

Minutes of the Hadlow Annual Parish Meeting held on 14 March 2022 at Old School Hall, Hadlow

Present: O Baldock, E & L Bright, D Carey, N Collins, M Harvey, J Massy, R Morley, J Newman, S O'Shea (Hadlow Parish Cllrs). L Pierce (Hadlow Parish Council Caretaker), S Hudson (KCC Cllr), J Anderson, H Rogers, P Montague (TMBC Cllrs), S Edmonds, D Wakeling (KCC Community Wardens),

Group representatives and Members of the Community: C Anderson & P Jones (Hadlow Village Hall Management Committee), P Large & F Gibbins (Hadlow Seniors Pop In Group), S Vanns (Scouts & Hadlow Primary School), R Bosworth-Davis & other (Hadlow Cricket Club), G Brown (Hadlow WI), A Hughes (Historical Society): S Bentham & L Pearson (Knit & Natter, Café Plus), A Waddingham (Golden Green Association), D & J Isted (Short Mat Bowls & Bowls Club), M Johnson (Hadlow Bakery), J Gregory (Appletons), H Pax, D Wetton, A Barrett, S Ingham, D Stanley, B & T Senior, C Hyams, J Stacey, M Hayes,

Also in Attendance Minute taker: M Stepkowski (Parish Clerk),

1/ Welcome by the Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Nick Collins

Reminded attendees that the Parish Council was the facilitator of the meeting, but it was a Parish Meeting and therefore any questions for the Parish Council would be addressed at the next Parish Council meeting which was due to follow on at the end of the current meeting.

2/ Apologies for absence

These were received from TMBC Cllr J Sergison.

3/ Minutes of the meeting held Monday 8 March 2021

The Chair confirmed these had been approved and signed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 5 May 2021.

4/ Dementia Friendly Awareness Session – presented by KCC Community Warden Sandra Edmonds

Sandra reported: "As we continue to work within the Hadlow Village our focus this year will be to create a Dementia Friendly Community, where people who are living with Dementia and their families/carers can feel safe and supported with the knowledge that there is a greater understanding of dementia within the local area.

In May during Dementia Action Month, we hope to encourage all residents to 'Paint the Village Blue' to raise awareness of Dementia. People can support this by making Blue Door wreaths, planting Blue Flowers in their gardens, making and displaying Forget me nots in their windows. We will also be focussing on delivering more Dementia Awareness Sessions to Youth Groups and other groups in the village."

Sandra then presented a Dementia Awareness Session and information leaflets were made available in the Atrium for people to collect.

5/Reports from Borough, County Councillors & Community Warden

TMBC Cllr Montague:

As a member of the Borough Waste Technical Services Cabinet, Cllr Montague reported on the current status of waste collection. In summary:

Garden Waste – service resumed as of date of meeting and subscriptions had been frozen during the suspension of services. An extended period before payment due would apply.

Bulky Waste – this service is not currently due to restart particularly as the old scheme did not allow for items to be segregated and recycled where possible and all items were taken to Allington for burning. In addition to this, concerns were raised as drivers on routine services were also being used for the Saturday programme and there was a risk of staff shortages. Cllr Montague appreciated the importance of the service locally and to those who perhaps could not afford to book bulky waste removal services and or had lack of transport to the local waste recycling centre. Although currently not an option he did not dismiss the arguments for its re-introduction in the future.

Litter picking/Street Cleaning – In response to public concerns that the high street and surrounding area never seemed to be litter picked or swept by the waste contractors which before Covid occurred at least once a week, Cllr Montague confirmed there had been staff shortages during Covid but that the service should resume shortly.

The Clerk took this opportunity to thank all those volunteers within the Parish who had already signed up to the Parish Council litter pick scheme, their continued efforts had helped to reduce the litter.

Cllr Montague was thanked for attending the meeting and his report.

TMBC Cllr Rogers then reported on other Borough issues:

2022-23 Budget: Both the Borough and County had over the last year seen Central Government claw back funding and with budgets in a deficit, difficult decisions had had to be made and some services cut including those that were not statutory obligations such as public conveniences. This also meant that the Council tax levies would increase.

TMBC Local Plan – this had been rejected by the Inspector due to "failure to discharge duty to co-operate"; and he went on to explain the position. In summary

planners were working hard to have the Plan amended to consider the Inspectors considerations to reduce speculation. In the meantime, Developers were taking full advantage of the position and there had been a barrage of planning applications put forward.

Save Capel Campaign – The Borough was vehement in their support of the Campaign and against Tunbridge Wells Local Plan which focussed most of its development on its borders with Tonbridge & Malling resulting in a negative effect on our infrastructure and services.

TMBC Cllr Anderson expressed concerns as to the increased traffic it would cause in peak times.

Electric Charging Points – the programme to date had been very successful with electric charging points being installed around the Borough including carparks, shopping centres etc.

Rough Sleepers – Cllr Rogers was pleased to confirm there were no rough sleepers within the Borough and accommodation had been found for everyone over the colder days of winter.

The Leybourne Leisure Centre and café had been established under the Green building project.

Recycling – a majority of waste was now being recycled within the Borough as opposed to going to land fill.

Borough Council Meetings – these continued to be uploaded to You Tube and available to the public.

KCC Community Warden Report

As we begin to move back to normal activities it is good to see the groups re opening and people beginning to come back out into the Community. Please if you know anyone who may be feeling lonely or isolated make sure you mention to them that groups have now restarted. If you have residents who are still anxious about coming out please do let us know by contacting 07969584183.

As we continue to work within the Hadlow Village our focus this year will be to create a Dementia Friendly Community, where people who are living with Dementia and their families/carers can feel safe and supported with the knowledge that there is a greater understanding of dementia within the local area.

In May during Dementia Action Month we hope to encourage all residents to 'Paint the Village Blue' to raise awareness of Dementia. People can support this by making Blue Door wreaths, planting Blue Flowers in their gardens, making and displaying Forget me nots in their windows. We will also be focussing on delivering more Dementia Awareness Sessions to Youth Groups and other groups in the village.

Please remember that if you have any concerns re Anti Social Behaviour or Crime report this directly to 101 or access the Kent Police Website and report it via the online reporting tool or the live chat function.

Lets hope for a Sunny and Safe few months where we can all begin to relax slightly more into normal daily life.

I am pleased to inform you that your new Warden is Diane Wakeling who is currently available via her e-mail Diane.wakeling@kent.gov.uk or via 07969584183.

Diane will be taking over the role of permanent Warden as I have now moved to become Supervisor/Team Leader of the Tonbridge, Maidstone and Malling Team. I will still be around though as I am very much looking forward to supporting you all with your Dementia awareness journey.

Sandra Edmonds
Team Leader KCC Community Wardens – Tonbridge, Maidstone and Malling.

6/ Summary Reports from Parish Council

Cllr Collins confirmed there had been no major projects over the past year due to Covid but that the Voluntary Assistance Programme had worked well ensuring the vulnerable were not forgotten.

A Finance report was provided. (*see appendix a*)

7/ Reports from Village Organisations

Hadlow Cricket Club – As a member of the Cricket Club, Ross Bosworth-Davies introduced himself and explained that it was the Club's 275th anniversary this year and they hoped to celebrate this milestone with the Community and plans for several events were well underway. Like many Clubs over Covid, games were restricted and there was now a need to push for more people to take part. They were keen as a Club to encourage local adults and children to sign up.

In response to a member of the public he confirmed that ladies were more than welcome to participate in the game.

(*Full report appendix b*)

Queen's Jubilee – local events update

The Clerk confirmed that the updated details had been published in the February Parish Newsletter.

8/ Public time – matters of interest

- Bulky Waste – TMBC Cllr Montague had reported on this matter earlier in the meeting.

- Climate Change – A formal working group was to be established through the Parish Council with both members of Council and residents joining together to work on lowering the Council’s carbon footprint and encouraging the community as a whole to reduce their footprint. As a starting point the Council had changed all its lights in the Hy-Arts Centre, carparks and Old School to LED lighting. Council are now using a Carbon Footprint calculator to monitor progress.
- Bus service reductions – Concerns acknowledged regarding possible reduction in service of #7 & #77 and possible loss of the #208. The Chair confirmed Council were aware that the subsidies would be reduced and that some routes may only run-in peak times but supported all three services noting that reducing public transport went against KCC’s aims to be carbon neutral. He encouraged everyone to complete the bus public consultation & #208 petition available at the Parish Office.
- Local Parking – Parking within the village remained a problem with people parking on pavements making it impossible at times for pedestrians and Motability scooters, prams etc to pass. The police were doing their best to curb this and were putting polite notices on vehicles illegally parked. In response to a resident’s request to therefore park in the Old School Hall Carpark, the Chair re-confirmed that this was not possible as the carpark remained private and for the use of medical centre, Old School Hall and library. It was not feasible to allocate bays to individuals.
- Commercial House development – Parish Council Chair of Planning & Environment responded to a resident’s concern about the current building works on the site. Any concerns should be addressed directly to the TMBC Planning Enforcement department as the Parish Council had no power to act on such matters but would continue to monitor the position.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 19.30

Signed..... Date.....

Appendices

Reports:

- a/ Hadlow Parish Council Finance & General Purposes Committee
- b/ KCC Community Wardens
- c/ Hadlow Cricket Club
- d/ Golden Green Association
- e/ Hadlow Bowls Club
- f/ Hadlow WI

(Appendix a.)

Finance Report, Hadlow Parish Council 2021/22

Despite this still being a challenging year due to the Coronavirus pandemic our income has been sufficient to meet the budget. Thanks to our diligent administration team grants have been sourced and expenses have been controlled. The 2022/2023 Budget has meant that the Precept had only to be increased by a very small amount (band D 81.20).

Not many projects have been embarked on this year but maintenance of our buildings, play areas and fields has been undertaken to keep them safe and up to standard.

A defibrillator has been installed in the phone box at the centre of the village for public use. Money was kindly donated by Hadlow Tower Steward Association to cover purchase of the equipment, but it will be maintained by the Council.

It was agreed to set up working party to assess ways of reducing the village's carbon footprint. To this end the Council has already replaced, where possible, it's lights with lower power LED lights. When the council vehicles need replacing electric ones will be looked at. We are still waiting for KCC to approve installation of two charging points in the Council car park. It is hoped that other ways of reducing climate change can be found.

During the storms this month emergency help was provided by the Council. Dangerous trees were removed and others assessed throughout the village. Unfortunately, the allotments had to be temporarily closed for safety reasons. Villagers also responded and ensured that vulnerable people were looked after.

Plans for a celebration of the Queen's Jubilee in June are well advanced with the Council providing funds for ancillary expenses. All Parishioners are welcome to join in the festivities.

Lesley Bright
Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee

(Appendix b.)

Hadlow Cricket Club Report

Cricket has been played at Hadlow since at least 1747. We say at least because in the first historical record of any cricket fixtures Hadlow is involved in, against Dartford in July 1747, Hadlow is described as a "famous parish for cricket," which suggests that cricket had been played for some time before 1747, in and around Hadlow. Either way, the fact that Hadlow is first recorded then, makes Hadlow CC one of the oldest cricket clubs in the world. To put that into context, the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club), the club that wrote and guarded the laws of cricket, and owner of Lord's Cricket Ground seen the world over as the "Spiritual Home of Cricket" was founded a full forty years later in 1787. This makes Hadlow CC one of the most historically significant cricket clubs in the world. It also means that 2022 is the 275th Anniversary of Hadlow Cricket Club, and we intend to mark that anniversary with a variety of events.

The modern club was first mentioned in 1819 and the present ground is located off Common Road, to the north of the village. The pavilion dates from 1864 and cost £42.10s to build.

We field two teams in the Kent County Village League, with league fixtures home and away every Saturday from early May to early September. We also field a Sunday friendly XI with fixtures most weeks, mostly at home throughout the summer.

On the playing front neither League team has seen much success in the past few years. The 1st XI has seen two relegations in two years and are now playing in KCVL Division 4. The 2nd XI plays in Division 7 and has not yet finished higher than mid table. Fortunately the Sunday team tends to win more often than it loses!

Despite our relative lack of success on the playing field we have a core group of players who have committed to the club for a number of years. We are a sociable and friendly group and make use of our pavilion facilities and onsite bar to hold social events after games. We are in a strong financial position (currently), although not so healthy that a financial emergency, such as requiring a new roller for the pitch, couldn't bankrupt the club, and if player numbers were to decline further our income would be impacted in the long term.

Like everyone else, the club was impacted by Covid 19, and the 2020 season could not be played in full. Despite the pandemic, fixtures were still played from mid July 2020 onwards, with certain regulations on social distancing and sanitation allowing us to play on. The pandemic has impacted on playing numbers, with people who had played for the club who lived further afield now unable to come as regularly or even at all. We regularly have players come down from London, and even as far away as the Highlands to play for the club.

All cricket clubs in the country say the same thing when it comes to playing numbers; they are on the decline. There are plenty of reasons for this which I won't elaborate on now, but one of them is that clubs are not a part of their local community enough.

Hadlow is unfortunately a classic example of this. Last season the club fielded only 2 players from the village, out of 51 different people who played in at least one fixture. One of our aims is to change that. We would like to see more Hadlow residents playing for the club, and we hope that reaching out and introducing ourselves and informing you of some of the plans we have for this, our 275th Anniversary year.

Our main plan is to run an event on Saturday 9th July at Hadlow Cricket Club on Common Road. We are still in the planning stages of this event but our intention is to invite the local community to an all day event with cricket coaching and fun games for young children and families to engage with during the day. We would also like to invite local people and businesses to have stalls they can sell their goods. We would have family fun activities, caterers etc. In the evening we would have a BBQ and live music from two local bands. We would also have the on site bar open during the event as well. There is a precedent for such an event with the Hadlow ground used in the past for a Hadlow Fair. The success of those events was down to the club and the community engaging together and we would like to build on that again.

We also would like to raise the profile of the club, and aid visitors to the club in finding us, by installing a small Hadlow Cricket Club road sign on the A26 opposite the entrance to Common Road. This would, we believe, raise the profile of the club to passers by who may be unaware of our existence. If the Parish Council could support us in this we would be most grateful.

We also have planned a series of anniversary fixtures and events alongside our regular league and friendly season to celebrate our 275th anniversary and any engagement with the local community, press etc would be most welcomed as well.

We hope that by doing these events we will re engage the community with the club, hopefully attract more players to the club and make us more viable in the long term, so that in 25 years time Hadlow CC will be able to celebrate its 300th anniversary and not have folded, as so many other village cricket teams in this country have.

Ross Bosworth-Davies
On behalf of Hadlow Cricket Club
March 2022

(Appendix c.)

Golden Green Association

Report for Hadlow Annual Parish Meeting, March 2022

The Golden Green Association is the community association for the hamlet of Golden Green to which all residents are automatically members. Its twin objectives are to help provide funds for the upkeep and maintenance of the Golden Green Hall; and to promote a community spirit in the hamlet.

The Golden Green Association organises a number of events during normal years which in the past have included:

- Free Lunch for the pensioners of the hamlet
- Quiz nights
- The summer fete on Signpost Field
- A coach trip to Eastbourne
- Carol Service with mulled wine
- Barn Dance

The last year has been somewhat challenged of course. Nevertheless, we have managed to keep coffee mornings going through most of the year (thanks to the outdoor courtyard at the Bell). And we did manage to hold our fete in August when the pandemic was at a lower ebb. Our carol service morphed into an outside carol singalong. And now the hall is slowly becoming more active with line-dancing, bingo, art resuming – so not yet back to normal, but getting there!

The activities of the GGA and the village are documented in the monthly newssheet called the Hamlet which is now sent out by email to all residents.

An important source of funding for the GGA is the 250 club lottery which gives 36 prizes a year totalling £900 at a cost of £6 per ticket per year. As a result of this and monies raised at events like the fete, the GGA continues to be able to make significant donations to the Hall Management Charity for the upkeep and refurbishment of the Hall.

Anybody interested in the activities of the GGA should contact Alec Pelmore on 01732 850739.

(Appendix d.)

Hadlow Bowls Club

Like most other organisations it's been a difficult couple of years, but our membership has stayed with us and we have also recruited a few new members.

We felt it was important that we tried to complete our playing season as for some of our members bowls is their only exercise and social outing.

We played most of our fixtures with limited players against other clubs in accordance with the guidelines of the English Bowls Assn. We were unable to use the pavilion, so the match 'tea' was taken outside, luckily the weather was kind most of the time.

Our revenue was greatly depleted as we were unable to play as many matches or have any social fundraising events as usual. Our expenditure remained the same as the grass kept growing and had to be treated professionally.

The club would not have survived without the grants that came from Central Government to the local authority to support sports clubs. You don't often hear this, but I must thank the officers of Tonbridge & Malling Council for their help in acquiring the grants.

Our sister organisation, short mat bowls, has gone through similar restrictions as the outdoor club with matches against other clubs being cancelled and reduced revenue without any grant funding. Luckily, they have recruited some new members.

David Isted
Chairman Hadlow Bowls club.

(Appendix e.)

Wi Report for 2021/2022

Hadlow WI have like many groups had to adapt to the difficult and unpredictable times. The ideals of the WI, friendship, fellowship, care and compassion helped us to plan support for our members using a network of groups to support each other.

The beginning of the year was spent with Zoom meetings where we learnt about the Forbidden City, quizzed, and reviewed films. We blossomed with a garden party in June, it being wonderful to meet each other.

Our outdoor activities continue with a bowls taster and another social meeting involving food!

During the Autumn we have learnt about local strawberry growing, celebrated our birthday listening to a wonderful singer, Not King Cole and learnt about make up for the mature woman.

We contributed to Village events with the scarecrow trail, community litter pick, Village Hall and St. Mary's Craft Fairs.

Unfortunately, our usual Christmas meal was cancelled to try and ensure that our ladies wherever possible could spend time with their families and not get ill with Covid.

Since then, we have met to discuss the WI resolutions, had a beetle drive and had a talk about being as Green as possible.

We have been encouraged that several ladies have joined us during the year and at present we have a membership of 43.

We hope to continue to grow and that our members will enjoy the varied future programme of craft, cooking, Jubilee events, talks and social events.