

Gooderstone Parish Meeting
held at St George's Church, Gooderstone, 7pm on Monday 16th May 2022

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: parish councillors Judy Chandler (in the Chair); Ann Melhuish; Martin Belton; Carl Emson; Libby Coleman; Vince Martin. Residents: 25. Non-resident guests: Judith Taylor, parish council clerk (taking minutes).

Judy Chandler, chairing the meeting, welcomed everyone, and announced the Emergency Procedure.

Minutes of the last Annual Meeting, 24th May 2021

The Minutes were approved.

Community Police Liaison Officer

PC Paula Gilluley was unable to attend, but it was noted that her contact details are posted on the noticeboard.

The Parish Council, achievements and plans for the year (Carl Emson, parish councillor)

Make up of the council. The parish council has welcomed new parishioners to the council. Diversity is good with 4 females and 3 males each with varying tenure in the village. Council meetings have been well attended and supported by our clerk. The parish councillors are also the trustees of the Former Highways Surveyors Land charity which will report separately. Previous parishioner meetings have resulted in good feedback from the public which has been followed up in council business.

Play Area. The new play area has been installed and commissioned. There is ongoing discussion with the vendors on the quality of finish on the disabled swing. New goal nets have been put onto the goals. Recently we have had some damage and rubbish in this area if you see anyone please do not hesitate to report it. The playing fields. Hedge cutting has been performed as a start to better management of the perimeter and its function as a wildlife corridor. A new contract has been signed with CGM to provide grounds maintenance. A new pathway had been laid that gives better access to the play area from Elm place.

The shelter. A shelter built of green oak has been erected on a new concrete base to provide shelter from the elements for parents collecting children from the school. The wood is aging and there is ongoing monitoring to manage any sharp edges that may naturally arise. The roof has been finished in a style compatible with the school buildings.

Highways. The parish council has been in touch with highways and has had major work done on the verges of Clarke's Lane to reduce the explosion of Himalayan Balsam. There are also visible marks on the Street indicating that highways have noted the repairs needed to our roads. It should be remembered that we are a low priority as the traffic flow is small.

Flood alleviation. The council has worked with Chris Palmer to manage the flood points in the village with great success. The culverts have been cleared and we have seen significant reduction in flooding at the East End. At the Chalk Row intersection, we have had flooding once the culvert if itself inundated. We continue to monitor the situation.

Plans in the short term

Increased provision of a dog waste bins has been approved in Chalk Row and re-siting of one in Elm Place

A grant has been received from the Gooderstone Fen charity to enable the council to purchase and locate some planters at entrances to the village. A local engineering company is providing us with quotes but with the ever-increasing costs we are still in the process of obtaining the best options

A SAM2 Unit has been purchased and will be installed ASAP hopefully this will help with the speeding in the village

The council is about to start a trial newsletter

St George's Church, upcoming events and plans (Rev. Linda Lubbe)

Rev. Lubbe reminded residents that many months back the lead had been stolen from the church roof. A combination of factors, including the required monitoring of bats, had delayed the work of replacing the roof, but it was now finished thanks to a grant from English Heritage. Over the coming months there are two weddings booked at the church, and during the Jubilee weekend there will be an exhibition of Royal Memorabilia. The parish council had been using the church for selected meetings, which is encouraged by the church, which is keen to be of service to the community. The clock will hopefully soon be working again; thanks to Lucy Mason Closs and the Fen Charity for this. The usual contact with Gooderstone School had been suspended by Covid, but the Easter Egg hunt was able to be held.

The Swan, accomplishments and plans for the next year (Libby Coleman)

There had been lots of changes in the 13 years since Libby took over The Swan.

There was a new pergola outside, the garden has been remodelled, the interior completely redecorated. The pub caters for all family occasions and although food is not served on a regular basis, there are frequent 'specials' nights, including the popular fish'n'chip night. There are musicians' nights and community coffee mornings to which everyone is welcome, as well as the new Craft and Singing groups. Suggestions as to new ventures are always very welcome. Libby has now signed a lease for a further 12 years.

The Craft and Singing Groups, based at The Swan (Fay ?)

The Singing Group meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, 7pm to 9pm. The Group is purely for fun, and raises money for charity. There is Carol singing, both around the village and for a Carols evening at the pub where locals can join in. For the Jubilee there will be a pub songs evening, open to all.

The Craft Group meets every other Thursday from 10am to 12noon, and all are welcome with gentlemen especially encouraged to join. Crafts vary depending on who is attending; current projects are crafting Jubilee wreaths, and Jubilee brooches, but people can bring any craft along.

The Fen Charity (Ann Melhuish, Trustee)

The Fen Charity is responsible for 51 acres of land, partly within Foulden Common, which has SSSI status, and a spring arising within and running through it and ultimately out to the Wissey river. The charity's main income is from DEFRA under its payments for land management. The land is fenced and is grazed carefully and seasonally by cattle and sheep, the latter mainly to control ragwort. The land was

originally awarded to the parish of Gooderstone in 1805, with the aim of helping to maintain the poor of the village. The charity has been revitalised in recent years, with new legal governance which has allowed it to expand its aims. This year, the charity has funded new planters at the entrances to the village, and will be funding a new clock and bells at the church.

The Former Highways Surveyor's Land Charity (Vince Martin, Chair)

Cllr Martin gave a brief history of the Charity, which comprises three pieces of land. The parish council is Trustee, and parish councillors are therefore automatically trustees. At the last parish meeting, there was some discussion about looking at options for the future of the land. The decision had been made, for various reasons, to retain the land within the charity and held on behalf of the community. There are tenants on two pieces of the land; The Chalk Pit opposite the Water Gardens will have bee hives on it; the land on Chalk Row Lane is agricultural. The Pit at the end of Elm Lane, having been used for decades as a rubbish tip, is not suitable for any sort of cultivation, so the intention is to re-wild and leave it as a wildlife haven and corridor. The Pit is dangerous for anyone accessing it; there is no right of way over the land and the Trustees urge residents not to trespass. The cost of any accident could land on the taxpayers of Gooderstone.

The Gooderstone Cricket Club (presented on its behalf by Martin Belton)

The Club is just starting to recover from the negative effects of Covid. They lost ten players, and so had to abandon the second team. Currently the team is in Level 3 of the Norfolk league; so far this season there are two games lost and one won. Finances had been reduced because there was no income during Covid lockdowns, so the project to build a new pavilion has had to be shelved until the finances are in a better state.

Gooderstone Water Gardens and Café (presented on their behalf by Vince Martin)

Mr Martin gave a brief history of how the Water Gardens came to be; established by a farmer, Billy Knights, on land which was deemed too wet for cultivation. The gardens had fallen into disrepair when the current owner, Coral Hoyos, inherited them in 20001. There is an abundance of wildlife, dogs are allowed into the gardens, and there are reduced rates for Gooderstone residents. During the summer months the Café is open, selling refreshments, and also local arts and crafts. There will be a Jubilee celebration this year.

The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (report provided by Kate Faro Wood and presented by Martin Belton)

The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is the largest online crime prevention community organisation in the UK. There are 2.3million members of the charity. In Gooderstone there are currently 35 members, who receive email alerts from Police Connect and Alert, and regular updates from the police's Operation Randall, which targets rural crime. More members are welcome.

Any other business as raised by residents

A resident mentioned the poor state of the bench adjacent the new shelter at the school. Judy Chandler reported she had been investigating the provision of a mobile pressure washer to clean it, and she was also about to clean the village sign.

Vince Martin mentioned the new newsletter, and welcomed any contributions.

There was a query about the drove, which was impassable in winter. Ann Melhuish noted that it had recently been graded by the landowner.

A request was made that the report on the condition of the church bells be circulated. Judy Chandler agreed to obtain a copy.

The Cockley Cley estate wished to have the wall along from the Water Gardens repaired and had approached the parish council for suggestions as to who could do that.

It was confirmed that the new SAM2 unit (speed monitoring) would be moved on a regular basis around the village.

Date of next meeting

Monday 21st November 2022

The meeting closed at 7.50pm