

Felsham

Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 17th May 2022 7.00pm Felsham and Gedding Village Hall

Present: 4 Members of the Public; Cllr Garrod – Chairman; County & District Cllr Otton;
Cllrs Kearney, Simpson & Sparkes; Isabelle Reece – Parish Clerk

Apologies: Mr Cockell (Felsham Playing Field), Mr Plumpton (Royal British Legion), Cllr Nunn

1 Cllr Garrod welcomed everyone to the meeting

2 Apologies were received from Mr Cockell, Mr Plumpton and Cllr Nunn

3 The Minutes of last years meeting, held on 18th May 2021 were received and approved

4 District & County Councillor Penny Otton gave her report, which is attached to these minutes

5 Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Simon Garrod gave his report, which is attached

Royal British Legion Felsham & Gedding Branch Secretary Mr Norman Plumpton's report was read out by the Parish Clerk & is attached

Mr Andrew Conquest, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee gave his report, which is attached

Mrs Patricia Wilson, Felsham Charity Trustees, gave her report, which is attached

Mr James Morgan, Felsham Community Stores & Post Office, gave his report, which is attached

Felsham Playing Field Chairman, Philip Cockell's report was read out by the Parish Clerk, and is attached

Mrs Patricia Wilson, Chairman of the Village News, gave her report, which is attached

6 No further reports were received

7 There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting

Signed _____ (Chairman) Dated _____

THE REPORTS FOLLOW ON THE NEXT PAGE

Councillor: Penny Otton

Annual Parish Report – May 2022

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

This year has continued to be “dogged” by COVID which is even now affecting many schools. However, I’m sure we all agree the war in Ukraine has left us all feeling shocked and helpless. I know many people are now registering to house refugees and I have sent all my parishes the current information we have on how Suffolk will respond, and what is required to house them. A motion to council condemning Russia, action was agreed unanimously.

MOTIONS TO COUNCIL; over the past year we are pleased to get full support to make 20mph enforceable, support local energy companies, and against violence against women and girls.

I am doing one on 19th about sewerage discharge into our rivers.

PETITION ON HIGHWAYS CONTRACT; my group have started a petition to bring the highways contract back in house.

Biodiversity Recommendations to Enhance

Suffolk County Council will be doing more for the county’s natural environment, as it confirmed plans to enhance the biodiversity of at least 30% of its land by 2030. Examples include planting more hedgerows, improving highway trees, and developing nature-based flood management solutions.

Budget Meeting: GLI Amendments Declined

Suffolk County Council voted in their budget for 2022-23. and the Conservative’s did not take the maximum social care precept to fund adult care allowed by Government. Suffolk GLI Group highlighted the need to invest more in adult social care,

Carbon Budget

The first Carbon Budget for Suffolk The Carbon Budget is aimed to help us understand the level of emissions the Council are responsible for and helps to achieve the Council’s ambition of being carbon-neutral by 2030.

Report into SEND Provision: Review & Recommendations

Suffolk County Council commissioned an independent review into Special Educational Needs and Disability provision. The report found severe failings in the delivery of Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans for children.

Bus Back Better: Initiative from the Department for Transport (DfT)

The Bus Back Better scheme was launched this year, aimed at updating, expanding, and improving our bus services in Great Britain. The Cabinet at Suffolk County Council approved a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) submitted to Government, while Suffolk County Council which was unsuccessful.: I have asked if a KATCH response service can be set up in this area.

New Investment in Drainage and Footway Infrastructure

The Cabinet approved £10m to replace broken pipes and new installations, as well as an additional £10m to increase the maintenance of selected footways in Suffolk.

MIDSUFFOLK

THE ORCHARD; I have met with a housing officer to see if we can do something about parking at the Orchard. Unfortunately, he has now left so I need to get that resurrected.

PLANNING AT SIX BELLS SITE; I, Hayley and Nick attended the planning committee meetings and were pleased to get a site visit and then a refusal at the planning meeting. This has now gone to appeal.

MIDSUFFOLK LOCALITY FUND. I was please to support the playing field with cost of solar lights and work on the car park. I agreed £2,900 for your new village sign.

I did not agree to the rise in council house rents and there was a problem with the letters to tenants, hopefully this is now resolved.

ENERGY GRANT; I have asked mid Suffolk to make sure all those who do not pay by direct debit get their £150.

GLIDING CLUB; the group meet regularly and have agreed new wording for an amendment for their planning permission.

Felsham Parish Council

Chairman Cllr Simon Garrod introduced Members of the Council to the Annual Parish Meeting and reported that the Parish Council has resumed face-to-face meetings following the official ending of the COVID Pandemic.

He voiced thanks to the outgoing Clerk, Mark Bloomfield, for all his advice and guidance during his time with Felsham, sadly shortened by Mr Bloomfield's severe ill-health; and welcomed the recently appointed new Clerk, Isabelle Reece.

He also thanked: Suffolk County and Mid Suffolk District Councillor, Penny Otton, for all the work she does for the Parish and for the funding she has provided for local projects; as well as Mr Andrew Conquest for performing the Council's Internal Audit, required by statute and for agreeing to do the coming year's Audit.

The Council hopes that the existing vacancy will soon be filled by co-option; a parishioner having expressed interest.

The Parish Council sets the Precept, its principal source of income to meet its spending requirements: such as, Insurance, Street Lighting, dog & litter bin emptying, support for village organizations; and the Parish Clerk. For the coming year the Precept remains unchanged at £6946.00. Other sources of income are from the County & District Councillor's own budgets and donations towards upkeep of the Village from The Felsham Charity and the Council can apply for funding from various bodies like the Heritage Lottery Fund. Parish Councils receive no income from central government. An enormous amount of work in the village happens thanks to large numbers of volunteers, which reduces cost significantly.

The Planning Application Appeal to develop the land behind the Six Bells Public House was rejected: but another Appeal is anticipated. A possible site for local housing needs has been identified and the Mid Suffolk Community Housing Officer will be informed.

The VAS (Vehicle Activated) speed Sign, funded by Cllr Otton's Locality Budget, is up and running. Cllr Otton's Locality Budget has also provided the funding for the Village Sign: the next stage is to finalize a suitable design for the base.



FELSHAM & GEDDING BRANCH.

Date; 2nd May 2022.

Thank you very much for your invitation to attend and report our Branch activities to your Annual Parish Meeting 2022.

As with all other organisations and individuals, our activities have been somewhat restricted over the past two years and, along with everyone else, we look forward to a less regulated future. In this respect, I am pleased to report that we have been welcomed by our new hosts in the Six Bells and our monthly Branch meetings have resumed accordingly.

Our Branch President, George Emmett celebrated his 101st birthday back in January and, although Covid regulations have largely been lifted, we have not been allowed to visit his care home, owing to Covid casualties within the home. Hopefully, we will be in a position to visit him soon.

2021 was a year of celebration as we remembered 100 years since the formation of the Royal British Legion and the thousands of serving and ex serving members of Her Majesty's forces who have been assisted over those years. We hope to be here to continue our charity work for as long as is necessary. Our help and assistance is as much in demand today as it was back in 1921.

Our Branch Standard, with its adorning 75 year pennant attached, has been out in force over the past few months attending funerals and parades to commemorate VE and VJ Day memorials and also the C Group Festival of Remembrance held at the APEX theatre in Bury St. Edmunds. I and one other Member of our Branch are active on the sub Committee of the Festival of Remembrance, which annually raises around £3,500 towards the Poppy Appeal.

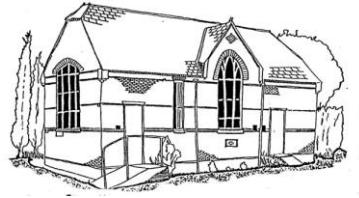
Our Branch Standard will also be in attendance at the Suffolk Show on 1st June, where we will be joining many other Royal British Legion and association Standards, as part of the Suffolk Pageant designed to commemorate our Patron, Her Majesty the Queen, in celebration of her Platinum Jubilee.

I would also wish to thank the Parishioners of Felsham & Gedding for their sterling efforts to raise the wonderful sum of £929-23 towards the 2021 Poppy Appeal. This is a significant amount and contributes to the County total that as of the 9th April stood at £629,620-36. Thank you.

My thanks also go to everybody within the village who assist us in our vital work which we hope may continue for another 100 years or at least, as long as we are needed.

My invitation extends to anybody who would like to join us in achieving this remarkable milestone and, as I have said before, Membership is NOT restricted to Members or ex Members of Her Majesty's Forces. Anybody is welcome.

Kind regards,
Norman Plumpton Eng.Tech:MSOE:MIRTE.
Branch Secretary,
Felsham & Gedding Royal British Legion.



FELSHAM AND GEDDING VILLAGE HALL

Report for the Parish meeting to be held on Tuesday 17th May 2022 in the Village Hall

MANAGEMENT

The Committee which run the hall has been well served in the year by:

David Simpson (Vice Chair) Jo Hutchings who keeps us all in order as secretary. Tricia Wilson, Mark Crawford, Brian Francis, Brian Deards, Jamie French, Gordon Silver, and Mary Carter.

As you will know we lost David Williams a stalwart in the Hall's management and development over the years who will be sorely missed.

Ken Sparkes has had to step down from his caretaker role. I am very grateful to Ken for his support over recent years. Fortunately we have found an admirable replacement in Victoria Dillon and her husband Paul who helpfully live next door to the Hall.

THE HALL'S USE

During the last year use has been growing as we come out of the pandemic. Carpet bowls and table tennis take place on alternate Wednesdays and film nights have returned monthly as well as a monthly whist group. Those activities are part of the social club for which members now pay £15 per annum.

The rock band rehearses weekly and provides free entertainment at events in the Hall. Continuing the musical theme an Octet of 12 use the hall weekly to rehearse.

The churches, Parish Council and Gedding meeting, The Playing Field Committee, and Village Friends are all community organisations which use the hall as well as a new women's group – an alternative to the disbanded WI.

Of course, the hall is available for hire for parties, wedding receptions and other events. This year has seen it used for a 'flog it' style day with a local firm of auctioneers.

FUND RAISING

We have over the last 12 months been able to start our fundraising activities both for the hall's upkeep and the proposed development.

In September we held a fundraising weekend with a band night, courtesy of the 12th Night Band, an art and craft event and a scarecrow competition which together raised £1190. In November FAGENDS was able to come out in force with a fantastic pantomime which raised over £2800. A table sale in March raised about £330, a golf day in April (at Flempton Golf Club) raised £1200 and a quiz night last week raised over £1000.

THE HALL DEVELOPMENT

The Hall's well-being is essential to the running of this marvellous facility. Its maintenance and development has to be a key focus. Over the years lots of improvements have been made and we are now embarking on fundraising to not only improve the current facilities but – with the proposed

extension - accommodate the community shop and a café to double as a meeting room facility and further storage facilities with the aim of creating more of a community hub.

Our first target is to raise about £400k for the extension (based on a budget estimate provided by professionals). These funds will need to be raised from a combination of village donations from the community, fundraising events and grants. The fundraising has begun and we will be reaching out to the community for support offering a series of brick certificates in return for loans and donations. The formal proposal is currently being worked on and will be released soon. The plans for the development are available.

HALL FINANCES

Partly as a consequence of grant aid, but also through fund raising, the hall now has funds of c£30k part of which supports the ongoing running costs and part will be allocated to the development fund more details of which will be available at the AGM being held next week on Tuesday 24th May here in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. All welcome.

THANK YOU

I would like to thank the committee for their support over the year; David Simpson for taking on the booking mantle and providing much needed knowledge and support and his renowned bar duties, Tricia Wilson for dealing with our Kitchen Hygiene rating and the Kitchen generally and Jo Hutchings for her sterling work as secretary. Thanks must also go to all those involved in the fundraising events who I know get a lot of fun and enjoyment out of it but also put in a lot of hard work to enable the events to happen.

Andrew Conquest, Chair
Felsham and Gedding Village Hall
17 May 2022

Felsham Charity Trustees

Mrs Wilson reported on behalf of the Felsham Charity Trustees.

She paid tribute to the Late David Williams, whose many valuable years as a Trustee were much appreciated: he would be greatly missed, by the Charity, and by the whole village.

The Charity is in good standing financially, but effecting changes to the bank mandate to provide three signatories had proved problematic.

Happily, many educational grants had been paid in the year ending December 2021 and it is hoped that those students will return so as to enable the Charity to support them with further funding.

On a more sombre note, the Charity had also been called upon to supply several Funeral Grants; including for six very long standing residents of the village who had sadly passed away during the last year. They will all be sorely missed.

Felsham and Gedding Community Shop Report from The Chair

Through challenging, and unprecedented, times the Felsham and Gedding Community Store has surpassed the expectations of the original business plan in many ways. Under the Plunkett Foundation Model Rules have been adopted by the FGCS

We are an Organisation set up by the Community for the benefit of the Community and it is the Community that makes the whole operation work and at this point there are a number of thanks that

need to be made, not only by The Chair, but also by the Community as without the following there would quite simply be no Community Shop.

First, and foremost, the Volunteers who run the shop on a daily basis without them there would be no shop. There can never be too many Volunteers to assist and if there is anyone who can, or knows of anyone, who can help please get in touch with Gwen Owen or pop into the shop. It is not all about standing behind the Counter! There are a number of other wonderful people who selflessly give their time and knowledge to the shop behind the scenes and without wanting to embarrass them – thank you for everything that you do. The contribution of Jason and Ruth in the Post Office, ably helped by our own Village volunteers, as well as other Felsham volunteers is crucial to the ongoing viability of the shop and although the Post Office as an organisation is in a state of flux our little corner of Suffolk does what it can.

Secondly, Ria Crosbie. There are not many words in the English language that can be used to adequately thank her for the tireless work that she has put in to the Shop which at times have been thankless but crucial. Ria sadly stepped down from the position of Chair at the end of January and I can only try to achieve a similar work and success rate that she did. Without Ria, without too much exaggeration, the shop would not be in the healthy position that it is today.

The Committee works, mostly, quietly behind the scenes and I am thankful for the amount of time and thought that they provide to the organisation. If anyone would like to join the Committee please get in touch as we are always looking for additional views and help. Special mention should be given, as well, to Andrew Conquest who manages to keep control of the day to day finances and has a great view of the bigger picture and the future.

Finally, the Shareholders. Without you the Community Store would not have got off the ground. If there are other members of the Community who have not bought shares who would like to please contact us! With apologies for anyone that I have missed – it is not personal or deliberate.

Looking to the future, I am happy to confound the myth that changes are afoot and the Shop will continue to operate from the existing premises and a new lease is in the process of being agreed and signed with the new Owner of the building. There are exciting plans afoot for the Shop and moving premises to an extension on the Village Hall but this will not happen in the very short term.

I would urge everyone in the Villages to support the shop as much as they can, although we cannot pretend to be a major supermarket we have a fantastic line of products and I hasten to add with a wider range of stock and more competitive prices than a newly set up organisation in the next door village but one. Without support there will be no shop. We have overcome the restrictions caused by the pandemic in remarkably good financial shape and I hope that with continuing support the future will be rosy.

James Morgan

17/5/22

Playing Field Report

Firstly, allow me to apologise for not being present at tonight's meeting. I'm currently away in Derby undertaking some training on scaffolding and hoists for my new job.

I'll try and keep the annual chairman's report as short and sweet as I can, as I'm sure I waffle on enough at meetings when I'm present anyway!

It has certainly been a year of activity and movement when compared with the last couple, and I'm pleased to see some long term needs finally coming to fruition. In particular, our new storage facility, for which we're indebted to Jamie Corney for obtaining - We now have a safe and dry place to keep all our equipment etc together. Hopefully, we can move the rest of our assets into storage soon enough.

Thanks should also go to Mark Tavernor and Paul Ridgard for their efforts with the base and internal shelving, and indeed to all who've pitched in where possible.

Completion, too (and a long time coming) of the new roof for the youth shelter, which is looking very nice with its new lick of paint. Meanwhile, the usual maintenance of hedgerows etc has continued as

ever. As a side note, I'm currently mowing the site myself again at the moment – happy to do so until a new arrangement can be reached.

Although there's been no fun-day in the last year, it was pleasant to see our annual bonfire night effort return with a bang (excuse the pun!), and although we only made a small profit, the event has always been a treat for the village more than anything else, so we can judge everyone's efforts a great success – well done to the bucket shakers who cajoled folks out of their spare shrapnel at the gate!

Looking forward to the year ahead, there is no fun-day planned for June in lieu of the anticipated return of the Street Fair in September. The Playing Field will probably end up being utilised for parking. Variety is the spice of life, so they tell me – it'll be good to mix-up the usual calendar of events. Asset-wise, some of the wooden play equipment on the top end is reaching the end of its lifespan, and will need replacing soon. We're also setting our sights on expanding the basketball court to make a larger, multi-sport area.

Going forward, we have a bank balance of just over £8,000, and a committee which is in a much stronger position in terms of numbers and ideas – A good position to be in.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank, as always, the committee members for their time and dedication to keeping this great asset going – its important to recognise that these things don't organise themselves.

Phil Cockell.
(Chairman)

Village Meeting May 2022

Village News Report

Last year, for the first time in our now 18yrs of printing the Village News we made a loss. This was due in no small part to Covid 19 as through lockdown we lost various advertisers and we also felt unable to charge our normal prices to those who did survive but were unable, in the main, to work. We did however have enough in our bank account to cover the loss and already this year we have welcomed new advertisers and we are also printing magazines for others which means that over the course of the year we should be able to cover this loss.

Our new layout has proved popular but we have recently been asked if we could re-instate the list of activities taking place in the villages and in the Village Hall, this we will try to do over the next few months. Part of the new layout is the photograph on the front page, these are taken in and around our villages and we would like to thank those of our readers who have contribute pictures for this purpose and please keep them coming.

We have welcomed a new editor into our fold, Libby from Gedding who is enjoying the challenge. I would like to take this opportunity to thank: our editors and contributors, without them there wouldn't be a magazine. Our advertisers without them our village magazine would not be free. Jo Tavernor for her stalwart work: finding advertisers, printing the magazine and uploading the digital copy. Our small band of dedicated deliverers who ensure that every house in our two villages receives a copy.

We would also like to thank Felsham Parish Council & Gedding Parish Meeting for their continued support and the Village Hall for continuing to provide our printer/copier with a home.

We are a non-profit making organisation and all our funds are used for the upkeep and purchasing of the equipment necessary for the production of the Village magazine.

Patricia Wilson
Village News Chairman
18th May 2021