

BRININGHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 13th May 2024, at Briningham Village Hall at 7pm.

This meeting was recorded

Present: Chair Cllr Helena Gregory (Chair of the Parish Council), Parish Clerk – Kerry Harris
9 Residents and electors, NCC Cllr Steffan Aquarone

Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. The Parish Meeting is an opportunity for residents and electors in Briningham to discuss any matters relating to the local community. Any local organisations are invited to send a representative along to the meeting to give an update for the previous year and plans for the year to come.

Approve minutes of the meeting held on May 25th 2023

These were approved as a true record of the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting and signed by the Chair.

Annual Report from the Chair of the Parish Council

I am immensely proud of this Parish Council and the work it has embraced and accomplished over the last year. It has to be said that none of this would have been achieved so seamlessly without the wisdom and guidance of our, now permanent, clerk – Mrs Harris. Thank you so very much, Kerry, for all your hard work.

As anticipated, Councillors have taken some of the workload from the Clerk and this has enabled us to engage Mrs Harris for 2½ hours per week – saving the Parish significant expenditure.

With our Clerk's guidance we have carried out all outstanding reviews of policies and they have been brought into line with current recommendations. We have been strict with our expenditure and, hopefully, by the end of the next Financial Year we will be maintaining our general reserve at the recommended level. This has been helped by increased income on allotment rentals, membership savings and, more recently, a far more competitive insurance quote.

Around the Parish there have been several improvements:

The Village Bench has been refurbished and moved from its previous location to the Village Hall – in line with the request from the resident on whose land it was previously sited.

The Clothing Bank and Paper Bank, which were generating no income for the Parish and which had begun to attract litter, have been removed.

The Parish Council and Village Noticeboards have been replaced at no expense to the Parish.

At our request, the defaced speed limit signs have been cleaned by the Highways Agency – after a fashion!

And the missing milestone, whilst not yet returned, is currently undergoing restoration. The bill for this work and for its reinstatement will be met by the County Council.

Our plans for an Allotment Working Party have been superseded by our new responsibilities under the Environment Act 2021 -namely to enhance and conserve biodiversity within our Parish. An Open Morning was held on 2nd December last year. This was well attended, our plans were well received, and there was a healthy and constructive sharing of information. Differing comments were also received by email.

We have already carried out a 'Spring' appraisal of varieties of plants growing on our roadside verges and on the War Memorial Field. This will become an ongoing catalogue, updated throughout the year. We have also started to introduce other native species to ascertain what may thrive and where to benefit wildlife.

I'd like to say thank you again to our Clerk, the Councillors and the residents who have supported us so warmly.

St Maurice, Briningham - Churchwarden's Report for 2023 by Sylvia Took,

We are blessed to have the Revd Dr Trudie Morris as Priest-in-Charge of our Benefice. St Maurice has one service on the first Sunday of each month, alternating between Holy Communion and Morning Worship which are taken by Trudie and Carol. The Services are well received by our congregation, which averages 15 plus 3 young children. Refreshments are always enjoyed on these occasions.

Our regular PCC meetings are now jointly held with Briston and Thornage, which we feel works well.

Church events:

25th February – Service of Holy Baptism for Herbert Julian Crossley (Herbie)

1st March - Geraldine Bird, a long time resident of Briningham who played an active role in the Church was buried in Briningham Church

8th May – Bluebell Walk in the woods at Belle Vue Tower

11th June – Ralph Jackson, a member of the Congregation was confirmed at All Saints Briston by Rt Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich

27th August – the annual Village Garden Party, in aid of Briningham Church funds was held in the grounds of Briningham House, home to the Crossley Family. We thank them hugely for their kind, warm and generous hospitality. This joyous occasion was slightly prematurely ended by a downpour. Nevertheless £1,741.81 was raised for the Parish Share.

1st October – Harvest Service followed by refreshments. Many people had decorated the Church and tidied the gravestones and churchyard. Coffee and cake kept everyone energised. Thanks to everyone involved.

9th November – 8th Quinquennial Inspection of the Church

3rd December – Advent Service, 3pm. There was a congregation of 36 adults and 13 children, 7 readings by Briningham villagers and children also took part. Mulled wine & mince pies gave a good feeling to the start of Advent.

19th December – Carol Singing at 5pm in our candlelit Church. Many people came, including those who do not often come to church. Food and drink were enjoyed at this wonderful Christmas event. Many thanks to Trudie and to Jeremy, our special organist.

Thanks to Jeremy for being our amazing organist at every service in 2023. The Church would like to thank everyone on the flower rota for providing flowers and caring for the Church throughout the year.

In 2023 the grass in the Churchyard was allowed to grow longer than previously. With the help of volunteers it was cut back, cleared and tidied in the Autumn. Thanks to all involved.

Karen Sidall's Report

We aim to maintain and keep in order the fabric and cleanliness of the interior of St Maurice and to carry out any further urgent repairs to the fabric of the Church. Regular checks to the outside of the Church are to continue, with particular attention being given to clearing the gullies to prevent any rainwater damage.

It is hoped that the maintenance of the graves, grass and borders of the churchyard will continue to be undertaken by the kind volunteers from the congregation of St Maurice and residents of Briningham and Burgh Stubbs. The aim is to encourage wild areas to flourish bringing in more diversity of wildlife and fauna, whilst still preserving the integrity of the graveyard. This has begun with the planting of some kindly donated bulbs and biennials.

At St Maurice the aim is always to provide a warm welcome and to try to grow our church community. There is always a need to raise funds and we try to ensure this involves the whole village and indeed the wider Benefice, with a big element of fun for everyone, if possible.

The Easter Fayre was a huge success, thanks to all the volunteers who made it possible and it was a busy, convivial day enjoyed by many.

There is to be another new fundraising event at Stody Lodge Gardens on 24th May where, in conjunction with St Andrews, Brinton, we hope to provide some delicious refreshments for the visitors.

It is hoped that the Village Garden Party will take place again in August, as this continues to be very popular and a major fundraiser for the Church.

Report from Anglian Water by Cllr Chris Rix

Due to the significant rainfall this year leading to a huge amount of water, a S101A is to be initiated with Anglian Water.

At the end of April an Anglian Water Representative spoke to 6 residents and said the situation in the village supported the application. They are now waiting for his report.

Current applications are being slotted into the 2032 – 35 timeslot but the AW Rep suggested their situation was serious and mains drainage may be initiated sooner.

Residents Forum

Speeding in the Parish

Mr Cook wanted to know if Cllr Aquarone would be able to help with funding monitoring of the Speed Limit. He wanted the topic brought back onto the Parish Council agenda.

Mr Rushworth wanted to know if the speed limit could be reduced outside his property as it was set at the National limit (60mph)

Residents also stated that vehicles often drove through the village at 60mph and concern was expressed about children riding bikes and pedestrians crossing the main road. An increasing issue was that Electric vehicles had no noise so gave no warning of approach.

NCC Cllr Steffan Aquarone said that this was the biggest issue affecting many villages. The main solution is to change driver’s behaviour – if they thought there might be a risk of being caught speeding they were less likely to do so – therefore the best solution was enforcement. Cllr Aquarone said that, as the Police & Crime Commissioner has changed after the recent election she has as yet no track record. However, under the previous regime there had been an increase in the number of officers trained to combat speeding and motorbikes were to be deployed as a mobile deterrent.

He also suggested that putting up additional speed signs did not tend to act as a deterrent, rather a target for some drivers to drive faster than that.

Cllr Aquarone said that NCC Highways team do a remarkable job with limited resources. They have a capital projects budget but will prioritise areas with a higher accident risk He suggested that Briningham should start with getting evidence which could be put in front of the police – and Briningham already have a lot of evidence from when they previously looked at speeding in 2020.

Cllr Aquarone said that any work on the roads was expensive, but it is unlikely that it would be possible to change the speed limit out to the Parish Boundary – drivers will not expect the speed in such a rural area so will not conform.

Where there are issues, residents need to identify areas where mobile enforcement could be stationed to monitor vehicles.

The Parish also needs to decide if they have the appetite to fund Highways issues.

Allotment Survey

Mr Cook questioned the need and cost of a survey of the Allotments. He believes it is a lot of money to spend.

The Chair said that this is to be discussed in the Parish Council Meeting which follows the Annual Parish Meeting and explained that currently the Parish do not possess accurate measurements of the land. The survey will provide the Council with full plans and accurate measurements for the allotments and for those other areas of land owned by the Council.

Close meeting

The Chair confirmed with members of the public that all business had been concluded and the meeting closed at 7.33pm

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Date