

# Abbots Ripton Parish Council

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

16/05/2021

### Minutes

Present: Cllr G Richardson (Chairman), Cllr J Leaver (Vice Chairman), Cllr S Brown, Cllr J Hemsley, Cllr D Brennan, Headteacher of Abbots Ripton Primary School, Revd Mandy Flaherty, Matthew Fido (Village Hall)

Emily Moore – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Abbots Ripton Parish Council.

#### 1. Report from Abbots Ripton Primary School

The following report was received from Abbots Ripton Primary School:

**Pupils** - We currently have 102 pupils on roll at school, split into 4 classes.

Number on Roll	Van Gough Class	Monet Class	Kandinsky Class	Picasso Class
102	17 Reception	28 Yr1x11 Yr2x17	26 Yr3x17 Yr4x9	31 Yr5x15 Yr6x16

The vast majority of our children (72% which is 73 out of 102) travel to us from outside of our catchment area. It is vital therefore that we continue to appeal to families outside of our catchment area if we are to remain a viable school.

In Year 6 we feed to a vast number of secondary schools; St Peters is our natural feeder school as our catchment children would go there but with so many out of catchment children we feed to most local secondary schools. Our 16 current Year 6 children for example will be moving on to 6 different schools.

#### **Staffing**

We employ 17 members of staff; 7 teachers (some are part time and 1 is currently on maternity leave), 5 members of teaching support staff and 5 other support staff including office and catering staff and a cleaner. Unlike most schools, we do not have a caretaker.

#### **Quality of education**

We had our last OFSTED inspection in February 2019. This was a short monitoring inspection as we were a 'good' school at the time and the inspection found that we continue to be good. Our last SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) was in July 2015 and we judged to be good. This inspection should take place every 5 years but has been delayed due to the pandemic. We can therefore expect a SIAMS inspection in the next academic year.

We are very proud to be a school which is highly regarded both locally and within the local authority. We play an active role in our local cluster, HAPP (Huntingdon Area Primary Partnership) and are often called upon by the Local Authority to offer support to other schools. At times this is at a leadership level, with our Headteacher being asked to support other heads or to lead other schools alongside leading Abbots Ripton for short periods of time. We also offer support to local teachers; often being asked to host visits from other schools.

In the last reporting year (2019) our progress and attainment data in reading, writing and maths has remained in the top 20% of all schools nationally for children at the end of Year 6. In 2 of these areas, (reading and maths) our progress data was deemed to be 'significantly' above national data. Over the last few years, we have also been recognised for our results in phonics and also the progress of our children eligible for pupil premium.

#### **COVID-19**

In the initial closure in March 2020, our children of critical workers were offered a place at Wyton Primary School and some of our staff joined a rota to teach there. We had 6 children who attended Wyton. In the most recent closure in January 2021, we opened our school to critical worker children and we had 25 children registered for places at school and we averaged around 19 children per day. Headteachers were given the freedom to interpret the 'vulnerable' category and we had 3 children who attended part time under this category towards the last few weeks. Our Risk Assessment is updated regularly and we have been well supported by the Local Authority throughout the pandemic. We have not lost any teaching time due to school or class closures in additional to national closures and we are very proud of this.

## **2. Chairman's Report to include the Year's Activities**

The following report was received from Geoff Richardson (Chairman of Abbots Ripton Parish Council)

Firstly, may we thank the whole community on the way they have supported one another during these difficult times.

The council have continued to meet on a regular basis via zoom

As you can see from the accounts we have managed to operate within our budget and accordingly only increased our precept by a very small amount.

We have completed several projects that have been ongoing for several years

We have refurbished the telephone box and installed a new defibrillator.

1. We obtained an additional MVAS machine plus extended the pole in Station Road to accommodate one of the machines.
2. We have replaced the Christmas lights on the tree in Jubilee Gardens
3. We have continued to make and we believe we have been successful in application to the LHI funds.

Also, we worked with the Cambridgeshire County Council to try to minimise the inconvenience and disruption when the improvements of the B1090 were made.

Despite the difficulties have continued to manage the village affairs.

I would like to thank all my other Councillors who have supported me and the village in these difficult times.

## **3. Report from Cambridgeshire County Council**

No report received

## **4. Report from Huntingdon District Council**

The following report was received from Cllr Simon Bywater:

The past 12 months have been incredibly challenging for us all but it looks as though we can all begin to see the light at the end of a very long tunnel. The impacts of this dreadful virus have been far reaching but the way residents have responded and pulled together has been remarkable. We have also witnessed one of the biggest changes in ways of working that has ever been seen either locally or nationally and the District council has not been exempt from this. The staff have done a brilliant job in coping with this change and challenge.

For our part as local politicians we have been clear that we want our organisation to do “whatever is required” to meet the needs of our residents and communities. That saw us establishing a brand-new network of Recognised organisation – tailored to their 15 local areas, making community groups and local delivery a cornerstone of our response to covid. The district council has continued to deliver front line services despite the challenges of Covid and on the back of a 0% council tax increase. We are very aware of the financial pressures on our residents. We have also acted with our resources, putting more money than ever into supporting local communities and community groups, and in the management of the distribution of grants, have sought at every opportunity to not just meet immediate need but also build capacity and long term solutions for both the individuals and residents effected. Our WeAreHuntingdonshire website did and continues to do just that – providing clear access to the support that our residents need irrespective of where that support comes from. What the last year has shown us is a number of things. Firstly, how well we have worked together as a whole community. As a Council we take our own delivery very seriously and strive to deliver the best possible results for our residents and businesses. However, our work over recent years and in particular our experience during Covid has made the District Council acutely aware that there are limits to what any single organisation can do, and the better we understand the problem and the more we can align support to provide a simple and logical process for local residents and businesses the better.

Better solutions, better targeted and more impactful, reduced bureaucracy, increased pace of delivery, and more local ownership are some of the pieces of feedback that we have had from those who have benefited from these new solutions. This will form my thinking behind the community strategy when it goes forward to the cabinet in the year ahead.

My final thanks go to all the Parish councillors, volunteers, workers and businesses in the community who have made our lives a little easier in these difficult times.

Best wishes  
District Councillor Simon Bywater  
Sawtry Ward  
Huntingdonshire District Council

## 5. **Report from Cricket Club**

The following report was received from Geoff Richardson:

As you will appreciate there has been no cricket played in this last year due to Covid 19. Due to the increase in costs requested by the village hall for the use of the hall and cricket field and due to the non-availability of these facilities plus one or two other factors the players decided that they would amalgamate with Hemingford park and play there.

However, with the recent costings that the village hall require I do not see cricket being played again at the village hall.

Also due to a position I have been offered by the ECB in order to take up this position I will have to leave ARCC.

Geoff Richardson.

## 6. **Report from Abbots Ripton Village Hall**

The following report was received from Matthew Fido (Chairman of Village Hall)

### **2020 – 2021 ARVH SUMMARY**

After finishing 2019 with an excellent Christmas fair organised by Alison Leaver and the committee and raising over £600 for the hall’s funds, we were looking forward to a busy year with the hall booked for weddings and private parties throughout the calendar year. Some of these bookings have been cancelled and refunds returned. Some of the bookings have been rebooked for the following year.

We had also been awarded the solar farm funds with our new revised tender submission after shelving our plans to extend the hall.

We had revised and changed our web page provider to give us a more internally manageable web page and flexible web provider. This would also give us more scope to market new events and share news and updates on the hall.

We were also looking forward to our new associates from Stukeley Meadows Youth Football club completing their first Season on the Abbots Ripton green.

Our plans for the year ahead we're somewhat thwarted by the COVID 19 pandemic and what looked like the hall being closed for a few months has continued now over 12 months. As we now look forward to reopening on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 to exercise classes, we are also taking the opportunity to carry out a decoration refurbishment including the installation of new air conditioning and LED lighting throughout the hall. We are also carrying out the sparkle refurbishment on the main toilets ready for when social distancing restrictions allow these to be used again.

Through the year we have also replaced the original stage made of trestles and planked staging with a professional folding stage which means the stage can be folded away and used in different configurations. The new stage includes a professional fire-retardant stage skirt.

The new stage has also still given us the invaluable storage space underneath the stage for the rectangular tables.

Throughout this difficult year we have been managing costs including Utilities while ensuring all statutory costs have been processed and paid.

There has been COVID government grants available, which we have been claiming where relevant apart from one grant at the start of the pandemic which we missed due to confusion on which grants we could apply for.

This was soon rectified once I became registered with the rates office at Huntingdonshire district council. We are still awaiting some further grant payments up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2021 and a restart grant, both have been delayed due to delays at the company carrying out the national fraud checks.

#### **THE ARVH COMMITTEE**

We have unfortunately had some trustees resign over the previous year and at the end of 2019.

Sue Custerton

Sue King

Jenny Fellowes

Susan Kirkwood

Fergus Pinkerton

These committee members' resignations were a loss to the committee and we thank them for their time on the committee and we are exceedingly gratefully for all their hard work and commitment in helping run and manage the Hall and the events held at the hall over the years. His Lordship is aware of the missing family trustee and we are awaiting his decision on the families representative replacement.

Alan Scothern has requested to pass on his baton of booking agent for the hall a role which he has done studiously and with some considerable organisation and much success. The committee is completely in his debt for all the work he has carried out during the time he has managed this key part of the hall's operational requirements. Stacey Gale has agreed to take on this with Alans's stewardship initially to show her the ropes of the hall booking procedures. We are also looking forward to Stacey joining the committee and sharing her hospitality skills with the committee. Alan will still continue in his trustee position as Secretary.

Dean Drage a very well-known man in the village for many things including his time as a local beat Police officer and also his drawing skills has also joined the committee in 2020. He has made us aware of his building skills which will be a fantastic asset to the committee.

We are also very pleased to have John Shrewsbury has also join the committee for his second term as Treasurer, John is already on the bank mandate and is at present arranging his online bank access and I am looking to hand over the treasurers baton to him as soon as we can meet up. We are also all looking forward to our first committee meeting as soon as restrictions allow us all to meet in person.

### **Trust committee members for 2021 :**

Matthew Fido *Chair*

Alison Leaver *Vice Chair*

Alan Scothern *Secretary*

John Shrewsbury *Treasurer*

David Brennan *PC member*

Heather hall

Dean Drage

Stacey Gale *Hall bookings*

### **FINANCE**

In late 2020 we discovered there was £14041.70 missing from our account which at the present time is under police investigation, of which we have had £11209 repaid.

The final money owed is being repaid in instalments over the next 13 months. This issue left us with some challenging times with our bank and difficulties with completing a new bank mandate which unfortunately the bank exasperated with numerous delays due to lack of communication and not checking documents correctly. These problems have been resolved now and the bank account mandate is in line with the present committee. The bank did refund £1000 of the money that had been removed fraudulently plus a disappointing £300 in compensation for the inconvenience caused. The bank also refunded interest charges that they had previously charged.

We are also close to having all direct debits reinstated that were cancelled during the mandate change.

After this incident we have put in place extra requests, that statements are also sent to Secretary and chair of the committee. The committee also now has online access to the account so that balances and deposits paid in for events can be more closely monitored.

We have also negotiated a new electricity contract with Scottish Power which reduced our electricity cost from 14p per KW to 12p per KW on a new 2-year deal plus an owed credit refund of close to £900. At present our financial situation is positive, please see present trust held funds below

### **BANK ACCOUNT**

MAIN ACCOUNT.	£16,176
FUNDRAISING ACCOUNT	£ 6,454
SAVINGS	£.10,298

### **REOPENING THE HALL**

We are reopening the hall on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May to our Pilates and Tai chi classes. There will of course be restrictions on numbers and some changes to hiring conditions so as to work in line with social distancing restrictions. We will develop the COVID procedures to match the restrictions as they change. We have also installed the relevant signage and hand sanitiser stations

### **THE YEAR AHEAD.**

As we complete the painting off the Hall inside and the refurbishment of the toilets the estate are looking at supporting us with the external painting of the hall, when they have decided on the colour of which Black looks is the leading choice at the moment which would be striking against the bright colours of wedding guests in their pictures.

The committees next major project will be the Halls' kitchen refurbishment that will include inline fridges, new counters and an industrial dishwasher and new electric oven with extraction hood. These changes will improve the usability for hirers and for village events. This project will be funded partially by the awarded solar fund and the ARVH trust funds. We are also looking at refurbishing the bar area to include a glass washer. It is still our intention to build a storage shed on the perimeter of the car park if planning permission can be obtained, and would also like to consider making some provision to improve the storage for sport club activities.

### **FUTURE EVENTS**

In 2020 we made a commitment to subsidise the annual harvest festival supper with the church, we are looking to honor that commitment this year and with the church make this a celebration of not only the harvest but of all our Parishes journey out of this pandemic and say thank you to some of the fantastic people within our village community who have helped us all through this difficult period.

The event will be after the harvest church service and we can then all meet at the village hall for our **Village harvest festival supper party** with some entertainment and good food and raise a glass or two and personally thank the outstanding people in our Parishes.

When the committee can meet in person, I am sure we will be able to plan more events and look further forward to our plans and events.

### **CONCLUSION**

The last year has been a difficult one in so many different ways but I feel the hall will emerge from this difficult period with a new fresh look including investment in its facilities and appearance. The committee as we go forward will continue to strive to raise the halls use by parishioners of the villages and work at organising events to bring the villagers together. I also want to thank the members of the committee who have worked this year to ensure the hall has kept moving forward and your continuing support.

Matthew Fido Chair.

## **7. Report from Abbots Ripton Church**

The following report was received from Abbots Ripton Church:

### **Background**

St Andrews Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Abbots Ripton with Wood Walton, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelical, educational, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the Parish Church and the Churchyard at Abbots Ripton. There is no responsibility for the Church at Wood Walton, which is in the care of the Friends of Friendless Churches and "The Friends of St Andrew, Wood Walton". The Churchyard does, however remain the responsibility of the Parish.

Rev Mandy Flaherty serves as Rector for the North Leightonstone Benefice which consists of Abbots Ripton, Alconbury, Buckworth, Great Gidding, Great Stukeley, Hamerton, Kings Ripton, Little Stukeley, Upton and Winwick, with Mandy taking responsibility for Abbots and Kings Ripton plus several of the other churches along with her Associate Priest, the Reverend Fiona Brampton

### **Membership**

The Electoral Roll was revised in 2019 and the total on the Electoral Roll to the end of 2019 is 33.

### **Parochial Church Council**

During the year the PCC has met once only at the 2019 Annual meeting on 8.9.2020 with a virtual meeting on 24.11.21 to discuss the proposal of siting a pre-school nursery at the Abbots Ripton Primary School. The following have served as members of the PCC:

<b>Chair</b>	The Rev Mandy Flaherty
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Mrs Valerie Scothern Mrs Pamela Simpson to 8.9.20
<b>Representative to the Deanery Synod</b>	Mr Roger Gough
<b>Hon Treasurer</b>	Mr Roger Gough
<b>Hon Secretary</b>	Mrs Valerie Scothern
<b>Members</b>	Mrs Lois King Dr R Price Mrs Scarlett Mitchison to 16.6.20 Mrs Pamela Simpson from 8.9.20

**Sue Redmond** is happy to continue in the role of Project Manager for any repairs or other which may become necessary. We thank her very much for this.

**Church Services and Attendance**

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic there were only nine services held during the year:-

12<sup>th</sup> January Holy Communion

19<sup>th</sup> January Family Service

9<sup>th</sup> February Holy Communion

16<sup>th</sup> February Family Service

8<sup>th</sup> March Family Holy Communion

20<sup>th</sup> September Harvest Service

18<sup>th</sup> October Family Communion

13<sup>th</sup> December Carol Concert and Service

25<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Family Service

Overall average attendance was 16

There were no Baptisms, 1 funeral, and 1 wedding

**Young People's Ministry**

Mandy has continued with the Family Services until lockdown in March

**Abbots Ripton School**

Due to lockdown there was no school presence at the Church during the year, however Mandy serves as a Governor at the school and has continued to provide recorded Collective Worship for the school on a weekly basis.

**Fabric Report**

The project to improve the drainage has been monitored over the year and no significant change has been observed. The Quinquennial Inspection took place in October. Copies have been circulated to all PCC members but it has yet to be discussed in full.

**Review of the Year**

Due to the pandemic it has not been possible to take forward any projects this year and services have been very few and far between. However it was possible to hold a Carol Concert with a limited congregation and with a number of performances from local people and the St Andrews singers. Many thanks to Bronwen and her cello group and to Tony Humes for organizing the choir and singing. It was much enjoyed as was the Christmas Day service which we were also able to hold.

Thanks also to Mandy who very professionally produced a video of all the Parishes performing their Christmas worship. This was sent far and wide and gave much pleasure in a very difficult time.

The village newsletter The Little RAN, has been issued occasionally during the year and all Church events continue to be included.

The Mission Action Plan With no Harvest Supper and very few services it unfortunately has not been possible to support the two charities as we would have wished.

Bees We took advice from a firm who undertook to remove the nest of bees and make the repairs necessary to prevent a re-occurrence but unfortunately they did not carry out the work as planned. Since then further discussion has been held with another firm and it is hoped that this might be able to be resolved during the next year.

The Parish Giving Scheme The one positive event during the year was the introduction of this scheme. This was launched in the late Summer and received an encouraging number of participants. This has produced a guaranteed monthly income for the Church and also removed the necessity of claiming most of the Gift Aid

The Parish Share was paid in full.

**Fund Raising**

Again due to the pandemic no formal fund raising has been possible during the year.

### **Looking Forward**

After a truly difficult year we can only hope that 2021 will see a return to normality. We will work with Mandy and make every effort to take the Church forward.

### **Acknowledgments**

The Flower Ladies and Molly Bolton and Daniel Price continued to help with the cleaning and flowers when required, and did sterling work with the cleaning up of bees which is a most unpleasant task. Our very grateful thanks.

Our organist rota : Although seldom required this year our organists Roger Ray and Ann Tollington are always ready to help when asked which is a blessing.

Churchyard Maintenance This is now in the hands of maintenance man Kevin who has kept the churchyard looking lovely.

Geoff Richardson our independent examiner. Many thanks for the time he gives to our accounts.

And finally, to the PCC for their support to the Rector and Churchwardens throughout this very difficult year.

THE CHURCHWARDEN

## **8. Report from Abbots Ripton Village groups**

The following report was received from Alan Scothern:

### **ABBOTS RIPTON FISHING CLUB**

The Abbots Ripton Fishing Club last year had around 150 members who now pay an annual subscription of £60, O.A.P.s pay £40 . Under 16s are free but must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

For this members are allowed to fish four lakes in the village, rented from Abbots Ripton Farming Co. Ltd . These lakes are Brooklands, Wild Goose Leys, Foxenfields, and Holland Wood. All lakes contain a mixed variety of coarse fish, e.g. carp tench, roach bream and perch.

The family ticket (now costing £70 per year) which allows a member, his/her partner, and any children of the family under 16 to fish continues to be popular.

Due to the coronavirus no matches were held last year

In agreement with ARFC, fishing on the days before shoot dates is no longer allowed, as well, naturally, as on the shoot date itself.

Night fishing on Holland Wood and Foxenfields lakes is still banned but is now allowed on Wild Goose Leys and Brooklands lakes.

We have managed to get night fishing on Holland Wood and Foxenfields lakes on Saturday nights only.

Carp of 30lb have been caught from Holland Wood and Foxenfield lakes.

There are carp over 20lb in Wild Goose Leys lake.

Some roach and rudd have also been taken from Holland Wood lake and put into Brooklands.

The appropriate movement licenses have been granted by the Environment Agency.

The aim of the club is to make Brooklands lake a silver fish lake with no carp.

To help this we have put 1000 small tench into this lake. These tenches are now being caught.

The club was granted money from the Solar Park fund to put bream into Brooklands but because of the coronavirus this did not happen.

Hopefully the money is still available for the club to purchase the bream for this lake.

Alan Scothern  
Treasurer and Secretary

**Meeting Closed 07:30pm**

