The main orchard has been pruned this year.

There is a coach trip to The Suffolk Show May.

We have a shelter for events kindly donated by BDC.

Linda Pritchard organized an Easter Raffle and raised over 140 pounds

Rob Stafford-Baker is stepping down from the committee

Water is being used diligently

Thanks
Paul Thompson

Appendix N

Essex County Council - Heddingham Division

Cllr Peter Schwier – 2021/22 Annual Report

The last 12 months have been exceptionally busy and demanding. They have also been productive, and the new administration at Essex County Council has lost no time in setting out its clear aims and priorities for the four-year term.

While too many to list in full, below is a small sample of the landmarks and achievements of the last 12 months at the county council.

- **Launch of Everyone's Essex Strategy** – the council's ambitious plan for the four years ahead. It set out our levelling up plan for the county, and 20 commitments under the key areas of "economy", "environment", "health" and "family". The strategy set out how renewal, equality and ambition run through everything we do. Crucially, from my perspective, it established our aim to reach net-zero in Essex.
- **A budget for Essex** - In February this year, the council set its budget for the 2022/23 financial year. To help achieve ECC's vision of a county where everyone can thrive, it was announced that several areas would receive significant additional investment, including:

- a £1.3 billion capital programme across the next four years
- £200million over the next four years to support our climate action and net zero ambitions
- an additional £10million in skills and economic growth
- a further £2million for infrastructure and a new pothole fund
- a £1.5million fund for the heritage and culture sector
- an additional £1million for Levelling Up across Essex
- continuation of the £750,000 localities fund to support district-based Levelling Up priorities
- a continuation of the £500,000 investment in the work being done to protect Essex children from being targeted by gangs

A £20million investment has already been made available to help families. This includes directly supporting financial wellbeing and helping them with summer childcare. ECC will also commit an extra £700,000 to the Essential Living Fund to help families and individuals with food, fuel, clothing and furniture bills.

- **Council Tax** – At the same meeting, ECC took the difficult decision to increase its share of council tax by 4.49%.

As an administration, we are very clear that the only money the council has to spend is the money of our residents. It is therefore right that we raise taxes reluctantly and only once every alternative has been explored. In this instance, the main part of the increase was a 2.5% increase in the social care precept – money that goes towards supporting vulnerable residents, including frail, elderly, adults with disabilities, and vulnerable children in need. While we always seek to avoid council tax increases, the pressures on the social care market are such that an increase this year was deemed the only way to stave off serious problems in provision of social care, with providers struggling to stay in business.

- **Highways** - The council will be spending £135m on highways maintenance over the coming year and, as ever, will prioritise the areas by severity of need.

In the Braintree district council area, over the last six months, this spending has led to repairs to 184 county-grade roads, 160 local roads, 187 pavements, 3,711 drains cleared and 2,240 street lights fixed.

- **Climate Action** - In November, ECC's cabinet approved a Climate Action Plan which agreed a £200m commitment to help address all areas of climate-related activity in Essex. The county council's ambition is to ensure we are building a coalition of support across the county for the move to net-zero carbon emissions in our county by 2050. Detailing how we will implement the recommendations of the Essex Climate Action Commission's report *Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral*, it included plans across areas such as housing, infrastructure, transport, waste and the natural environment.
- **Within the first 100 days** - the following was achieved
 - repairing over one million square metres of roads and 40,000 square metres of footpaths and cycleways
 - creating over 600 new roles for unemployed young people aged 18-24 as part of the Government's Kickstart scheme
 - delivering four BT broadband contracts under Superfast Essex programme for a further 12,000 premises
 - starting construction of the West Mersea temporary defence barrier scheme
 - launching a new £500,000 fund to support community action on climate change
 - working with the Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC) to develop and publish the 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' report
 - launching the Active Essex 'Find your Active' campaign, supported by a £1.25 million fund
 - launching Essex Pedal Power, a £2.7million community-based project being piloted in Clacton and Jaywick Sands
 - launching the new Essex Care Technology Service to support people with care needs access and use the latest technology to help them to live as independently as possible
 - announcing the Essex Education Task Force which will invest £1million in reading over the next 18 months, to support children and young people affected by the loss of learning during the Covid-19 pandemic

- piloting construction methods designed to deliver net-zero, future proof, inclusive school buildings

It has been a pleasure to assist the following communities with My Locality Fund - Sturmer, Ashen, Pebmarsh, Castle Hedingham, Lt Maplestead, Gestingthorpe and Belchamp St Paul.

I hope the above gives you an idea of the work that has gone in over the last year to develop our plans and deliver on them for the people of Essex.

For my part, my appointment as Climate Czar was a great privilege. It is a role that speaks volumes for our commitment in this space, but the work has only just started and there is much still to do.

Most of all, it has been my pleasure and privilege to serve the residents of all the villages, both large and small, within the Hedingham division. I look forward to continuing to do so in the next year and beyond.

Best wishes,



Appendix O

Fit Fun Club

It was great to start back again last year after our long covid closure. How we missed the exercise and meeting up with each other. Only 5 members ranging from 70 plus to almost 7 years old. We are planning to advertise later in the year as we have space for more members. Please feel free to come and join us on Tuesday afternoons from 3.30pm – 4.30pm in the village hall, only £3.00 a session or call Zoe on 01440 785778.

Thank you

Zoe Hughes