

Minutes of the **BLAKENEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** which was held on **Thursday 24th March 2022** in the Village Hall.

Reports, where received have been included within these minutes.

Chairman:- Rosemary Thew (Blakeney Parish Council Chairman)

Clerk:- Tracey Bayfield (Parish Clerk)

Public Attendance:- 19

1. **Welcome by the Chairman** - Rosemary Thew welcomed all those present and thanked everyone for attending & **Apologies for absence** had been received in advance from; Barry Girling, Alban Donohoe and Iain Wolfe.
 2. **Resolved that the minutes** of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 are signed as a true record.
- **Guest Speakers – PLANNING POLICY MANAGER (NNDC) – Mark Ashwell – The North Norfolk Local Plan.**

North Norfolk District Council is preparing a new Local Plan. This document will guide development decisions in North Norfolk until 2036. Local Plans set out the strategic planning policies for the district and decide how land is used, what can be built and where. Plans ensure that the development needed due to population growth can be provided suitably and sustainably. It also addresses challenges such as;

- Growing and ageing population
- Providing affordable housing
- Improving the design of development
- Managing the potential impacts of climate change

Mark touched upon many aspects of this, all of which can be found in full detail on the NNDC website www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/localplan He also took and answered questions from the floor.

- **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR** – Dr. Victoria Holliday – gave an informative report on Ambulance response times & Community First Responders.
- **HM LORD-LIEUTENANT – The Lady Dannatt MBE** was accompanied by the **Deputy Lord-Lieutenant; Robert Carter** – The Lady Dannatt presented a plaque, which had been commissioned and produced by the Norfolk Lieutenancy, to Rachel Bould (winner of the 2022 Community Volunteer Award) on behalf of the community, to ‘Commemorate our community’s resilience in the year of the pandemic, 2020-2021.’

3. PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY FUND – (Each group was presented with a grant from the fund) Group presentation & brief reports;

Blakeney Area Historical Society - Thank you for the grant which the BAHS intends to use towards wiring to extend the Village Hall's internet into the History Centre and a wireless microphone system. Our meetings are now hybrid to a live audience and also over Zoom and the new microphone makes this possible.

Blakeney Parish Council have been very generous to the BAHS over the years. Past grants have allowed us to purchase a notice board, a display case for the 'Hettie' lifeboat model which is now on display in St. Nicholas' Church alongside its service board; a new dehumidifier and much more.

On the exhibition table you will see examples of our publications. Our newsletters are now digital. To receive them either join the Society or sign-up for information emails. Also, we have a large poster of Blakeney for sale with proceeds to the DEC Ukraine appeal. Later this year a new issue of the Society journal, the Glaven Historian, is being published. members get a copy as part of their membership perks.

Blakeney Village Hall Trust – Thanked the Parish Council for the grant. The hall introduced Wifi in late 2021, but given the hall's size, standard Wifi doesn't provide complete cover and fails to separate visitors from the hall's private operations. We would like to introduce a Mesh-solution, which allows for a guest Wifi network as well as a private hall wifi network, keeping our own operations (e.g. card readers) separate.

Blakeney Conservation Duckpond – Thank you very much for the contribution to Blakeney Conservation Duck on. We have struggled the last few years due to Covid as have many charities, so this is most welcome. It will go towards new duck houses, we are working with the Men's Shed in Wells, they have kindly agreed to make us 10, we just pay for the materials. We have also launched some photographic cards to sell to raise money, they are on sale at The Blakeney Garage and are display on the table if anyone would like to buy some.

Blakeney Channel Coastal Community Team – Perhaps like many organisations, B3CT have been hampered by Covid19. In our case it has meant that we have not been able to hold meetings at a crucial stage – in particular our own committee meetings as well as seeing stakeholders impacted by our project. We were able in October 2021, between lockdowns, to hold a Public Exhibition to update the community on our latest plans and gain feedback from people attending via a survey. This will be useful moving forward. We hope to hold a committee meeting early April in order to kick start the project following which we can hold more detailed consultations with the stakeholders. We will continue to provide information on our progress via the GVN and the BHA website. (*This report had been submitted for the meeting, but in the absence of a member it was not read aloud.*)

Blakeney Primary School PTFA – Thanked the Parish Council for the grant and explained that the PTFA would like to fund additions to and regeneration of outdoor learning facilities within the playground and the plantation, whilst developing the children's knowledge and providing them with new skills and understanding of the natural environment and this grant will go a long way to assist with this.

Glaven Valley News - Good evening. My name is Oscar Haynes, and I look after the production and distribution of the Glaven Valley Newsletter. On behalf of the GVN committee; the numerous volunteers who help produce and deliver the magazine; and the 1500 or so households in the Valley who receive it each month, I would like to thank you very much for your very generous grant. Our income comes from advertising revenue, and contributions and donations from readers, and we just about manage to break even each year. This grant will help towards our regular outgoings (printing consumables, paper etc), and we are very grateful.

Apart from our editor, everyone else involved with the magazine is a volunteer, and each month about 40 people are involved in the printing, collating, stapling and delivery of the magazine. We also have an online version, but the feedback I have is that the vast majority of people prefer a paper copy, and we intend to continue with this. I would like to finish with a request: if you know of anyone who might be interested in helping out with the magazine, for 2 - 3 hours each month, please ask them to get in touch with me: I would be very pleased to hear from them. Without the volunteers, your magazine would cease to exist... Thank you.

4. OTHER COMMUNITY GROUP REPORTS:-

Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society - Chairman's Report to Blakeney Annual Parish Meeting.

It can be difficult coming up with a fresh angle for the annual report each year as generally one year is the same as the year before. 2021 was the Society's 75th Anniversary. Due to the Covid pandemic various plans to celebrate the event were put on hold. It now looks as if we will have to look forward to our 80th in four years' time.

Fortunately, restrictions were eased sufficiently during 2021 for our contractors to start work again on outside projects and where necessary internal emergency repairs. I am pleased to report the gable end wall at 131 High Street has been almost completed. The cracked rendering has been removed, brick and flint work to the main part of the wall has been replaced and repointed and the lower section of the wall may well have been rendered in lime by the time of the Parish meeting. It does look good. We apologise to neighbours for the length of time the scaffolding was in place. Work is also progressing well on 109 High Street where we have removed cracked and flaking render and repaired the brick and flint work. In both cases timber double-glazed windows have been installed – a small concession by the Conservation Officer and well appreciated. We are just about complete with the refurbishment of 100 High Street but like all refurbs this has required a lot more work than originally anticipated which has resulted in a delayed completion. We have also

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managed to complete normal cyclical work such as exterior painting, boiler servicing, chimney sweeping, smoke and heat alarm servicing despite the various lockdowns.

Energy Performance Certification surveys have been completed and several properties will need work to get them into an acceptable grading. Unfortunately, the structure of all the Society's properties doesn't allow us to bring them up to a high standard without very high levels of expenditure and considerable disruption. We do what we can when we can within the constraints of the income we have.

Electrical Certification is ongoing and about 40% complete. It usually involves changing the consumer units due to changes in the electrical safety standards. Once all consumer units were metal. They were considered unsafe so consumer units were switched to plastic. Now we're back to metal!! Yet more expense!

We have had very few tenancy changes. The tenant from 100 High Street has moved to the refurbished 103 High Street. The intended tenant for 100 High Street is being very patient while works are in progress for which we are grateful. Throughout the pandemic tenants have been able to keep up with rent payments with only a very few requiring some assistance. As oil or electric heating is installed in all but two of our houses the high cost of fuel may well be another problem.

The Housing Society is working well. The Officers (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Housing Officer) are in regular contact between meetings dealing with day to day matters as they arise. We meet with the rest of the Management Committee every two months and can now do so face to face again. Last year we said goodbye to Don Glaister the outgoing Treasurer and we welcomed Martin Tyler as our new Treasurer. Just about his first task was to produce the end of year accounts for which we are very grateful. We also welcomed Louise Donohoe to the Management Committee in the last year.

Financially the Society is well placed. Our reserves are sound and we have funds available for the joint developments between BNHS and Broadland if and when they happen. As always it is a privilege to be able to work with and for the BNHS.

ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH, BLAKENEY - As with most other organisations over this past year, at Blakeney Church we've had to be regularly adapting what we've been able to do in church, according to the changing Covid conditions. Most of our services are now following a regular pattern again, and we're able to offer the full range of worship we were offering before the pandemic began. People have benefitted enormously from the camera system that was installed earlier last year, which has enabled us to stream services on YouTube – a real boon for those no longer able to attend services in person, but who can watch either live or later.

We've also been able to put on other events throughout much of the past year, although every activity in the church has been subject at different times to social distancing and face-covering, as well as having to put refreshments on hold until recently. But we've been able to stage concerts, for example, for most of the past year, albeit with varying restrictions. Our social programme is now mostly up and

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running again, and since the new year, we've re-started our monthly Blakeney Breakfast and Let's Do Lunch, and we're really enjoying being able to welcome people in for those and other similar functions again.

Messy Church, with the children from Blakeney School and elsewhere, will finally be able to re-launch after Easter, and that will be a real pleasure too. Our links with the school remain as strong as ever, and the team from church has recently re-started going into the school to lead the Open the Book sessions which the children enjoy very much.

Visitor numbers have risen noticeably again, and it's good that we're able to keep the church open every day for people to drop in to explore our wonderful building, and indeed climb the tower, which is open a lot of the time, and enjoy the amazing view from the top.

We are blessed with a wonderful team of people at St Nicholas', who care for our magnificent building and for the people in our community. We're here for everyone, residents and visitors alike, at every stage of life, and in any sort of need, and our benefice website and other publicity provides information on what's going on and who to contact for support.

The Red House Land Trust – We would like to thank BPC for their continued support over the last year. In particular, the grant awarded to The Red House Land Trustees to cover insurance, security and maintenance etc. The land itself is in regular use and enjoyed by many locals and visitors alike.

Blakeney Parish Council - Report for the past year and a glance to the year ahead by Rosemary Thew (Chairman).

BLAKENEY'S RESPONSE TO COVID AND UKRAINE - This evening, Blakeney Parish Council, on behalf of the village, has been presented, by the Lord Lieutenant, with a plaque to mark the village's response to the challenges presented by Covid. The response was orchestrated by a small team, but many others were also involved. So, during a very difficult time, the village pulled together to ensure that vulnerable people were looked after: the shops made home deliveries and Spar, in particular, remained open for long hours providing goods for villagers. The whole village is grateful to all those who led this outstanding achievement. A community support fund was established to help those in particular need and a small amount of money still remains.

Sadly, the Russian invasion of Ukraine is, once again, testing the village's resolve. Collections of necessities are being made and teams again are pulling together to help. The Parish Council is assisting as it can, but all the thanks should go to those who are working tirelessly to ensure that the best help possible is going to those who need it.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - You have heard this evening about North Norfolk District Council's local plan. For some time now, Blakeney has been working on a

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neighbourhood plan advised by a steering group including many local residents and chaired by Sam Curtis. Thanks to all who have helped with that process. The main aims of the neighbourhood plan are to seek to protect Blakeney through good design of housing; to balance the needs of second home and holiday home owners with those of permanent residents and to seek ways to deliver affordable housing. The plan has now been formally submitted to North Norfolk District Council and is now open to consultation before going forward for independent examination. The hope then is that it can go for a village wide referendum. If adopted, it will then need to be taken in to account as all planning applications are considered.

DARK SKIES - Blakeney Parish Council has joined with Cley Parish Council in adopting a dark skies policy. We live in a beautiful part of the world, and dark skies are a great contributor to the enjoyment of the area. Sadly, some houses are being lit up at night, destroying the dark skies and to the detriment of others in the village. The Parish Council has written to the owners of those properties asking them not to light their houses and we are grateful to those who have acceded to that request. Some still are lighting their properties and we would again ask them not to do so. External and obtrusive internal lighting are a key consideration when planning applications are received by Blakeney Parish Council.

BLAKENEY MEDICAL SURGERY - Blakeney Parish Council, reflecting the views and concerns of many local residents, wrote to Holt Medical Practice expressing worry that the Blakeney surgery is not being used on a routine basis for consultations and medical advice with a doctor in attendance. A reply has been received and the correspondence featured in the most recent GVN. The reply did not reassure Blakeney Parish Council that the Medical Practice intends to reopen the centre and a further letter has gone to them. It focuses on the inconvenience and difficulty for many Blakeney residents in getting to Holt or Melton Constable as well as the adverse impact these, arguably unnecessary, journeys are having on the environment. Other villages in the area are similarly impacted. A reply is currently awaited.

COMMEMORATIVE SEATS - Blakeney Parish Council is conscious of the number of commemorative seats, particularly on the Quay, and is now asking those wishing to have a seat to consider a "sharing" arrangement under which one seat will display plaques dedicated to up to 5 people. The long term aim is to have a consistency of seat design, particularly on the Quay.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - Blakeney Parish Council is very aware of residents' concerns about volumes of traffic in the village. Last summer, the problems seemed particularly acute as staycations increased. Blakeney Parish Council has established a traffic management working group, but residents with long memories will know that traffic management has been a concern of successive parish councils over many years. There are calls for a one-way system, but that could lead to excessive speeding and, at some times in the year, tides make the Quay impassable. A speed measurement device has been working in parts of the village to monitor speeding and some members of Blakeney Parish Council have indicated willingness to work with nearby councils to provide a community speed watch. If any residents are

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interested in joining in, please tell Tracey. Other suggestions are to stop parking on the Carnser. However, unless we make Blakeney a no entry village, with obvious detriment to our local businesses, the traffic must go somewhere and the council's concern is that this could lead to indiscriminate parking in side roads.

MORE ROUTINE ISSUES - Blakeney Parish Council arranges for regular cutting of grass in key areas: for maintenance of the play equipment on the playing field: for Christmas lights to decorate a tree in the Pastures and generally to keep the village at a high standard of presentation.

Blakeney Parish Council is exploring the possibility of a trod or footpath on Langham Road to join the existing footpath on the east side of the road and to run up to the public footpath to Kettle Hill. That is a route regularly used by walkers and should assist road safety.

Blakeney Parish Council has looked at the possibility of electric vehicle charging points, but cost and changes in technology have prompted us to hold back on pursuing that in the short term.

OTHER ISSUES – Today we have installed the new/replacement defibrillator on The Quay by the ladies toilet block, this is in addition to the one outside of The Parish Office.

2022 marks the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II and Blakeney Parish Council is working with others to mark this most significant event. Current plans include a procession from the Quay to the Church where a beacon will be lit in the tower and a street party on Sunday 5 June when we hope everyone will join in for a "bring your own" tea in the High Street. Immediately afterwards, there will be the ever popular Glaven Sings Gospel on the Pastures. Other ideas are being considered and I hope everyone will have a most enjoyable long Bank holiday weekend. We just need good weather!

FINALLY - I would like to give sincere thanks to District Councillor, Victoria Holliday, who has worked very hard for us in the past year and also to my fellow councillors for all they do-often behind the scenes. During the year, Jess Tutt resigned for personal reasons. She will be a big loss and we thank her for all she has done and, we hope, will continue to do. But we are delighted to welcome Willie Weston back to the council table. Blakeney is fortunate to have the benefit of councillors who work hard and unselfishly for the good of the village. But most of all, Blakeney is fortunate to have the services of Tracey, our parish clerk. She is a fount of knowledge and help and the Council and village would be much poorer without her.

- 5. OVER TO YOU; OPEN SESSION** - A chance for the **Electors of the Parish of Blakeney only** to comment on any items already discussed. There were no comments or questions, other than one which had been raised during the Traffic update;

- Now that the SAM2 (Speed Awareness Message sign) is not going to be located in Back Lane, could it possibly find a suitable spot in the High Street?

Meeting closed at 8.43pm

Chairman _____

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