Woodham Mortimer and Hazeleigh

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY
MINUTES - TUESDAY 09 APRIL 2024

Convened at Woodham Mortimer & Hazeleigh Village Hall at 7:00pm
(Preceding the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting)

In attendance: Parish Councillors; Simon Brady (SB Presiding), Kim McDonald (KM), Lorraine Cobb (LC), Richard Britton (RB). District Cllr Simon Morgan. County Cllr Jane Flemming.
Andrew Ritchings (Clerk to the Parish Council taking minutes)
There were 2 members of the public in attendance

1.24 APA APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Parish Cllrs Graham Harle was unable to attend due to overseas commitments, Pauline McDonald is unwell and Stephen Pemberton had work commitments.

2.24 APA MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

As proposed by KM and seconded by RB the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Assembly dated 11 April 2023 were approved as a true record of discussions.

Given the length of reports and matters on the following Ordinary Parish Council Meeting members of public in attendance and Parish Cllrs agreed to forego the reading of the following 4 reports in order to progress business in a timely manner. This was due to the fact that all entire ports will be provided within the minutes of the meeting and made publicly available on the Parish Council's website.

3.24 APA PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

We're now seeing the projects which were in planning last year move into action this year.
Work has started on the crematorium and Coopers monument restoration with expected completion by the end of this year.

The tin roof café has now opened, and started welcoming a number of people through its doors in April.

All of our bus stops have been replaced with new, posts flags and new timetables.
The vegetation which hid bus shelters has now been cleared back. The maintenance contract for the bus shelter by The tin roof café has been re-established with Essex county council. The graffiti removal on the bus shelters has taken longer as we have had to find companies that do the job with value for money.

I am now a representative for our council on the Maldon and Heybridge transport bus users group, and welcome information from you in how to improve the services to bus users.

New proposals for planning this year have involved a new solar farm between London road and the A414 and a revision of the Golf driving range development.
The Essex minerals plan review Relates to 2 sites in Woodham Walter. Our council have submitted points relating to access to the site via Tom Tit lane onto the A414 and Concerns relating to effects on the environment.

The proposal by the local NHS trust to close Saint Peters Hospital and move all hospital services to other sites outside of our district is not acceptable to our council and we oppose it. You can see our councils response on the parish council website.

Our councils policies are still focused on reducing the speed limits on the A414 and the B 1010, getting pedestrian crossings on the A414 and pavement clearance and improvement. Budget cuts and deferments can delay our policies, however we will still continue to pursue our aims.

On our council this year we have welcomed Lorraine Cobb as our new councillor.

The monthly coffee mornings on the first Friday of each month in the village hall are proving to be a successful event where you can meet and talk with people from around the parish that you possibly didn't really know before. You learn from people about a number of different Issues /problems /good things /bad things, but it's very good to have something like this. I would sincerely like to thank all the hard-working people who make this the success that it is. It's a really welcome event each month and thank you very much for your very hard work.

I conclude my annual report by thanking all the members of the Council for their hard work over the past year.

4.24 APA VILLAGE HALL REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Over the past year we have had the new Gate in the front hedge, fixed the bench in to position (thanks to Andrew MacMorland). We have had a successful year with hiring out the hall, the Burns night supper was very successful and raised over £500.00; Coffee mornings are still going well and although we said goodbye to Mick and Sharron, these will continue. It is our intension to purchase a new cooker to replace the now defunct one in the kitchen. Financially, we are in a good position and we are pleased to advise that our organisation has been awarded 80% mandatory and 20% discretionary Mandatory and Discretionary Charity Relief for the period 1 April 2024 to 1 April 2025.

5.24 APA FALKLANDS TRUST REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Falkland trust committee met last year and agreed a sum of money to give to a member of our parish. We acknowledged the leadership and guidance of David Macmorland of the trust over the years. It is yet another example to us of the legacy that David has left to us in many walks of our lives within our parishes, and it's with sadness that we learned of his death this year.

6.24 APA PARISH COUNCIL CHURCH LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

St Margaret's Report for Church Year December 2022 to December 2023

During the past year St Margaret's has facilitated two services of Holy Communion in the month and one lay led service by Alan Marjoram and our thanks go to him for enabling this service to continue. Thank you also to Ken Hay for continuing to travel out to us from Chelmsford to play the organ and also to James Rushton from Woodham Walter who has stepped in on occasions when Ken has been away and also very kindly covered for a funeral. We are still currently unable to facilitate a lay-led service on third Sunday in the month but on those Sundays there remains the offer to join the congregations at All Saints, Purleigh or St Michael's, Woodham Walter.

Many from within our congregation contribute to our services and special occasions through welcoming, providing readings, leading our prayers, assisting during Holy Communion and stewarding the church or parking facilities. Fellowship after the Sunday services continues to be accompanied by refreshments and the church is readied for Sundays during the week by so many of you who also give of your time to clean, garden, and arrange flowers. Thank you.

Our PCC is small but my thanks go to: Sheila and Elspeth our Churchwardens for their energy in overseeing St Margaret's, the practicalities of rotas and the admin involved in church life. Graham for continuing to ensure that the building and grounds are kept safe for visitors and for keeping his eye on work required as a result of Quinquennial Inspections.

Sarah in her role as treasurer and for her efforts to help us ensure we don't miss out on possible ways of raising funds. Sholto for his patience with all that is necessary for Safeguarding. Janet for her attendance and note-taking at Deanery Synod Meetings.

The year has flown by....Easter was celebrated at St Margaret's with a Family Communion Service and refreshments afterwards.

On May 6th many of us witnessed a Coronation for the first time on as King Charles III was crowned and many of us joined in with the 'Coronation' themed Coffee Morning in the village hall the day before.

In July Ken Hay and Penney McAvoy joined forces with Penny Rich and Gerry Cabanero to put on a concert in St Margaret's on a bright Sunday afternoon. Thank you to these good folks for their time and pre-concert preparation, the concert was very much enjoyed and also a great fundraiser for church. Thank you also to those who facilitated the refreshments that followed and to Elspeth and Sholto for ensuring that we have our own 'stash' of wine glasses at St Margaret's.

On August Bank Holiday Monday, the Teas by the Tombstones, organised by The Friends of St Margaret's took place once again and was very well attended. Many folks shopped for and prepared the teas, used their vehicles to transport tables and chairs and we, once again, made use of the new marquees which take energy and muscle to assemble. Many thanks go to everyone who contributed to making that day such a success.

In September Reverend Jordan Palmer was ordained priest and able to preside at services of Holy Communion. Therefore, although I will remain his Training Incumbent until he completes his training, we will no longer need to lead services together and Jordan can immerse himself within his own parishes. I think I can speak for all of us when I say as a church congregation, we are grateful for Jordan's ministry among us.

During October, St Margaret's held a 'Thank You' evening in church where everyone who gives of their time was warmly invited to an evening of Cheese and Wine, with a little 'Glen Miller' playing in the background. This was such a lovely evening with some folks who help the church, never having been into the building before! Thank you to Sarah and Janet for providing a wonderful 'spread' which was enjoyed by all.

And finally... during December we also welcomed the children, staff and parents from Woodham Mortimer Pre-school as we provided St Margaret's for their nativity. This year they showcased a new production and for the first time, I don't believe there was a single tear shed.... well not from the children anyway. Well done to the staff and children and also to the parents for their donations to The Children's Society.

As rural churches we love and serve our communities by offering care and friendship without expecting anything in return. Sustainability as a Christian community in a small rural church is only possible through persistent prayer and the gift from many of their time and energy. With prayerful thanks to you all, *Julie*.

7.24 APA MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

One member of public in attendance wished to discuss the possibility of having a Vehicle Activated Speed sign (VAS) installed on the A414 opposite Zara Restaurant close to where the 30mph limit begins. It was decided to revert the matter for discussion to the follow-on Ordinary Parish Council Meeting.

8.24 APA MEETING CLOSURE AND SUMMARY

Chairman closed the meeting, thanked everyone for attending, for concluding matters promptly and continued to the Ordinary Parish Council meeting.

..... *Simon Brady*..... (Chairman to the Parish Council) 08/04/2025