

## CHARSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

Minutes of Meeting Held on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023

**Present:** Councillors Pedgrift (Chair), Moor (Vice Chair), Sharp, McArthur, Haird, Laird, Youngman and Pam Hembra (Parish Clerk)

**Attendees:** District Councillor  
County Councillor

**6 Members of the Public**

		Action
1.	<b>Update on the Parish Council's achievements and activity over the year and on what is being proposed for 2023/2024.</b>  Chairman's Report attached below	
2.	<b>To approve the Annual Parish Minutes of 17th May 2022</b>  The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.	
3.	<b>To Receive Reports from Other Organisations.</b> Village Hall AGM Report attached below  Charsfield Recreation Ground AGM Report attached below  <b>Charsfield CEVP School</b> Executive Head Teacher Mark Taylor gave us a report of the school. School doing well and, according to Ofsted, remains a good school and apparently feels like a family. They are looking to increase ties with the village. There are 31 pupils (target number is 70).	
4.	<b>Open Forum for the Public to Raise Questions</b> There were no questions from the public.	

## REPORTS

### Chair's Report

It hardly seems possible that a whole year has passed since my last report and I have some ongoing projects to update you on.

Our three new councillors have settled in well and completed most of their training and we are delighted to welcome Ed Youngman on to the team – especially as he lowers the average age of the Parish Council considerably.

We continue to participate in the Community Partnership which includes Martlesham, Kesgrave and Rushmere as our bid to change to the Framlingham Partnership was refused. However, we are looking forward to a closer liaison with Bealings, Debach, Clopton, and Grundisburgh in representing smaller villages within the Partnership.

Under this umbrella we also attend the Road Safety Forum and this year, along with Charsfield School, participated in national Road Safety Week.

The Clerk and I also attend the regional meetings of our advisory body, the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, to share information and guidance on new legislation within Suffolk. At the last meeting we met the new CEO of East Suffolk District Council and had an opportunity to raise matters of concern – we were not the only parish council present to highlight Planning as a major problem.

We are currently in dispute with SCC Highways regarding the provision of safety signage at the junction of The Street and B1078. We did offer to purchase a specially designed sign warning of the two roads joining the B1078 at the bend but this was rejected by SCC. They have agreed to refurbish the original bend sign and we are currently awaiting the effect of this before deciding on future negotiations.

Our celebrations for the Queen's Jubilee and Festival of Suffolk resulted in three days of activities thoroughly enjoyed by the village and this year for the King's Coronation we enjoyed cream teas in the church together with a performance by our new Charsfield Choir. A sincere thanks to all who helped stage those events.

The latest Planning Application for the Three Horseshoes was rejected by ESC in January as Environmental Health raised several reservations regarding the proximity of the proposed new dwellings to the pub. Our latest information is that the owner has been asked to submit new plans after further advice from ESC. We are closely monitoring any progress on an amended application.

The Queen's Green Canopy planting has been temporarily delayed due to a variety of circumstances but we are hoping to complete later in the year.

The telephone kiosk has moved on considerably, thanks in no small part to the generous efforts of Alan Ward. The next stage is to choose the Akenfield stills and description board for the display and the purchase of a small table for temporary exhibitions.

The Village Website is just about to launch – just a few minor tweaks needed. Watch this space.

Our village historian, John Fox, continues to do sterling work – look out for his pop up information boards in the village.

We have had some new initiatives in the village this year – Charsfield Seniors provided Christmas Lunch and entertained over 30 people in the village hall and have further events planned. The Parish Council will continue to support them as well as our usual grant towards the maintenance of the Recreation Ground.

Thanks to Peter Clitheroe Potsford Brook water quality is being continuously monitored in conjunction with the University of Suffolk and Save the Deben.

Unfortunately during the last year we have had cuts to our already inadequate bus service in that we lost the 12.29 to Ipswich and that there is no service to Woodbridge until 3.40pm with no return. The lack of passengers from Charsfield leaves us open to the danger of losing the service altogether.

For the first time we have received funds of £2,353 from East Suffolk Council under the Community Infrastructure Levy and one of the first actions your new council will take is to discuss how best this can be used for the benefit of the village.

I must mention the flash flooding on 9<sup>th</sup> May which most of us were involved in in some form or another. Thank you to all those people who turned out to help. The parish council will be looking at ways to ensure the more vulnerable properties in the village can be assisted as it looks like episodes like this are becoming more likely.

Our plans for 2023/24, apart from bringing current project to a satisfactory conclusion will concentrate on making Charsfield a safer place to live, including supporting a 20 is Plenty campaign for the whole of rural Suffolk. As always our main task will be to keep our village at the forefront of all developments within the County and prevent us being “swallowed up” by the bigger players.

Lastly thank you to all the councillors for their hard work and to Pam, our Clerk who as always has gone that extra mile to serve the village.

### **Charsfield Recreation Ground - Chair's Report 2022**

The area remains popular with people from the village and those visiting from other villages. Grass solutions no longer maintain the grass it is now Paddock Maintenance. The hot weather kept the grass cutting down this year.

We haven't had any major refurbishment work.

Park Properties are building our toilet block instead of paying the Community Infrastructure Levy that was due, which they found a loop hole not to pay. After lengthy negotiations they have also agreed to donate some money (£5,000) towards the maintenance of the tennis court and MUGA and £100 per house sold (£1400 -14 open market dwellings to be paid as each dwelling is sold). **This money is yet to be forthcoming.**

Last year's annual RoSPA inspection found one of the uprights to the junior swing set to be rotting so we had had to take it out of action. The quote from Kompan, who installed it, was expensive so Peter Holloway stepped in and got some metal legs made and he, Wayne, Alan and Alan's brother replaced the legs with metal ones.

### **Fundraisers and Grants**

The following events made £1996:-

Charsfest which was a great success

Phoenix Nights

Quiz

100 club subs took £1256

Tennis membership £720

Donations £451

## Progress

- Hedges have been trimmed as part of our ongoing maintenance.
- Ben has joined the committee. His team graduated the back of the children's play area and removed the rotten sleepers.
- As part of their DofE Tom has handed over to Izzie Holland in the village to do our health and safety risk assessments checks.
- One of the picnic tables in the BBQ area has been replaced with a plastic one

- **Future**

Work over the next 12 months and beyond includes:-

- Completion of the toilet block by Park Properties
- Set up a business plan looking at ongoing maintenance and succession planning
- Recruit more members on the committee- Jan, Jo, Sarah and John are stepping down. Thankyou for all of their hard work over the years. John will carry on with the tennis admin this year until he finds a replacement.
- Park properties to run a tarmac path from the new development to join with our tarmac path to ensure people with buggies and wheelchairs etc can access the facilities
- Develop the picnic area
- Removal of the path through the wild fun area and replace with grass cut paths.
- Put up explanatory boards in the wild fun area and we hope it will become a venue for organised wildlife activities for adults and children.
- Repair or replace the rotting uprights to the climbing frame or remove it
- Repair or replace the rotting uprights to the toddler swings.
- Review the future of the recreation committee with regard to coming under the auspices of the Parish Council (still ongoing)
- Continuation and review of our fundraising events
- Replace the missing bricks on the football wall
- Continue to gauge the demand for a petanque pitch and, if feasible, secure a grant

## Thank you

I would like to say thank you to:-

- All the committee members especially Jan for her hard work and dedication over the years and John Fox for his hard work with the tennis affairs.

- I would like to say thank you to Graham for his hard work as treasurer
- Thank you to Lucy & John Fox for cutting the hornbeam hedge and responding to emergencies on the rec.
- The Parish Council for their help financially
- The village for supporting our fundraising events
- Andy Wyatt, Mark Turner, Lucy Fox, Alan Ward, Peter Holloway and Wayne for their hard work as non committee members.

**Jo Wyatt** Chair, Charsfield Recreation Ground November 2022

## **Minutes of Charsfield Village Hall Meeting** **Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

Present: Pam Hembra (PJH), Chris Haird, Viviane Ward, Peter Holloway (PH), Garry Stratton, Trevor Boyd, Amanda Little, Martin Lyne

1. **Apologies for absence:**  
Pauline Llewellyn, Nikki Hind, Liz Holland
2. **Minutes of Meeting dated 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022** were agreed and signed as a correct record by Trevor Boyd
3. **Matters Arising –**
4. **Finance Update – full report as noted**

### **2022/2023**

Current Account	£2,241.53	
Savings Account	£38,518.58	
Cash held	£394.50	<b>£41,154.61</b>
Project Reserves	£34,100.00	
Income	£1,545.39	Income over expenditure =
Expenditure	£1,855.43	-£310.04

It was decided the £30 charge for a bar for local groups like the Church and the Recreation Group would be dropped and other organisations looked at when booking.

6. **Community Bar** - See report below
- Someone is needed to take bottles to the bottle bank after each pub night.
  - Wine wastage is a problem, we could just use the small bottles but not everyone likes these.
  - Should we encourage more non voting committee members as we sometimes have problems with a committee member being present when the bar is operating. Suggested Margaret contacts everyone on her list.

7. **Technology** – see report below
- Instructions to be placed behind the bar for the Smart Switch.
  - Refrigerator to be turned off when not in use

8. **Village Website**  
Meeting needed to take place with Jan, Garry and Pam

9. **Bookings**  
See below

10. **Hall Maintenance**
- Servicing of boiler – should be undertaken at the end of the month (slightly longer than usual as was not used much last year).
  - Gutters – front have been cleared, back to be done shortly.
  - Drains have been covered.
  - Shed roof has been covered at a cost of £184
  - Exterior of hall to be painted next year with black barn paint. Some of the shrubs against the hall need to be pruned back to enable this.

11. **Fund Raising – Future Planning**  
A charity dance has been organized for 19<sup>th</sup> November with a live band.

CADS hopefully taking place in March.

12. **Contracts**

1. Green bin licence renewed to September 2023.
2. Electricity costs per month in period May to August averaged around £65. Anticipated that with price cap change and increased use of lights etc. in winter months that costs will increase to £100 pcm and we should budget appropriately.

Because we are on a domestic tariff we will be in receipt of the Government £400 rebate which will be credited to our account for the next six months

3. In process of getting water transferred to VHC for payment.

Having filled out and submitted the 'new owner form', Wave initially stated that they did not have any record of supplying water to the village hall. ML will send photograph of meter.

**ML**

4. We still have quite a lot of oil and cannot order unless we can take 500 litres.

13. **Projects**

- PJH, TB and AL to look into new cookers. We need to confirm whether there should be a gap around the cookers. AL to contact her electrician and PJH will visit Hughes to see if they can help.

**AL/PJH**

14. **Any Other Business**

**Warm Rooms** – it was suggested we might open the bar on every Friday from Christmas to Easter to facilitate allowing people to come and play cards, games, table tennis etc and keep warm. To be put on to next Agenda.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

- Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023
- Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Report for Charsfield Village Hall AGM - 7th November 2022 - Trevor Boyd

I write this report as the interim unelected Chair, having joined the committee at the last AGM as its newest member. David Wolfe, having successfully steered the transition to a new committee, had completed his term as Chair.

I joined a well established team. It could now meet again properly rather than online. In November, the first major social activity since the pandemic was held. A welcome return of the Fat Band, with the hall filled to capacity for two nights, raising funds for charity and a fine tribute to James Holloway. The committee showed their appreciation to David with a thankyou presentation.

The committee has continued with developing and maintaining operational arrangements and facilities. The hall online booking system is proving a success. The hall website is in the process of being integrated with the village website. IT related facilities continue to be enhanced. Financial management and banking arrangements are operating efficiently. Miscellaneous repairs and improvements have been undertaken to the fabric of the hall. The bar has been running smoothly. A 'Risk Register' has been updated for annual review by the committee to ensure the hall is functioning safely and sustainably long term.

The role of Chair has been made easy by an enthusiastic supportive team. Thankyou to Chris for acting as Treasurer, to Amanda for overseeing the bar, to Garry for maintaining our various IT related facilities, to Viviane for managing hall hire bookings and publicity, to Peter for

organising social events and oversight of hall maintenance issues, to Martin for maintaining our various contracts, to Liz for special tasks, and to Pauline for her long term support. Also to Nikki for looking after the hall during the year. Thankyou to Clive for his past work for the bar. I am personally indebted to Pam, as Secretary, for keeping our meetings and processes running properly. We are all indebted to others providing additional support, including Margaret, with her team of volunteer bar staff, and Angela for taking care of the hall garden.

It is pleasing that the financial results are back on track coming out of the pandemic and showing an operating surplus. Hall hire has picked up again and we will continue to seek to attract hall hirers. The community bar provides a regular village meeting place and a revenue stream. We are grateful for the grant income received and will plan for its careful investment in hall improvement projects with long term community benefits. We look forward to maintaining and hopefully growing the use of the hall and of continuing to support village social activities.

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## Charsfield Village Hall Year End Accounts 2021/2022

In summary:	31/07/2022	Prior Year
<b>Income:</b>	<b>£12,048.65</b>	<b>£21,968.00</b>
<b>Expenditure:</b>	<b>£8,444.03</b>	<b>£7,004.09</b>
<b>Excess income for period:</b>	<b>£3,604.62</b>	<b>£14,963.91</b>
<b>Excess income less Covid Grants:</b>	<b>£937.62</b>	<b>- £3,744.09</b>
<b>Barclays Bank:</b>	<b>£41,070.15</b>	<b>£37,669.83</b>
<b>Petty Cash</b>	<b>£394.50</b>	<b>£190.20</b>
<b>Bar Stock</b>	<b>£740.65</b>	<b>£845.07</b>

2022 was a fully operational year albeit with a slow start as the Community emerged from Covid issues. Overall, the financial results were a great improvement on last year with a small operating surplus after the final Covid grant is discounted, however, it should be noted that no heating oil was purchased during the year and the water bill is still to be received, which would probably have resulted in an overall break-even, still a good result.

Hall hire has picked up well with several old regulars returning and some new hirers who took advantage of the discount packages we offered in the first half of the year, although usage is still below pre-pandemic levels. The Committee continue to improve the Hall infrastructure and to market the Hall to encourage hirers to make use of this valuable Village asset at all times of the day and week.

The Friday Night Community Bar which continues to provide a local village drinking establishment while the Pub remains closed, opened 30 times this year, interestingly the average evenings takings were down on last year. This, however, continues to provide a regular, easily accessed meeting place for the Community and also provides a healthy revenue stream for the Hall. With more regular openings this year the stock management became less of an issue and the bar profit has recovered to sustainable levels. The three fund raising events of the Fat Band, Phoenix and QPJ also contributed to bar takings and allowed us to share profit with various community causes.



It is very important to the Committee that the Village Hall remains both affordable and is regularly used by our Community. We will monitor closely and react to, the current rising cost of living and its impact on the number of hirers and also the cost of operating the Hall, especially the cost of utilities. We will continue to run Community bars on a regular basis and also invest in core projects which enhance the usage of the Hall. It is therefore likely that we will breakeven in 2023.

## Technical Report

### Stage Lighting

The Village Hall is served by a sophisticated stage lighting system, which has been used successfully for two performances during the year. They have also been tested for integration with the sound system, which works well. Two committee members are now familiar with the operation of the lights.

### Website

#### General

The new website is into its second year and has continued to run successfully, with no issues reported during the year.

#### Booking System

A website-based hall booking system has been implemented, which supports a simplified online booking process including online payment. Reports to date from potential clients, clients, and administrators indicate the new systems are working well.

### Data Management

Many Village Hall documents are stored electronically in secure Google Drive folders. There are no current operational issues, although there is an opportunity to make more use of the Google Drive for shared documents.

#### Wi-Fi and Data

The Wi-Fi and broadband have been reconfigured to improve the broadband service. This has enabled a more reliable service at no extra cost, for example the streaming of classes by users of the hall.

Performance continues to be monitored and any further improvement to the service would require investment in new technology.

#### Automations

Automations are in place that enable remote monitoring and control of heating and lighting. This year, the automation has been extended to the bar fridges and the sound system. While not always intuitive, these systems generally work well.

The smart switch controlling the outside lights has required replacement this year: initially due to the switch failing, and then because of a faulty replacement. No issues at the time of writing.

### Sound System

Following review by the committee in 2021, a simple two channel stereo sound amplifier was installed for the playing of music and use of microphones. Two new speakers were also installed to replace those on loan.

Low-cost options were selected, as it was expected that events requiring high quality sound, such as band performances and discos, would provide their own equipment.

Following discussions for an event this year, the system was changed to provide a more powerful amplifier and better quality speakers – both second hand. This amplifier has since failed and the original reinstalled. The better quality speakers have been retained. A Bluetooth speaker, bought as an interim measure, has continued to prove successful for use during Community Bar evenings.

Garry Stratton  
31 October 2022

## **Hiring and Marketing**

It has been an encouraging year for hall hire. Most of the regular hirers have returned including bowling, Cotton Club, WI, St Peter's Church, recreation ground and pilates. We have also had a few new hirers including a regular puppy and dog training class. Private hirers have been on the up with celebrations including a wedding and birthdays. It was great to see the Charsfield Flower Show return and for the hall to host a couple of music evenings with Phoenix and Jax & Co tribute band. The exhibition in the hall for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was also a great success

We have simplified the pricing and conditions of hall hire to make it

Thanks to all the hirers for using the hall and to everyone attending the different clubs and events.

**Viviane Ward**

## **Bar report 2022**

The community bar has been running every month this year and has been supported at various at different levels.

Thankfully without restrictions we have also seen functions coming back some of which had the bar open.

Unfortunately Clive had to step down so I took on the beer side as well. I changed the system slightly getting a bright beer which does not require tapping and is much easier to use. These are only for functions and we use the same beer but bottled for community bars.

Thanks to Viv for keeping me up to date with requirements from hirers.

Thanks to Margaret who is happy to continue to arrange our volunteers for next year. One issue that has come up is that she cannot always get a committee member to help out or even be in the building, on the evening.

We have managed to get the GP (profit) up to much better percentage 40 plus.

Last year's low number was due to wasted stock from pandemic. I've managed to keep stock at levels ok so not too much loss this year. There has been a wine loss probably around 4/5 bottles in total due to wastage from opened bottles.

Margaret has also said people don't want/not able to take the bottles after the bar so is it possible to get a person to volunteer to do this the day after the bar?

Amanda.

DRAFT