

## PARISH of STOW BEDON & BRECKLES

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday, 20 May 2013 at 7.30 p.m. in Caston Village Hall.

Present Peter Mills (Chairman of the Parish Council), and 9 Parishioners  
Julian Gibson (Clerk)

- 1 **Apologies for absence.** Rachael Garrod and Lee Pilkington.
- 2 **Minutes.** The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Friday, 11 May 2012 were **confirmed and signed.**
- 3 **Matters arising.** None.
- 4 **Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council.** The Chairman reported on a number of items from the past year, highlighting in particular the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and said he was pleased the Council had supported this by providing funding for each child in the parish to receive a commemorative mug. He spoke of the plans to restore the parish notice boards which should soon come to fruition, but on a less happy note, mentioned the two unauthorised developments on Peddars Way and the muck heap on 100 Acre Hill, both of which are causing great concern to parishioners, and remain unresolved. The Council was looking into the possibility of obtaining a Portaloo which could be used at various events in the Parish, and has also been considering obtaining a Village Sign for Breckles. He welcomed Mr Peter Cotes as the Council's new Internal Auditor, and also paid respects to Mrs Rosemary McIntosh (who had recently passed away), praising her for her work on the parish history booklet and for valiantly stepping into the breach as temporary Clerk when the previous one resigned.
- 5 **Report of the County Councillor.** Unfortunately Mr Monson was unable to be present, which the Chairman suspected might be related to the results of the recent County Council elections.
- 6 **Report of the District Councillor.** Councillor Phil Cowen gave a review of issues faced by Breckland Council during the year, which unsurprisingly focused on budget issues. He mentioned the 'Could we? Should we?' consultation and various cost-saving measures that had been implemented. These included outsourcing Planning to Capita, which he acknowledged did not always work as well as had been hoped, and he said that he had recently attended a high level meeting which aimed to improve this. He also mentioned the Boundary Commission review which would result in a reduction in the number of District Councillors from 54 to 50, and a change to Ward boundaries (although he stressed there would be no change to parish boundaries).
- 7 **Stow Bedon PCC.** Beryl Warren (Church Warden) reported on 2012's activities at St Botolph's Church, Stow Bedon. Nine benefice services had been held with attendances of 35-40, plus a Carol Service. The churchyard has been regularly cut by a contractor, and the Village Hall Fund was thanked for its contribution towards the cost of this. Various fundraising events had been held, and the redundant harmonium had been sold on E-bay, and now resides in Italy! There had been no major maintenance bills during the year, but the Quinquennial inspection was due in 2013, which was bound to unearth some issues.
- 8 **Breckles PCC.** Margaret Morfoot (Church Warden) gave a similar report on activities at St Margaret's Church, Breckles. Ten benefice services had been held with an average attendance of 37. This church had also sold its harmonium on E-bay (following obtaining a faculty for a replacement pipe organ), but the purchaser who had paid had not collected it! The churchyard had been cut by a volunteer, but for 2013 a contractor was being used, so the cost was bound to rise. She also mentioned the planned changes to the way the Church

calculates the Parish Share, which is expected to make a substantial difference to what an individual parish contributes to the diocese to pay for clergy, etc.

- 9 Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment.** Phil Childs, Chairman of the Trustees of the Charity presented his annual report, which will be made available in full on the Parish Council Website. Six people in the parish had received fuel payments of £400 each. He again asked to be informed about other potential beneficiaries. Projects for 2013/14 include continued spraying to reduce bracken encroachment and maintenance of glades.
- 10 Stow Bedon Village Hall Fund.** The Chairman presented the Charity's Annual Report, which is available on the Parish Council website. He said that the Council as Trustee had appointed St James's Place Wealth Management as Investment Manager, and placed £17,000 from the Treasury Stock which matured last year in capital growth funds with them. The plan is to use the investment with F&C to fund charitable and other payments, gradually winding this down over the years, and when this is exhausted, to look at the value of the St James's Trust investment and consider making a change to the policy so as to generate enough income from this to meet then predicted payments. Finally the Chairman thanked the organisations, notably the churches (which had been used to receiving sizable grants from the income derived from the old investment), for not grumbling too much now that the charity is obliged to reduce the size of its grant payments.
- 11 Any other business.**
- 11.1 A parishioner asked whether the Council could reconsider making grants to the PCCs towards grass cutting in the burial grounds. The Chairman said that the Council had considered this at its meeting last September but had decided against raising money for this via the Precept; however this could be considered again at the time of setting next year's Precept.
- 11.2 In response to a request, the Clerk said he would ask Mr Cowen if he would consider asking for his report to be published in *Waylander*, as the statistics given were very interesting but difficult to remember.

**Confirmed:**

.....

**Phil Childs, Chairman**

12 May 2014