

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF NORTH MOLTON**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> MAY, 2022 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE VICTORY HALL, NORTH MOLTON**

**Present:** Vice Chairman Dunn (chaired the meeting in Chairman Peek's absence); Councillor Barron; Councillor Bulled; Councillor Darley; Councillor Jennings; Councillor Johnson; Councillor Milne; Councillor Procter; Councillor Smaldon; District Councillor Bulled and the Parish Clerk, Noel Brooks - David Clark representing *All Saints Parish Church*, Richard Carder representing the *Feoffees* and Rob Kingdon representing the *North Molton Sports Club & Community Centre* also attended.

- 1. Apologies:** Chairman Peek, Councillor Geen & County Councillor Yabsley – all agreed.
- 2. Reading of the Minutes of the Last Annual Meeting of The Parish of North Molton held on 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 and approved at the 16th June, 2021 Parish Council Meeting in accordance with Local Government Administration.** The Clerk read out the Minutes.

**3. Matters Arising:** None

**4. Representations of Electors:** None

**5. Outgoing Chairman's Report** – Acting Chairman Dunn read out Chairman Peek's Report as follows: *This last year the work of the Parish Council has continued although now back in person. It has been much easier face-to-face.*

*Planning matters still occupy a good proportion of our time. The Lower Poole development has caused some problems but the Administrator is working to have some of the houses finished. When all is concluded there, the Parish Council is still keen to acquire the land to the west of the road opposite the development. We are in discussion with the Administrator to this effect. As I write, the outline planning application for houses to the west of the school has been re-approved.*

*The Laurels Playground refurbishment is nearing completion with the arrival of some more equipment recently. I would like to thank the sub-committee members who have guided this project along and also acquired funding from different sources notably the Lottery funding (Anne Johnson), Griffiths the contractors on the Link Road (Liz Bullied) and the Section 106 money from NDC. I would also like to thank all those who organised and took part in the very successful auction held in the Sports Club last September notably, Claire Barron and Anne Johnson. A good time was had by all, although the auctioneer, Gareth Clarke, did have some difficulty in being heard and hearing the bidding. The walls of the playground will be repaired and painted in due course.*

*The old BT phone box has now been transformed led by Hugh Jennings into the 'Book Box' with a variety of titles which can be borrowed.*

*The Parish Council has been in discussion to try to apply for training for First Responders which has not yet been successful. However, Melanie Jezzard is looking for volunteers for First Aid training which is supported and funded by the Council. She has recently put a post on the village Facebook™ page with more information.*

*The road works at Borners Bridge have caused some difficulties in getting to South Molton but I hope that, when finished, the roundabout will make the junction safer.*

*The Highways sub-committee continues to keep an eye on and organise work on our roads. If you see any problems, please get in touch so that we can organise to do remedial work.*

*There will shortly be a new Parish website which will be more up-to-date in its look. It is a work-in-progress and will be completed soon.*

*I would like to thank my fellow councillors for all their help and support in the last year. Meeting back in person has been a welcome relief from Zoom™ meetings although they have their place.*

*I am sorry that I am unable to be at the meeting in person as I will be in Spain to celebrate my eldest son's marriage to a Spanish Lady.*

### **Heasley Mill Village Hall Management Committee**

Councillor Barron read out Chairman Jackie Blackmore's 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2022 End-of-Year Report as follows:

*Once again quite a strange year for the Hall with the continued pandemic issues due to Covid 19.*

*However, the Hall has been hired at various times when the restrictions have made it easier for hiring which has raised a total of £870 including a funeral and art workshop plus exhibition.*

*At the end of last July the family of Mary Moore held a Celebration Afternoon which family and friends attended - whilst the weather was a little chilly there was a wonderful selection of food produced by Helen Jennings.*

*The costs for general maintenance and repairs during the year were £464 and the Hall Committee would like to thank the North Molton Parish Council for their continued support which is very much appreciated.*

*Jacqui Blackmore - Chairman  
1<sup>st</sup> May 2022*

### **Feoffees**

On behalf of The *Feoffees*, Richard Carder reported that the organisation continued to look after seven properties, one of which was *The Old School Hall*. Refurbishment works had continued, for example, at *Bakery Cottage* which had been re-pointed. The *Feoffees* had taken over control of the management of *The Old School Hall* following the disbanding of its Management Committee in April. A review on *The Old School Hall* would take place in November when its insurance was due to expire. There was a full complement of tenants and a waiting list of some thirty or forty people - whenever a vacancy became available, it was advertised on social media with responses being received within minutes – there was an emphasis on housing local people. Consideration of any works to *All Saints Parish Church* would be given upon analysis of its awaited *Quinquennial Report*.

### **All Saints Parish Church**

David Clark read out the Annual Report for 2021 as follows: 2021 started with the second lockdown but with churches now allowed to stay open, so throughout the year church services were held on Wednesdays and Sundays with the congregation wearing masks. There was no hymn singing until towards the end of the year. The church was locked between times. Wednesday attendances held

up fairly well but the congregation for Sunday services was much reduced from pre-pandemic levels but did recover slightly towards the end of the year. The impact of the pandemic was appreciable: Lent lunches did not take place and no fund- raising events were organised.

Rev. Baker's sabbatical which was cancelled in 2020 took place between April and August and at the beginning of September he moved to become Vicar at Braunton. At about the same time, Rev. Alistair Foreman retired. The Edgemoor group was plunged into an interregnum. With no stipendiary clergy in the group, Rev. Alison Rogers headed up a small team of clergy: Canon Michael Rogers, Rev. Jane Lucas and Rev. Bryant Sanders, and they maintained our pattern of services for the rest of the year. During the Autumn, meetings were held to prepare the parish profile which would be part of the information pack sent to applicants.

The third wave of Covid, identified as the variant Omicron, arrived. The Harvest was celebrated in the Methodist Chapel followed by a bought-in buffet lunch which resulted in a smaller donation to the FCN than in previous years. The Remembrance Day service took place as usual around the memorial followed by the service in Church with a donation made to the Royal British Legion. Attendance at the Christmas services was limited by Omicron.

The grant from the Parish Council has enabled the Church Yard to be maintained to a high standard by Tim Cole. This Council has also contributed to the maintenance of the tower clock.

The Common Fund payment in 2021 was £22,200.

The pandemic has had considerable impact on church finances with the unrestricted account showing a deficit of over £3,200 for the year.

The lychgates which are listed have to be repaired at an estimated cost of £1,500. Repair is in hand. Moving to the current year 2022, if I may make comment about the Interregnum. This month the vacancies are being advertised. Interviews will be held on July 7 and hopefully a Rector for the Edgemoor Group of Parishes, possibly supported by a spouse as part-time vicar, will be in place by late autumn.

**North Molton Sports Club & Community Centre** – Chairman Rob Kingdon explained the club's current management structure. The 2021 year-end accounts were in the process of being finalised to be made available at the club's A.G.M to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2022 – there were currently no borrowings with income mainly raised from hire of the premises, memberships and kind donations. Successful applications had been made for some of the Covid grants during the pandemic – post-Covid had proved a successful period with current funds standing at £27.17k. There were 148 current members all enjoying the benefits of the clubhouse and reduced bar prices. The membership was expected to increase during the summer. One of the two men's football teams had reached the Devon County finals. There was affiliated roller-hockey, badminton, archery, skittles, and keep-fit classes. The venue was used by the *Premier Main Devon & Cornwall Constabulary* for police training, *The Libra School* for training, the *Rotary Club* for its meetings and the *Exmoor Beast Cycle Rally*. The key events which did take place in 2021 were *Mission Unbreakable* in support of the *North Devon Hospice*, *The North Devon Country Fair* in association with the *Above & Beyond Charity & Tesco*, and a successful *Youth Dynamo* cricket season. Looking forward, there was the *Queen's Platinum Jubilee* weekend taking place on 3<sup>rd</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> June, a further *Summer Fair* on 21<sup>st</sup> August, *Mission Unbreakable* scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 with an annual Skittles competition to be announced. Current projects and planned expense included summer pitch renovations conducted in association with the *Football Federation* for which a grant had been received in May 2021 and bar renovations in association with *St Austell Breweries*. A new website was intended to be launched in 2022. Two proposed new football stands were expected to be announced with planning this year. A *Football Association* defibrillator was expected to be installed in May 2022.

**Parish Council Highways Report** – Councillor Milne kindly provided her report as follows:

### ***Highways Report May 2022***

During the year 2021/2022 the Highways sub-committee has contracted sub-contractors to carry out the following works in the Parish:

#### ***1 Drainage Hot Spots***

Ian Woolcott has carried out work on Warkleigh Hill and the Libra school, in Heasley Mill, at Roy Richards' shed and around Yarde Down clearing gullies in the flooding hot spots.

#### ***2 Verge/Hedge trimming***

Ian Woolcott has carried out all the verge and hedge trimming in the parish during the year.

#### ***3 Weed-spraying***

A & B carried out the first spray as SMTC were unable to do it due to COVID. SMTC carried out the second spray.

#### ***3 Edge-ploughing and gully-clearing***

Edge-ploughing was not carried out during this year due to contractor illness. However, the contractor Jonney Butt has carried out 4 days of edge-ploughing during April. The stretches of roads ploughed were Huntstone Cross to Coombeshead cross and Flitton Green and Holewater to Yarde Down where several gullies were discovered and these are going to be cleared by Ian Woollcott. There is a schedule of further edge-ploughing priorities which the contractor will complete during winter 22/23.

Other matters to report:

#### ***5 Gritting***

No gritting was required during the year. The Parish still has stocks of salt and grit for winter 22/23.

#### ***6 Finger Posts***

Many of the finger posts in the parish are in a poor state. DCC has repaired some of them but they all need to be cleaned. This can be done easily with some wet grass or a wet cloth and some have been cleaned by members of the Highways Committee and other individuals.

#### ***7 Resurfacing Work***

DCC has re-surfaced some roads in the Parish including the road to Nadrid, which is being used more frequently since the junction closures at Borners Bridge. The road at Sannacott has been repaired and other roads in the parish have been re-surfaced during the year.

## **8 Potholes**

Potholes on the Parish's roads continue to be problematic, however, if they are reported on the DCC website they are repaired.

## **9 Borners Bridge/Link Road Work**

The work on improving the link road and creating a roundabout at Borners Bridge continues. Other routes into the village are getting more traffic i.e., the Stony Bridge to Nadrid road and Bish Mill roundabout to Bendle Lane. DCC has re-surfaced these roads and repaired potholes, however they are getting a lot of extra use. The Parish Council Chair attends the contractor meetings on a regular basis and there is a good relationship with the contractors. Work is due to be completed by September 2022 but there have been a number of wildlife delays which may cause it to overrun.

## **10 Communication with DCC/Richard Sables**

Parish Highways' notes are sent to Richard Sables and Tom Vaughan at DCC on a regular basis together with work that needs carrying out in the Parish, however, communication continues to be problematic.

**North Molton History Society** – Acting Chairman Dunn is a member of the Society. He reported that the Society had not met due to Covid – there had been no financial movements. It was hoped that the Society would reconvene in September 2022.

**Closing Comments By Acting Chairman Dunn:** *I'd like to thank everyone who has attended and provided their reports – it is evident that a lot of hard background work has been carried out by the organisations concerned. It has been good to learn that the Sports Club has been doing well with lots of activities and that the Feoffees have been similarly and relatively active in their sphere of operation. I'm sorry to learn that the Church has had such a hard time during the pandemic but hope that things will improve in the future. It is evident that the organisations are all well-run and the parish should be grateful for the all the hard work put in.*

The Meeting closed at 8.12 p.m..