

## TILLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR THE PARISH OF TILLINGTON HELD ON THE RECREATION GROUND, UPPERTON ON THURSDAY 13TH JULY AT 7.00 PM

CHAIRMAN:	Mr T Compton
VICE-CHAIRMAN:	Mr R Morgan-Grenville
CLERK:	Mrs J Huggett
COUNTY COUNCILLOR:	Cllr Janet Duncton
DISTRICT COUNCILLOR:	Cllr Harsha Desai

The Chairman welcomed 17 parishioners to the meeting with a particular welcome for newly elected District Councillor, Harsha Desai.

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Mrs J Clevely (Parish Councillor).

#### 2. TO CO-OPT MRS JENNY LOWE AS A PARISH COUNCILLOR

The Chairman said one Parish Council vacancy had not been filled at the election and Mrs Lowe had put her name forward for co-option. Mr Gresham-Cooke said he would like to propose her, his nomination was seconded by Mr Sneller and, on a vote, Mrs Lowe was unanimously elected. The Clerk gave her the Declaration of Acceptance form to sign.

#### 3. MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S MEETING

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for the Parish of Tillington held on 7th July 2022 having been circulated, it was proposed by Mr Sneller seconded by Mr Gresham-Cooke that they be passed and signed.

#### 4. MATTERS ARISING

Gym Equipment: Ms Connor said she is continuing to look into gym equipment for the Recreation Ground. The Chairman thanked her for moving this forward.

#### 5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Parish Council has had another active year looking after the fabric of our village.

**Our Recreation Ground** is a jewel that gives us all much pleasure and whilst cricket is not played much we are working with Petworth Sports Association to maintain the wicket. Bruce Wickham has again done a fantastic job keeping it so presentable out of his day job, thank you Bruce.

We have some ambition to add to the facilities here. Consideration is being given to the install of some discrete outdoor gym equipment. Mary Connor has been researching appropriate installers and looking into funding for us. Thank you Mary, for some of us the sooner it is installed the better!

Over the year the pavilion has hosted several birthdays, family gatherings and christenings. We are so lucky to have this facility and be able to share it at a very low cost. Improving the kitchen has proved very welcome.

It is great to have youth football being played here regularly and next summer I believe that youth cricket practice and matches may start.

The Tennis Association continues with a steady membership. The Association's funds have steadily grown to a tidy sum so to cover any significant expense.

**In Upperton we have restored the Cart Shed** to ensure its longevity and structural integrity. This Grade II listed building was at risk but should now withstand the weather and gravity for a few more decades yet. I would like to thank Ben Kirk of Manorwood Construction for coordinating the necessary permissions, bat surveys and skilled craftsmen who have done such a good job.

We have now been able to relet the car parking spaces and, after waiting 20 years, Sarah has finally got a spot.

Financially this has been a major commitment. When gifting the building to the Parish I'm sure the Estate did not intend to gift us this liability (?!). Through careful budgetting over several years, and a generous loan from the Village Hall Management Committee, we have been able to do it, just.

This has left our finances finely balanced, but on the basis that our job is to apply your Precept it is better to do these things rather than have cash in the bank. We hope you feel this is money well spent.

One huge benefit from completing the project is that finally we can remove 'Item 9 Cart Shed' from the Council's agendas. It has been there for about as long as the building itself!

**The Coronation weekend** was, I think, Tillington at its best. Special monthly Friday Lunch, church services and our first 'Big Help Out Day' bringing people together in a common task along the Causeway. I'm sure John Constable would approve of the new fence, it certainly gives me great pleasure to see a job well done and remember the day we did it. Nick Blunt and his guys did much of the heavy work whilst your Vice Chair **Roger M-G** drank his tea and chatted most energetically! **Thank you to Jo Clevely and Andrina Lunt** for organising such a spectacular **Coronation Tea Party**.

**The orchard trees** we planted are establishing well and one apple is already bearing fruit. Whilst it looks a little unkempt the intent is to leave the grasses and wild flowers as long as possible each year for a small haven of biodiversity. Thank you to the Leconfield Estates for agreeing to this long licence ..... we must get this formalised.

**A continual pleasure** of living in Tillington is being able to walk out and enjoy the many footpaths and circular routes. The growth this year has been particularly heavy. Thank you to all the individual owners of these sections of path for keeping them so well trimmed back. For some of you I realise it can be an onerous liability and cost. The Parish Council would be happy to discuss a coordinated arrangement if that would be helpful.

Particular thanks to our Footpath Warden, Gerald Gresham-Cooke, who inspects every path at least once a year and gently cajoles owners to timely action.

We do have a problem on the highway footpath all along the A272. We seem unable to persuade WSCC Highways to include it in their regular maintenance. Steve Hodd has requested action but, to date, it has been deemed too expensive by higher powers. It is too dangerous for individual owners to do this. I am sorry we have not found a solution to this, I hope we can do so soon.

**I was privileged recently** to see an archive of recent Tillington history. This included a wonderful book created by the Tillington Women's Institute in 1965 to celebrate its Golden Jubilee. It details all the societies, activities and life of the village and is an amazing recent history, a very colourful census. It was dedicated to their successors with a hope that it would be completed in 2015 to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the Women's Institute.

**I wonder** what authors would make of the health of our village society now. I think they would find it in reasonable fettle but probably feel there is more insularity and less active engagement.

**The reality** is that the demographic of our parishioners is getting older and for younger families just being able to afford to live here is almost impossible. I encourage all of us to continue to participate and keep strong our village institutions. They are only as good as the people in them.

The Parish Council works to serve you. If you have an idea or want to develop/change things please don't hesitate to come forward.

**Thank you** to all my fellow Councillors for your contributions and to all of you who participate and give your time to our village. It is often said you only get out what you put in.

**Lastly I would** like to say a special thanks to Jean. She Clerks the Council very well and has again shown unstinting dedication in this duty.

I would now like to introduce Harsha. After an energetic campaign many of you on the Electoral Role gave her your vote. As we know Liberal Democrats had a broader success in the whole district. We have already met to discuss the priorities for Tillington and where we can work together.

Cllr Desai said there are now 25 Liberal Democrat Councillors which is an achievement, and will enable them to get a lot done. She has been appointed to the Cabinet as Member for Growth and Place. Amongst her responsibilities are Economic

Development, Car Parks, Public Conveniences and Bus Shelters. Many local villages have also, for the first time, elected Liberal Democrats, John in Fittleworth, Jess and Hannah in Midhurst and Ellie in Fernhurst. She is keen to work for the people of Petworth Ward and is holding her first surgery in Petworth Library on Saturday 2nd September. Petworth Town Council are moving in there shortly. She also intends to work closely with Petworth and Fittleworth over speed and traffic noise problems.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Sustainable Village: Mr Morgan-Grenville was asked for an update on the Sustainable Village project. He said he had been away for much of this year, but is hoping to move it forward in September when he will be looking into grants. To start with he doesn't want to be too ambitious, mainly looking at Swift boxes, Bat boxes and verge cutting. Some things may be functional but not necessarily environmental. Several households have already shown an interest, he will need help by mid-September. Asked about the new Community Orchard he said as the Chairman mentioned this will be kept as such for as long as possible. A discussion took place on its future use and sustainability.

Mr Sneller thanked Councillors for the work they carry out, congratulated the Parish Council as a whole, there is a full compliment of Councillors, good leadership and organisation.

Mr Morgan-Grenville thanked Mr Compton for being a very effective Chairman, especially in the way he had led the work on the Causeway fence and the Cart Shed.

Ms Connor said she's looking into two items raised at recent Council meetings, she will be receiving a quote from Nick Blunt for a gate at the Cemetery Lane end of the Glebe Fields and has received a quote for archiving the Parish records. The Chairman said the storage in the hall needs to be looked at, it's not very satisfactory.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.40 pm.