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Chair: Jason Ess  
Clerk: Caroline Boyden

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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 2022 FROM 7.00PM AT THE VILLAGE HALL.**

PRESENT: Cllr Jason Ess (JE) – Chair. Cllr. Adrian Bramwell (AB), Cllr Andy Blatch (ABL), Cllr Jon Large (JL), Cllr G Mathias (GM)  
Borough Cllrs & Michael de Whalley (MdW), & Colin Manning (CM)  
Two members of the public present.

1. WELCOME TO ALL FROM THE CHAIR
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE : Cllr S Dickerson and County Councillor J Moriarty  
COUNCILLORS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – none
3. Approval of the circulated minutes from the Annual Parish meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2021  
Proposed JL, seconded AB and all in favour.
4. Chairmans Report:

Good evening, Residents, Members and Officers

It has once again been a difficult and challenging year for both the Parish Council and Residents alike with not only local, but also national and international issues playing their part. Having only stepped up to the position of Chair recently my report will regrettably be brief, but I think it is only fair to begin by formally thanking our former Chair Andy Parker for his stewardship during recent years and to wish him well for the future.

I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all members for their efforts throughout the year together with the Parish Clerk for her diligence and support, without which we would surely have struggled to operate efficiently.

Thanks, should also be extended to the tremendous support, that we have received from our County and Borough Councillors this year who have through their regular attendance and correspondence given the Parish the confidence to move forward with projects and decisions that otherwise may have been held back. I would also like to pay tribute to the Village Hall Committee for keeping the facilities we all take for granted so clean and in good order as well as the many other volunteers who give their free time to the community.

It should be remembered that we all give our time freely for the betterment of the Parish and whilst our influence in the Borough may be small, we must continue to ensure that we listen to our residents' views and steer the Parish accordingly.

I am pleased to see improvement projects have been completed this year which include: -

1. Installation of new play equipment to Glosthorpe Manor
2. Refurbishment of the village hall play equipment
3. Repairs to the village sign
4. Implementation of the Speed Awareness group

Major projects that we hope to move forward in this coming year will include the implementation of a 'Neighbourhood Plan' in conjunction with the Local Planning Authority to help the Parish more effectively govern our landscape as well as measures to help control the communities battle with anti-social behaviour.

Whilst I am sure there are still many issues and obstacles, we will need to negotiate in the coming year I am confident that we have both the knowledge, fortitude, and vision to ensure the Parish moves forward to meet these challenges head on.

Councillor Jason Ess, Chairman of Leziate & Ashwicken Parish Council

#### 5. Borough Councillors Reports:

CM advised that Covid has affected staffing levels in all areas and some re-deployment of staff was necessary in key areas plus allowing home working where suitable. There is a staff shortage in the planning department causing delays and there is a national shortage of planning officers.

The Councillor Community Grant has proved successful and well received with the 2022/23 allowance now in place for requests. A wide range of events are in place within the Borough for the celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee. The changes in some bin emptying routes commences today and this is to ensure all routes have the same journey times. The QE Hospital has the support of the Borough for a new hospital and this will be in the same location. The £150 grant payments are due to start this month. There are still some issues with emails to gmail accounts and planning applications continue to be sent out by post. The public engagement survey from the police is now available for all parishioners to complete.

MdW stated it had been another difficult year but now restraints from Covid were beginning to ease off. It is hoped that all parishioners enjoy the Jubilee celebrations and that it brings parishioners together again. Council meetings are now being videoed and available on line. During 2021 the figures for new build homes hit 96% of target with 340 being build out of the required 348. The projections for 2022 are looking very good.

#### 6. County Councillor Report -JM sent the following report:

I was grateful to be elected as the local County Councillor in May of last year and have tried to be at as many parish councils meetings as I can and to always send a report to each meeting which can be read in the published minutes.

One of the biggest issues facing the villages remains the Wellness Centre and, whilst it is a Borough Council decision, I have kept myself abreast of developments and tried to help your local Borough and Parish Councillors where I can.

I called a Public Meeting late last year to discuss parking and traffic issues and, as a result, committed my annual Highways budget to expanding the Clearway restrictions to cover Brow of the Hill and East Winch Road. To that end I also sought sponsors for the recent GEAR run to give residents the opportunity to top up the available funds for this and a possible Traffic Survey. The Justgiving page is still open and has raised £1350 to date. Highways will now shortly be in touch with the Parish Council to discuss in more detail what it, and residents, wish from any extended Clearway ie its extent, months and times of operation etc.

My apologies that I cannot be with you this evening, but Monday is a popular night for Parish Council meetings and I am sometimes forced to alternate between Councils.

7. Parishioners Open Forum:

Grave concerns were raised regarding coming out of Fen Lane on the B1145 due to lack of visibility making it a blind junction. A request for the speed limit to be reduced was made but advised that this would take years and a lot of funding. However additional signage could be requested from Highways including a "concealed entrance" and, ideally, a mirror allowing improved visibility of on-coming traffic. Clerk to contact Highways.

REPORTS RECEIVED from the Churchwarden of All Saints Church, Norfolk Constabulary, Bird Boxes, Leziate, Ashwicken and Bawsey Village Hall and Ashwicken Primary School – see below:

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH, ASHWICKEN  
CHURCHWARDEN REPORT 31/12/2021**

Last year, I reported how we had all been affected by the COVID pandemic and the start of 2021 was a bleak time still with many restrictions remaining in force. Perhaps most grievous of them all was the order banning more than 30 people to attend a funeral.

In February, our own Rector, Revd Jane Holmes, died from the illness that had blighted her last two years. A service was held in St Nicholas, the Church she loved, before she was transported to be buried with her husband in Leicestershire.

She had remained in the Rectory to the end but that has now been emptied and the property is being let by the Diocese. It is unlikely that it will ever be brought back into use for the Church as we do not anticipate there ever being two stipendiary priests in the Benefice for the foreseeable future. Not everyone appreciates just how committed Revd Jane was to the Church and the people here. An indication, perhaps, is that she left a considerable legacy to further mission here.

We now are extremely grateful to have Revd Judith as our Rector with the help of our non-stipendiary assistant Priest Revd Sue Martin and the rest of the Mission Team. In the longer term, we are aware that Revd Judith wishes to retire so that she may enjoy a retirement with her husband and children. Sad, though her loss will be, we do wish her every happiness in being able, at long last, to spend time with her family.

Through the year, restrictions eased and something like normal services resumed until the winter months and the omicron variant of the virus.

At Ashwicken, we had a few Communion services along with Easter, Ascension, Michaelmas, and our Armistice Day service. We were also delighted to welcome back Ashwicken School for a harvest service and to celebrate in School a Christingle. It was also a pleasure to have Holy Communion on Christmas morning and to have a Christmas service in all our Benefice Churches.

We also had 3 funerals and ashes burial but, happily, 2 baptisms also. For the most part, Weddings remained postponed still as restrictions applied.

Fetes and fund raising and general fellowship events were also still cancelled but Churches were all opened for visitors through the year.

Zoom services that had been such a solace last year were gradually reduced as in Church services resumed.

In all of this, apart from having to cancel one issue of the magazine, we continued to publish our parish magazine and massive thanks to our editor, Gina Watling, for producing this at a time when there was so little input from our Schools, Parish Councils and Clubs and societies who were closed. The magazine produced had a good surplus to help out at a time when Church income was so disturbed.

The Benefice web site at [www.ggmbenefice.uk](http://www.ggmbenefice.uk) continues to be supported and now enters its seventh year.

The Church building continued to be monitored and the annual clearing out of all gutters and drains was resumed. The fire extinguisher programme with fire points in both nave and vestry was done and the organ serviced.

The building also received a Quinquennial Inspection at the end of the year that was for the most part favourable. The PCC will give it closer attention in due course.

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Signature

Date

The Churchyard remained very well maintained and once again our thanks are particularly extended to Leziate Parish Council for arranging and paying for this.

We are also so very grateful that our Church is decorated so beautifully by our flower team but especially Helen and Brenda.

There remain a great many challenges facing us all for the future. The amount needed to cover the general overheads of the building and Clergy expenses plus the allocated Share are constant challenges. This year there has been a dramatic loss of income because of Covid restrictions and we anticipate further difficulties with Parish Share as we are close to exhausting savings.

### **Synod Report**

I was unable to meet with the Synod through 2021 which was, in any case, restricted to a single zoom meeting.

I was able, however, to be present as the new Bishop of Lynn, The Venerable Dr Jane Steen, was presented at St Margaret's. We look forward to welcoming her to the Benefice soon.

*Steve Williamson. Churchwarden and Synod representative.*

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### **LEZIATE ASHWICKEN & BAWSEY VILLAGE HALL**

Chair's annual report

We were unable to hold a physical AGM last year, and were prevented from holding one in March. We therefore moved the meeting to October to enable it to take place.

Our Treasurers report showed us to be in a good financial position.

The hall remains in good condition, with continued replacement of fittings etc as required. Enquiries continue to be received as well as via Facebook. The Tuesday Club sadly finished due to so few people returning following the Covid lockdowns.

We have kept the majority of our regular hirers, sadly the Ringcraft Group disbanded after the lockdown as did Zumba and Yoga classes. They will be missed after so many years of association.

We continue to move forward with a hall in good condition, a healthy diary of hires and strong Management Committee

Full details were provided to Parish Council in the Trustees Report.

Pauline Pullum. Chair

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### **Wings over Leziate & Ashwicken:**

Pleased to say that 33 boxes were put up in the fen ready for this season. Plus 4 at Ashwicken church and an owl box just off the fen where a pair of Barn owls were found.

Early indication is a great uptake of the boxes and egg incubation is underway for some while migrant birds are still arriving.

Red kite, Marsh harrier, Curlew and Snipe all use the fen while breeding has yet to be confirmed. The barn owls have settled into the box and egg laying is expected soon. Monitoring of these species is done under special schedule 1 licence.

Badgers have several active setts and a fox is regular.

This short report is made just as the breeding season is getting going and I look forward to sharing further news.

**Julian**

## Ashwicken Primary School Report for Leziate Parish Council Meeting May 2022

The school has undergone considerable changes over the past year. We have welcomed new staff as some of our long-serving staff have retired. As many of you will be aware, the school is considered 'Good' by OFSTED. This has made us all the more determined to offer the best possible education to our pupils and to ensure they have the best possible grounding before moving on to secondary education.



Members of staff at the school are now involved in supporting trainee teachers. We have been working with 3 different universities to help develop the skills of the new teachers. We are hoping that now Covid 19 restrictions are easing, we will be able to develop this further to invite other teachers and specialists into school as well as support other schools where we have strengths.



Currently we are exploring funding streams to enable us to update the EYFS play area outside and the Eco classroom as this space is inadequate for the pupils that are using it. This is being supported by the Diocese using our SCA funding and we are now awaiting plans to show how we may be able to develop this area. Presently the space only has a single toilet for 2 classes and one of the classrooms has to be accessed through the bigger room.

Although the school is relatively new, we have had several building issues which we have had to attend to: We have found large amounts of glass in the area near the play equipment from when the builders brought in contaminated soil: this has been addressed by the LA and new bark and a liner was laid both here and near the early year's classroom as well as the soil being scraped to clear away any further problems. We have also had to have the floor in the hall and corridors relaid due to the incorrect screed being laid and subsequent cracking. This too has been addressed by the local authority.



The old mud mound...



The new flattened space before resourcing...

As always, we would like to thank the many local people who support the school in different ways. We have volunteers who work with pupils, supporting their reading, as governors and when taking pupils on trips. It means that we have been able to reach out a little and see new places – we have taken the pupils in year 3 and 4 on a residential trip and are about to do the same with the year 5 & 6 pupils. We have been to Norwich and to the pantomime as well as countless sports events. We have been able to visit the local church in Ashwicken for our Harvest Festival and hope to do so again in the summer term.



The children continue to support numerous charities. This year we have raised money for Children in Need, Genes for Jeans, Comic Relief, the Ukraine, Macmillan Cancer to name but a few!

Ashwicken Primary School continues to have the highest possible aspirations for its pupils, continues to welcome local people who would like to volunteer and seeks to foster and maintain good relationships with our community.

Sophie Dickson  
Head