

SOCIETIES OF CORFE AGM – 10th May 2022

Apologies for Absence – Sue Ford (Corfe Quilters), Keith Gosling (Corfe Village Hall and Corfe Community Trust)

Minutes of 7th May 2019 – Due to Covid, no Corfe Societies AGM has been possible since 2019. Minutes of that meeting were therefore not discussed as out of date and not relevant.

REPORTS OF THE PARISH ORGANISATIONS:

CORFE PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

The Parish Council convened several times since the last AGM in May 2019 complying with the Covid rules and at the meeting John Harrison continued as Chairman and Brian Lenthall Vice Chairman.

I would like to thank the Councillors for carrying out their portfolio duties during the pandemic and Ken Brown who has been asked to keep us up to date on the A358 Bypass project, as well as carrying out the Financial Audit of the PCs accounts.

Planning - In the past 3 years we have been consulted on several planning applications, of which 2 we gave reasons for our thoughts to decline the applications.

Speedwatch – The Speedwatch team have been active when possible and the new SIDs have been installed at no cost to the PC as Chris Brown and me obtained 2 grants. They do appear to be making a difference.

West Somerset & Taunton and SCC Councillors - In addition thanks go to Sarah Wakefield and John Thorne for their continued attendance at our meetings and updates and guidance on Local Council and County Council matters.

Village Social Meeting - This get together with new residents in mind was a great success and hopefully will happen again in the future.

Precept – Unfortunately, as you are aware the Precept was increased this year to keep up with rising costs and to keep a healthy balance for unforeseen expenditure.

Section 106 Funds - The remaining funds of the Section 106 for Recreation were lost due to no agreement within the timescale to identify a project.

White Hart Pub - As you all know the pub did not reopen after lockdown rules were eased and eventually was vacated and put on the market for sale. It would appear a buyer has been found. In the interim, I requested the protection of Community Asset Value Order, which was granted.

Dog Poo Bin - Oh nearly forget something very important but I am sure you have seen the dog poo bin which is installed at the Village Hall car park and seems to be well used.

All that remains is thank you for your attendance this evening and to those giving reports. Please feel free to stay for the Parish Council AGM which follows.

CORFE VILLAGE HALL and QUEENS ACRE COMMITTEE:

This is the first Village Hall Annual Report that has been presented for three years, due to the Covid restrictions, so along with this report a five-year financial history has been included to help understand this

period. Whilst the aims of the Village Hall Committee are broadly consistent with those for earlier years, the level of activity has been severely reduced over the past two years. Therefore, it is encouraging that we did manage to have a 'Welcome to Corfe' event for the village, a charity quiz, and the first Flower Show that has been held for some time.

However, whilst the income from renting out the Village Hall is steadily getting back on track for most activities, we have sadly seen the Youth Club, Mature Movers, and the Art Group not start up again post Covid. Therefore, it would be good to see if these activities can be replaced or alternatives found as we go forward to protect the income generated.

Income from normal activities over the last three years was £16,126, recurring costs were £11,735 and major project costs were £6,314 - which left an overall deficit of -£1,923. The major projects included further work on the Village Hall floor, a complete rewiring of the fuse box, and the installation of a dishwasher. The deficit was substantially reduced by generous donations from the Parish Council, but what has placed the Village Hall on such a strong financial footing was the various Covid grants given out by the Government. Over the last two years, these have amounted to £32,321.

This strong financial position does give several opportunities, one of which would be the replacement of the ageing container with a small, purpose-built extension. This would provide more (and safer) storage facilities in a dry and clean environment. Additional blue chairs are required, but these cannot be stored in the damp container and the current storage facilities are inadequate to cope with the existing clubs and activities. The planning requirement for this is currently being explored and if anything is possible then this would be presented back to the Parish Council for their consideration and approval.

There will also be challenges ahead with the huge pressure on costs, particularly the recent rise in energy bills. In addition, we have recently been informed that Somerset West and Taunton will be reviewing, and potentially reducing, the 100% discretionary rates relief that the Village Hall currently enjoys. On a more local level we have still to replace Judith Richards as Chair and to get cover for the Secretary and the maintenance work.

So, in summary, this has been a very challenging three years. However, much has still been achieved, with the Village Hall being an excellent and well used resource. The income from the Covid grants puts us in a unique situation to make further improvements. I would finally like to particularly thank Chris Brown and Ruth Pickles for their hard work and commitment over the last few years. I look forward to working with them, Sue Ford, and the recent new additions to the Village Hall Committee, over the next twelve months.

CORFE COMMUNITY TRUST

Due to covid restrictions, this is the first report that has been prepared for three years and the first thing to highlight is that the name has been changed from The Charity of Allotments, Corfe, Somerset to Corfe Community Trust. The trustees felt that this name is more relevant and in keeping with the Charities objectives. Each of the 3 years has seen a small surplus of income over expenditure, with the current bank balance being £6,694. The income from the Charities Official Investment Fund has remained fairly constant at just under £3,000. However, some areas of expenditure have not been required, including monies for Corfe Lifts and for cutting grass on Queens Acre. However, the rental for the Taunton Deane Helpline for parishioners continues and a successful outing last September was arranged to the Heron Vineyard at Honiton. This outing was particularly well received due to the long period of Covid restrictions. A small grant was also given to the village hall for the dishwasher, and another has been provided to help mark the Queens Platinum Jubilee with a village tea party.

Given the potentially challenging times ahead there may well be an increased need for support for people in the village and any requests for assistance will be reviewed sympathetically by the Trustees.

The trustees are: Mrs Ann Jeffery (Chairman), Mrs Christine Bradbeer, Mrs Audrey Derrick, Ms Barbara Coombes, and Mr Ken Brown. Any of them can be asked for advice if any cases of need are known, or the clerk, Mr Keith Gosling.

ALMSHOUSE CHARITY SELICKS GREEN REPORT

Cllr J Harrison reported that he was pleased to say all residents are well and none suffered from Covid. We have had solar panels installed and have had difficulty with electric suppliers to connect to the Grid but hopefully now this has been resolved. The exterior walls to the houses are currently being decorated. As three of the residents, despite repeated requests, do not tend the gardens, so we are arranging for contractors to tidy and maintain periodically. The finances are very healthy currently standing at £57k.

CORFE SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB

Since the pandemic, the club has been meeting on Friday mornings from 10am. This has resulted in our numbers increasing and we hope to start friendly matches with other clubs again soon. We will be holding our internal pairs and singles competition, which lapsed due to our previously low membership. As the club was formed when the new hall opened, playing on y evenings, we consider our longevity a great achievement for a small friendly club.

We would welcome all ages to come and have a trial game and meet us all. Age is no barrier to this sport. Our local contacts are Chris Bradbeer on 01823 421513 and June Fogwill on 01823 443645.

CORFE QUILTERS

Due to lockdowns, Corfe Quilters only started to meet again in the Village Hall in August 2021. Our membership has depleted due to various reasons, but we are able to meet regularly again. We hope to have an exhibition in 2023 so are working on projects with that in mind. We held a recent fabric pop-up shop which was quite well supported and where we handed over 22 Linus Quilts (a charity based in the UK for donation to traumatised or ill babies and children of the UK). Unfortunately, these quilts are not for children outside the UK but 6 of the quilts went immediately to some Ukrainian children who are now living in Somerset for the time being. Hopefully we will make some more, as these quilts provide a great help to these children in times of upheaval and trauma.

We hope to keep "Corfe Quilters" as a going concern and celebrated our 18th birthday in February. We welcome more ladies and gentlemen to join us. Please phone Sue Ford on 07989175387 or email richsueford@hotmail.co.uk for information.

TREE WARDEN – No report available to publish at present.

THE BLACKDOWN BENEFICE – ST NICHOLAS CHURCH CORFE

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 24th August 2022 Keith Vodden and Ann Jeffery were again elected as Church Wardens. The members of the PCC and Sidesmen were all re-appointed and their names appear on formal notice in the Church porch. At the beginning of Covid lock down in March 2020 no Church services were held though the Church was kept open for private prayer. We have gradually gone back to some form of normality and a service is held each Sunday in one of the Benefice Churches and Corfe has recently held two services of Morning Worship when young families have been invited and the children are involved in crafts, and these have been very successful. We held a Festival of Angels last December organised by Christine Bradbeer and £215 was raised for Church Funds which have become depleted due to the reduction in services in Corfe. Our usual service of Lessons and Carols was held before Christmas with the choir of Taunton's Minister under the direction of Miles Quick their musical director. This was well attended. Benefice sunrise service was held at Otterford which was well attended on a lovely Easter Sunday morning with the moon setting in the west and the sun rising in the east. We welcome the Revd Nick Jerret in June who is acting as Curate in the benefice for three years. We are grateful for his work among us and of course to our Rector, the Revd Jim Fallon. Thanks, are also due to Angela Vodden our very efficient Treasurer, Shirley Grinter, our organist and Ann Finchett our Sacristan, Angela Yarde who cleans the Church so

efficiently and Clive Wembridge who Mows the Churchyard with such enthusiasm. A Zoom Service is held each Sunday at 5.00pm and this is much appreciated especially by those who are still nervous about Covid. We have participants from France, Greece, and of course local friends. Notice of current Services is displayed in the Church porch and on the two gates.