

WOODHAM MORTIMER with HAZELEIGH

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MINUTES - TUESDAY 11 APRIL 2017

Convened at WOODHAM MORTIMER and HAZELEIGH VILLAGE HALL
Post Office Road, Woodham Mortimer at 7:30pm

In attendance

Parish Councillors: Simon Brady (SB) Chairman, Andrew Macmorland (AM), Pauline McDonald (PM), Kim McDonald (KM), Stephen Pemberton (SP), Kim Broadhurst (KB) Richard Britton (RB)
County Councillor Penny Channer (PC), District Councillor Henry Bass
Andrew Ritchings (AR) Clerk to the Council recording proceedings.

There were 6 members of the public in attendance

1.17 APM APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

District Councillor Mark Durham was attending a Maldon Committee meeting.

2.17 APM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2016

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12 April 2016 as proposed by AM and seconded by PM were agreed to be a true representation of business and agreed by all present at that meeting.

3.17 APM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Firstly I look back in sadness to our July meeting in fond memory of Ian Spurr who raised the last item of business on that agenda associated with the church and in August we were attending his memorial service. It was a shock to us all and we shall miss Ian but never forget him.

During the year the Council were involved with concerns regarding high water levels at the Royal Oak Quarry which now appear to have largely been resolved following our discussions with a new contact at Essex County Council.

I am pleased to report that continued correspondence with Danbury Parish Council have given both councils the chance to join in support over concerns raised in respect to large developments in consideration to the likely pressures any such developments would have between the already busy highways linking the villages.

Ongoing issues associated with hazardous pedestrian and vehicle conditions along the Fambridge Road have been progressing, all be it very slowly, requests for speed monitoring, vehicle activated signs, construction of footways and further speed limit restriction with gateway treatment have all been part of protracted correspondence with various departments. The Council shall continue to pursue measures which will hopefully help mitigate the conditions being endured by local residents.

The issue of funding churchyard maintenance at St Margarets has been presented to us and following today's Annual Parish Meeting the Council will be considering any views raised by parishioners along with the financial and administrative matters associated with upkeep of the churchyard which will hopefully see a course of action to help deal with its future provision.

Major planning developments on the outskirts of Maldon have been part of much discussion over the year specifically the concerns and impact of substantial extra housing will have and the long term effect on everyday life through both Woodham Mortimer and Hazeleigh. A formal planning consultation has now been submitted to the

Council from the Planning Authority with respect to the Woodham Mortimer Golf Driving Range presenting the village with its the largest planning proposal in the last 25 years.

On a personal note I was very proud to be a judge on the Maldon District Conservation Building Awards panel which was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and certainly gave me an appreciation of how much conservation interest there is in our district.

Following the sad loss of Ian as one of the councillors representing Hazeleigh we were pleased to welcome Richard Britton as his successor, I'm sure he will enjoy being on the Council and will provide valuable contribution to all items of business.

Finally I would like to thank all Councillors for their time and effort with all matters associated with the Council and villages, to our Clerk for keeping us informed, up to date and organised and in particular I would like to thank various people who shall remain nameless who unobtrusively make a difference in our villages by undertaking various tasks such as litter picking and giving their time helping and caring for other local people.

(Simon Brady)

4.17 APM VILLAGE HALL REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

The Village Hall Association were pleased to report another successful Burns Night which raised in excess of £400 and are considering the introduction of another celebratory evening of cheese and wine with quiz night which is to be confirmed. Unfortunately there has been no progress with respect to the cesspit replacement which is proving difficult especially as much needed roof repairs are now a priority with expected costs to be in the region of £5,000.

(Pauline McDonald)

5.17 APM FALKLANDS TRUST REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

At the bi-annual meeting held in December 2016 David Macmorland stepped down as Chairman and is to maintain a position on the Trust. The Trust Committee were pleased to then elect Sholto Morton as the new Chairman. In accordance with the trust principles and objectives a sum of money was donated to a worthy member of the Parish.

(Simon Brady)

6.17 APM PARISH COUNCIL CHURCH LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Since the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting, St Margaret's have moved from interregnum to a much happier position. The Church now has 3 clergy in different degrees as follows:

- Priest in charge from September 2016 – Reverend Canon Stephen Carter
- Ex-Officio member from September 2016 – Reverend Julie Wilmot (assistant Curate)
- Associate Priest from December 2016 – Penny Sayer residing at St Margaret's Rectory, Maldon Road.

In the year 3 weddings and 4 funerals took place, an increase from the previous year when there was just 1 of each.

During the interregnum the Church was run by a dedicated group of volunteers without whom the parish would not have functioned. The Church has been without Warden(s) during this time as 'volunteers' did not feel able to take on the role. With support from the new regime this has recently been resolved and 2 parishioners have taken up the mantel. Also during the interregnum period the 'Family Purse' was reduced and been fully paid. Now that period has ended this expense has risen significantly, coupled with this, income has been hit due to loss and sickness of a number of regular members of the congregation. The Church is supported by 'Friends of St Margaret's' which donates for specific requirements by fund raising events. However funds are very tight and expenses such as insurance, electricity, upkeep and maintenance of the church and

churchyard and the aforementioned family purse have to be budgeted and paid. Due to these circumstances it has been necessary to find ways of cutting costs and at this point the members of the church would very much like to thank Stephen Pemberton for his extremely kind offer of cutting the grass in the churchyard. Already it is looking superb. A couple of 'working parties' have been arranged to remove moss and tidy around graves; these events have proved to be very popular and enjoyable. Future costs for pollarding trees and replacing/maintenance of fences will be required.

Reverend Stephen Carter attended the March Parish Council Meeting to sound out the possibility of a donation for churchyard expenses from the Council funded by an increase in the precept as of April 2018. An amount of £200 was suggested; this would be designated to a churchyard maintenance account. Alternatives would be to 'close' the churchyard (there is no room for further burials) which would then transfer the responsibility for maintenance to the Parish Council.

It is hoped in the future the church will be able to become even more visitor friendly by the addition of a disabled toilet and small meeting room and additional much needed parking in the Rectory. The Church and surrounding churchyard is a beautiful public amenity for all parishioners and visitors to enjoy and it is hoped that it will continue to be a focal point for the community.

7.17 APM PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY REPRESENTATIVE

Ian Spurr had been the Public Rights of Way Representative and the position would be discussed at the Parish Council Annual Council Meeting in May.

8.17 APM MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

6 members of public in attendance considered and discussed matters of concern with Parish Councillors regarding the potential amount of vehicles likely to be using the A414 between Maldon and Danbury once the new developments have been completed forming the South Maldon Garden Suburb. The general opinions were that the current infrastructure is just not adequate to support the amount of properties being proposed. Dissatisfaction was also raised regarding the design of the new roundabout system and the continued excess of speeding vehicles along Fambridge Road. It had been noted the speed restriction sign having been knocked over many months ago had still yet to be re-sited and this would be followed up with Essex Highways. The Chairman reminded all in attendance that any highway defects or highway issues can be reported on the Essex Highways website at the following address;

<http://www.essexhighways.org/transport-and-roads/tell-us/problem-check.aspx>

The Chairman asked parishioners in attendance their opinions regarding Parish Council funds being used to help contributions towards St Margaret's churchyard maintenance and the feeling of some attendees was a small increase to the Parish Council precept demand would not be unwelcome and felt it was important to help maintain the church grounds, there were no specific objections raised other than understanding details of how such funds would be used.

9.17 APM MEETING CLOSURE AND SUMMARY

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and invited all to remain for the Parish Council ordinary monthly meeting.

..... *Simon Brady*..... (Chairman of the Parish Council)

10 April 2018