

PARISH of STOW BEDON & BRECKLES

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday, 12 May 2014 at 7.30 p.m. in Caston Village Hall.

Present Phil Childs (Chairman of the Parish Council), and 6 Parishioners
Julian Gibson (Clerk)

- 1 **Apologies for absence.** Phil Cowen.
- 2 **Minutes.** The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday, 20 May 2013 were **confirmed and signed.**
- 3 **Matters arising.** None.
- 4 **Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council.** The Chairman reported on a number of items from the past year. The Council started the year with a full team of members, but Peter Mills, Sue Tanner and Rachel Garrod resigned, so the Council lost many years of experience (including in the case of the first two, years of experience as Chairman). He welcomed Dawn Jessett who was co-opted to fill the first vacancy, but there were still two empty seats. He thanked our District and County Councillors who both regularly attend Council Meetings to keep members informed about what is going on with their Councils. He highlighted steps the Council had taken to try to deal with speeding in the parish, drainage on Mere Road, issues with the Pingo Trail car park, developments on Peddars Way. Finally he congratulated the Clerk on receiving the Norfolk Clerk of the Year 2013 award.
- 5 **Report of the County Councillor.** Councillor Ian Monson gave a review of the past year at Norfolk County Council, where the election results had led to no party having an overall majority, and so we now had a “rainbow coalition,” and were moving back to the 2001 system of a Committee system rather than a governing Cabinet. He said that much effort was being put into improving Children’s Services, where there had been issues, and also that Tourism was improving.
- 6 **Report of the District Councillor.** Councillor Phil Cowen was unable to be present, but had forwarded a report which was **received.**
- 7 **Stow Bedon PCC.** Beryl Warren (Church Warden) reported on 2013’s activities at St Botolph’s Church, Stow Bedon. Nine benefice services had been held including Harvest Festival when a different format was used, having seven readings accompanied by presentation of the appropriate gifts of harvest. In addition there was a Carol Service, a marriage, two interments of ashes and one memorial service. The Parish Council was thanked for its continuing support with the costs of maintaining the churchyard. As feared, the Quinquennial architect’s inspection was not good news, with a great deal of necessary work being highlighted. An application for a Heritage Lottery Grant had passed the initial assessment, and a decision should be made in June. The PCC foresaw a long road of decisions and fundraising ahead.
- 8 **Breckles PCC.** Margaret Morfoot (Church Secretary) gave a report on activities at St Margaret’s Church, Breckles. Generally the fabric was in good order, but here too the Quinquennial inspection had called for an inspection of the roof trusses, which could unearth expensive problems, and also within 5 years the guttering should be replaced. Ten benefice services had been held with an average attendance of 40, plus the Carol and Harvest Festival services. Sadly, the services were only supported by one resident of Breckles parish, and there is now no church warden, and only two members of the PCC (plus two ex-officio). A letter was sent to all the households in the parish detailing the problems the church faces if it is to remain open, but these elicited no response at all. The budget for the year shows a considerable deficit, and this seems likely to increase in the future, although the Council was

thanked for its support with regard to the churchyard maintenance. Church supporters continue to arrange fundraising events, but the future is very uncertain.

9 Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment. Phil Childs, Chairman of the Trustees of the Charity presented his annual report, which will be made available in full on the Parish Council Website. Six people in the parish had received grants of £400 each and he made his usual request to be informed about other potential beneficiaries. When questioned about the projected cost of fencing the Pingo Trail he said that the Trustees felt it was essential that they maintained the land so that the income from shooting rights which provided the funding of the charity could be maintained. Finally, he said that the Charity had been selected by Norfolk Rural Community Council to form a substantial part of its Poor's Land project, and formed part of a mobile display round the County telling the history of such charities, and showing how they operate today.

10 Stow Bedon Village Hall Fund. The Chairman presented the Charity's Annual Report, which is available on the Parish Council website. He said that the Council as Trustee was following its Investment Policy of leaving the large investment with St James's Place to maximise capital growth, and draw down the F&C investment as necessary to meet grants. It was pleasing to see that the St James's Place investment was growing, although it should be remembered that markets in general were performing well at present.

11 Any other business. None.

Confirmed:

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Phil Childs, Chairman

18 May 2015