

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Pentney held on Tuesday 18 May 2023 at 6.00pm at Pentney Village Hall

Present: Mrs R Littlehales (Chair) Mrs K Harvey Mr B Howlett
Mrs L Rons Mrs C Dallas Mr M Parker
Mr D Johnson Lady from Marham
Mr A Smith (Church Warden)

Also present: Clerk

Mrs R Littlehales, Chair of the Parish Council, was Chair for the meeting and welcomed everyone.

- 1 **To receive and consider apologies for absence:
Mrs P Wells and Mrs C Dallas have sent their apologies.**
- 2 **Minutes of the Last Annual Parish Meeting held on 18 May 2022**
The Locum Clerk was unable to find a copy of the minutes on the computer. The minutes to be approved at the next meeting.
4. **To Receive Reports from the following organisations:**

a) **PCC**

Mr Andrew Smith gave the following report:

Background

The parish of Pentney is one of 7 parishes that form what is known as the Nar Valley Benefice within the Diocese of Norwich, the Archdeaconry of Lynn & the Deanery of Breckland & currently operates under one incumbent Rector. Normally we hold two Sunday services per month; a service of Holy Communion on the 2nd Sunday & a more informal service of Morning Praise led by our lay-members on the 4th Sunday.

To support a full-time priest the Benefice has to raise over £70,000 pa for the so-called Parish Share which covers salary, pensions, accommodation, parish expenses & Diocesan support & administration.

Historically the Nar Valley Benefice has always met this obligation, the only Group in the Deanery to do, so and which is divided up amongst the parishes roughly according to population. Currently Pentney's share is £7382pa. Failure to do so usually means adding on more parishes – it is not uncommon to have as many as 12 parishes in one Benefice which then becomes a struggle for the incumbent priest and to the detriment of the communities they serve.

Together with our annual insurance premium of around £1300 these two items make up about 82% of our annual expenditure of around £10,500 which is increasingly a struggle to meet. Please particularly bear this in mind when it comes to our annual Gift Day in October.

Personnel

Pentney PCC has just held its annual parish meeting on 25th April 2023 and Andrew Smith & Sue Neep were re-elected as churchwardens for the coming year supported by 5 PCC lay-members of the church community.

Currently the post of Rector is still vacant, Stuart Nairn having retired after 30 years of ministry to this group of parishes in November 2021. During the Vacancy officiating at services and basic duties are being undertaken by the Rev. Richard

Howells who is a non-stipendiary priest living at South Acre but who has a full-time job in publishing. His contact details are to be found at the end of the Nar Valley News.

A New Incumbent

Arrangements are in hand to appoint a new priest for the Nar Valley Benefice but this is not an easy task for rural communities such as ours.

The main stumbling block is the existing Rectory at Narborough which is too big, massively energy inefficient & with large grounds to maintain. In consequence the Diocese has decided to sell it and purchase a more modest and more suitable house on Narborough Road just to the west of the Narborough crossroads.

However an area for car parking will be retained as an essential requirement for the future of the church. Diocesan procedures for rectories/vicarages require a completely separate office which is accessible to the public without having to go through the living accommodation. Therefore one of the twin garages at the new property is to be converted for such use and until planning approval has been granted and work substantially completed it has not been though wise to advertise the vacancy. This process could take another 4 of 5 months unfortunately.

Pastoral Care

The churches in the Benefice continue to operate normally during the Vacancy and to serve the communities in which they are located. For Pentney the contact details for the churchwardens are printed on the back of the Nar Valley News and they are freely available to deal with any enquiries or to pass them on to the correct person or authority. Alternatively the Rev Richard Howells can be contacted directly.

Fabric & churchyard

Pentney Church is in relatively good condition for a building which dates back to before the Norman Conquest. The major issue of the condition of the south roof was addressed in 2018/2019 by installing new slates at a cost of nearly £100K mainly funded by grants from several charities.

The Church of England requires all their churches to be thoroughly inspected every 5 years – the so-called Quinquennial Inspection – and the last one was completed in November 2022. This has identified several items that need essential attention which are:-

- rotted timbers under the leaded roof to the top of the tower
- leaking iron guttering generally which is having a detrimental effect to the stone walls
- the poor condition of the concrete drainage channel running around the external base to the church which is cracked and leaking and again causes dampness & deterioration to the walls
- slate repairs to various areas of the north roof and the porch together with other essential but more minor repairs.

The Architect's estimate for these repairs is around £11K plus VAT which sum we will have to find somehow.

We have a willing team of church members and supporters who keep the building clean and arrange flowers and the like. We also tackle specific issues in the churchyard mainly to do with overgrown graves and memorials.

Several fund-raising initiatives occur throughout the year including the Great British Breakfast event at Little Abbey Farm and a Christmas Craft Fayre & Grand Draw planned for November in the Village Hall and a flower arranging session nearer to Christmas.

We have an open-door policy and the church is normally open during daylight hours and which, judging by the comments in our visitor's book, is much appreciated.

The PCC is very grateful to the Parish Council for the support that it gives in maintaining the churchyard and for help with specific issues such as the upgrading of the church path and restoration work on the war memorial.

APS 16.05.23

b) Pentney, Narborough & District WI

Mrs Kate Harvey gave the following report:

The Pentney, Narborough & District WI meet every fourth Wednesday in the Month at 2.30 pm in Pentney Village Hall. The exception is December, where we go to the Pantomime or Theatre.

Our WI started in 1945 and is a member of the Norfolk and National Federations of WI's. We have 31 Members and a committee of 8 who meet monthly to make sure things run smoothly, plan for the future, link in and support other local organisations.

To give you a flavour of our 2023 programme: In January 2023 we kicked off with discussions and voting on five resolutions being put forward by The National WI. Our majority vote was for: Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife. We then had a very competitive quiz, great fun, especially if you know the answers. In January we all went to a "Happy New Year's Meal" at the Foldgate Inn, a great success. February, we learnt about "What to do with your supermarket flowers, and how to recycle and paint glass. It was much better than it sounds, using foraged flowers, greenery & twigs. They looked fantastic and inspired the "garden & hedgerow" theme of flowers we used for our WI Coronation event in May.

March – We had a very interesting talk from The Magpie Riding Centre for the Disabled and learnt what a huge impact not only on the physical but also the mental well-being of participants.

April – Our speaker was brilliant, talking and listening about nostalgic songs starting in the late 1950's into the early 1960's. Many long-forgotten songs, music & antidotes (he met many of the stars of the era, including John Lennon) that were enlightening. "The best yet", I heard. April also sees us take part in the annual ACWW (Associated Country Women of the World); a charity linked with WI to help improve the lives of rural women in over 60 countries across the world. So, in April we take part in a walk that's part of "Women Walk the World", joined by the WI Ramblers Group. The renowned Spring lunch saw a packed village hall and the promise of another Autumn Lunch in October 2023.

Our May Meeting sees us listening to Chris Bell, the TV Weatherman, I think a bit of storm chasing is in the offing! And of course, it's the King's Coronation, we couldn't let that go without a WI Party, which indeed we've had and thoroughly enjoyed by all. There is also the Annual Federation meeting in Norwich. We also planted a tree in Narborough Community Centre near to a seat to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee, the late Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of King Charles III.

The rest of the year we will be hearing about Ruth Smith Monologues; learning about The Perfect Cheeseboard by a Cheese Sommelier, listening to the adventures of The Yellow Caravan, we will be Singing for Wellbeing, and breathlessly awaiting the mystery guest in October (tbc). In November we hold our

Annual Meeting where we ask members to come forward and vote to be on the Committee & hold the key roles.

We are so lucky that we have a strong local WI who are enthusiastic, adventurous, keen to learn & support each other. (One member is going gilding on Friday!)

Kate Harvey, President

c) Village Hall

Mrs Bell was unable to attend this evening but has sent the following report:

The village hall committee has been working tirelessly to promote our gem of a village hall. Our aim is to increase the hirings and host a range of events.

In 2022/2023 we have continued to improve the appeal of our hall by the purchasing of new chairs which were kindly helped to purchase by some donations.

Fund Raising Events 2022/2023

Monthly coffee mornings

Quizzes

Jubilee Tea

Norfolk Day

Hogg Roast

Walking Quiz

Festive Tea

Coronation Tea

Forthcoming Events

Monthly coffee mornings - 1st Tuesday of the month

Quiz 20th May - 7.30pm

Craft & Food Faye - Saturday 10th June 11-4pm. Talented local creators and artisans.

Norfolk Day - Thursday 27th July

BBQ - Saturday 12th August

September onwards Events to follow.

We have recently formed a group "Friends of Pentney Village Hall" these volunteers have agreed to help when they are available, not to be committee members or Trustees. The roles that they will undertake are varied i.e., providing ideas for events, help to organise and work on the day etc. We are pleased to welcome these volunteers who are from various age ranges which will help us to provide a diverse range of events and encourage new people to our hall.

The above will help us to sustain our hall and ensure that it thrives for future generations.

Janis Bell
Chairperson
16.5.23

d) Pentney Charity Trust

Mrs Kate Harvey read the following report.

The Trust is made up five Trustees, a Land Agent, and a Secretary. Trustees include:

Ex-Officio Trustee who is the incumbent of the Church of Parish of Pentney
Two Trustees nominated by Pentney Parish Council
Two Trustees that are co-opted at a special meeting.

The Land Agent attends the meetings reporting on the management of assets and land owned by the Trust.

In 2023 we will meet five times plus any additional extraordinary meetings held for specific issues.

The Pentney Charity was formed by the amalgamation of some five local charities, the oldest dating back to the early 1800's. The Trusts primary role is to "provide relief to residents in Pentney who are in need by making grants of money or payments for services to reduce need or hardship". The grants can be to individuals and organisations within the Parish of Pentney. This is done by applying the income of the Charity.

Anyone in Pentney may apply providing they are on the voting list and have lived in the village for over two years at the time of application.

Each application is considered by the Trustees and it usually consists of a "one-off" payment either paid to the individual or the service provider.

One of the Trustees is appointed as a Treasurer who looks after The Charities finances, and an appointed internal examiner, who reviews the accounts on a quarterly basis. Accountants provide an independent examination of the accounts and produce an annual report and financial statements.

In light of the extreme rises in the cost of living crisis Trustees agreed to increase the discretionary grant to £150 an increase of £30, articles were placed in the Nar Valley News, asking people who lived in Pentney if they were aware that Pentney has money in Trust specifically to help and support the residents of Pentney, this generated an additional 9 new requests, making the total number of requests to 46 winter fuel grants.

Main activities for achieving objectives:

- Spring 2022 x 1 /Winter 2023 x 46 fuel grants were paid - total of over 7,000.
- £2,775 grants were given on other compassionate grounds.

The whole process is confidential, discretionary, and considered on individual merits.

Kate Harvey
Chair

e) The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies

The Head was unable to attend this evening as there is a School Governors meeting but had sent the following report which was written by year six children.

This Year at Narborough Primary Academy

This year, each class has had many exciting and enjoyable events. Read on to learn more...

In Hedgehogs class (reception and year 1) they have had many fun trips. At Christmas, the class enjoyed a performance of The Elves and the Shoemaker at Westacre Theatre. At the end of the spring term, they went to Melsop Farm and had a great day out, one child even got licked by a cow! As part of their learning in Geography, Hedgehogs class went for a walk around Narborough village to learn more about their local area. As part of the preparation for the coronation of King Charles III, Hedgehogs made an incredibly long train of bunting to decorate the school field.

In Squirrels class (years 2 and 3), they have had lots of fun experiences such as: a trip to the Sea-life Centre, watching Boudicca at Westacre Theatre, Cambridge Museum, and a visit to the RNLI at Hunstanton. They have also participated in cross-country, football, and the fun run at The Nicolas Hammond Academy.

Foxes class (year 4), were invited to plant a tree at Pentney to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee. All children were delighted to have taken part in such a special occasion.

Otters class (year 5 and 6) have been working alongside Foxes class, so have had many joint trips. In the autumn term, years 4, 5 and 6 had swimming lessons at Dereham, where we learned a range of swimming strokes such as: front crawl, breaststroke, backstroke, and the butterfly. At Christmas, we went to Westacre Theatre to watch 'Alice in Winterland' which was hilarious. We also visited the Castle Museum in Norwich to learn more about Ancient Civilisations where we learned how to build an arch, attempted Sumerian writing, learned about philosophy: we never knew you could get so much discussion out of a crisp packet. The year 6 children attended Crucial Crew and learned many vital life skills, such as first aid, fire safety, road safety, online safety, and mental wellbeing strategies. We have also participated in tag rugby, cross-country, netball, and dodgeball competitions at The Nicolas Hammond Academy.

To celebrate the coronation of King Charles III, the whole school had planned to have a picnic on the field with parents. Otters class had organised a range of events for children and parents to participate in such as: cricket, super-sized board games, penalty shoot-out, arts and crafts, basketball, parachute games and tennis keep-it-up. Each class had also made some bunting, paper chains and crowns. However, just as we had finished setting everything up and parents were about to arrive, the heavens opened, so a back-up plan was swiftly implemented. We still enjoyed our picnic with our parents (inside) and had indoor entertainment such as: mini disco, dance competitions and a range of coronation-themed crafts. Despite the weather, we still had loads of fun to celebrate this unique occasion.

We still have many things to look forward to before the end of term. Squirrels class are looking forward to their visit to Castle Rising as part of their learning in History. Year 6 children are looking forward to their post-SATs treat trip to Wells where we will play a range of games, build sand castles and have loads of fun to reward all of our hard work. The whole school will take part in Sports Day, where we use all of our learning in PE to compete in our teams in a range of events. The Parent, Teacher & Friends Association (PTFA) have also worked really hard this year putting on lots of events to raise money for our school, and we are all looking forward to the end of year school disco.

f) Police

PC Paula Gilluley had advised that she would send a report, but nothing has been received.

g) Borough Councillor

The Borough Councillor is new and has not attended a meeting yet.

h) County Councillor

Cllr Moriarty had sent his apologies as was unable to attend this year.

5. Parishioner Questions

Mrs Littlehales asked if there were any questions.

Mr Smith asked when the Churchyard Grass might be cut. Mrs Rons advised that it should be cut this week.

No further questions.

6. Correspondence and Any Items for Parish Council Agenda

No Correspondence had been received.

7. Date, and Place of next Annual Parish Meeting.

Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 6.00pm.

With no further business the meeting closed at 18.45pm.