

REDLYNCH PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES



Minutes of the Redlynch Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 13th April 2021 at 7.15pm via Zoom.

Present: Parish Cllrs Bennett, Budworth, Horbury, Horsburgh, Peacock, Stride, Voss, Unitary Cllr candidate Zoe Clewer and 5 members of the public.

1. Welcome and Introduction by Parish Council Chairman Kate Budworth:

Cllr Budworth welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting and thanked them for attending the first ever virtual Annual Parish Meeting.

2. Apologies for absence:

There were no apologies for absence.

3. Chairman's Annual Report:

Good evening everyone and welcome to the Redlynch annual parish meeting at the end of what has been an extraordinary year. The Council is aware of the affects that COVID 19 has had on our community and is grateful for the efforts made by all the keyworkers, volunteers and many others who have contributed to help our residents these past 12 months.

We didn't have a Parish meeting last year due to entering an unprecedented and unpredictable situation with national lockdowns, closure of schools and businesses, sporting and leisure facilities and what has been a global health emergency that has changed our way of life. Redlynch Parish Council took measures under the Government UK COVID 19 guidelines from April 2020 and whilst it was not possible to hold physical council meetings we embraced the technology and have had regular virtual Council meetings via ZOOM since June.

Over what has been a most difficult year your Parish Council has worked hard to try and ensure a normal service with regards to the various responsibilities that fall within our remit, and to adapt to the unusual times. We worked with the Church to distribute flyers to all households in the Parish to ask for volunteers to assist the vulnerable within our community and to let people know that there was help available if needed. We had volunteers hand delivering flyers and then the local postmen offering to deliver the majority so that the whole Parish was covered. To assist the community we posted updated COVID information on our website and lists of local food suppliers.

We are very fortunate in that we don't just live in a beautiful location of the National Park but we also live in a community which cares and has an abundance of goodwill and generosity, this was exemplified by the volunteer list for COVID support and how the community have rallied in general through these extraordinary times. The usual programme of Parish events has been very limited this last year, but the Parish Council have managed to complete works that we can continue to look forward to enjoying as the restrictions hopefully continue to ease.

You may have noticed a number of road signs disappearing and reappearing in a much improved state! After an approach by a parishioner regarding the state of a road sign, the Parish Council decided to undertake an audit of signage around the villages. With the majority being in a poor state, and knowing that they wouldn't be a priority for the County Council, we decided to undertake a refurbishment programme. The Lover Repair Café agreed to take on the works and with Parish Council funds and a successful application to the Community Area Transport Group (CATG), 51 road signs were successfully bought back to life and our thanks go to the Repair Café for all their hard work and to Councillor Horbury for her lead on this.

We know that antisocial behaviour has been a major concern within the Parish recently. We hope that you have noticed an increased police presence as we have established a close working relationship with the police who have been addressing those concerns. They have attended two of our meetings this year and

although both Inspector Pete Sparrow and PC James Barrett have now moved on, Inspector Tina Osborn and PC Mark Douglas alongside PCSO Matt Murray have pledged to continue the focussed police work and now have the use of Woodfalls Village Hall as a police hub moving forward.

We have continued to support our assets through the Asset Grant Scheme with grants provided for Lover Green, Redlynch Village Hall, Morgan's Vale and Woodfalls Village Hall and Redlynch Playing Fields Association. I would like to formally thank the management committees of those assets on behalf of the Parish Council and recognise the great job they do under often difficult circumstances. Grants have also been given to Downton 1st Scouts for kitchen improvements and Langley wood for footpath improvement works. The Council have also paid for the bus shelters to be cleaned and have worked with members of the community to respond to the Wiltshire Local Plan Review Consultation.

Early on in the year we had to close our playparks following Government COVID advice. However, you may have seen them back in full use with the recent addition of a zip wire at Redlynch as part of our phased playground equipment project. It is proving most popular! It is lovely to see people gradually back out and about again, lockdown has seen so many of the usual activities in the village suspended and we can only hope that things will keep moving in the right direction and gradually some normality will resume.

The council have continued to address a number of planning applications throughout the year and have had councillor representations on management committees, Neighbourhood Tasking Group, South Wilts Area Board, CATG, New Forest Consultative panel, North West Quadrant of the National Park, Downton Link, National Association of Local Councils and The Stockman and Woodlands Charitable Trust where COVID has allowed. We have also continued the everyday running of the cemetery at Grove Lane, the allotments at Vale Road and various areas of grass cutting throughout the parish.

We have purchased and installed a World War 2 commemorative bench at the top of Bowers Hill and attended the pared down service for Remembrance Sunday which was still respectful and effective during these restricted times. As a beacon of hope and light you may have witnessed the first ever Parish Christmas tree welcoming you at Bowers Hill in December. Many thanks to Nicky Ashton, our parish Clerk, for working hard to get this installed in time to bring some joy at the end of a gloomy year, and to Councillor's Bennett and Horbury for digging the trench for the electricity supply, Jim Butt for the trench works, Hamptworth Estate for the tree donation and Access engineering for the tree holder and capping off the hole and the volunteers for helping put the tree up. Our thanks also go to the children from Morgan's Vale and Woodfalls CE Primary School for providing some lovely tree decorations and to Woodfalls Band for playing carols whilst the lights were switched on by Ivy Jean Sainsbury. A very welcome addition to the parish for 2020 and every year moving forward.

During this last year we have said goodbye to Councillor's John Blocksidge and Nicky Newton and thank them for all their hard work and dedication and we have welcomed Jill Horsburgh. We strive to offer a democratic voice for our local community and bring a wide range of experience to the Council and work hard for no financial reward and often little thanks. My personal thanks go to all the voluntary Councillors who have helped in various ways to ensure that Redlynch Parish Council has continued to serve residents during these unprecedented times, and of course to Nicky, who continues to tackle every new scenario with a smile whilst also keeping us all informed and in line! This past year, in particular, has been a steep learning curve for us all and one that generations to come will be learning about in their history lessons! On May 6th we have Council elections which will see a change in the line- up of your Councillors. Having served for 9 years, 5 of those as chairman, I am not re-standing this year and someone new will be taking over the mantel. Similarly, our Wiltshire County Councillor, Leo Randall, is also retiring and I know that you will join me in giving him huge thanks for all that he has done for our Parish, he has been a constant supporter, not only at our meetings, but also in the local community and has always been on hand to offer advice, assistance and a link to various departments at the County Council. We wish him all the very best for the future.

Moving forward we have some new parishioners putting in papers for election which is very exciting, but we will still hold some vacancies. If you have an interest in what goes on in your local community and would like to have a role in how decisions are made in the future -please consider becoming a Parish Councillor. You can email our clerk for more information or attend a meeting and talk to any members there. Our thanks also go out to the many organisations, groups and individuals who are involved in any aspect of the community in whatever role you do, you all play a part in making this a parish that we can be proud of.

It has been an enriching experience serving on the Council, sometimes frustrating, sometimes difficult but interesting and rewarding and an honour to work alongside the people that I have. I wish this Council every luck moving forward, hopefully to brighter times with less restrictions, and I know that they will strive to do their very best for our community. A final thought – our present circumstances don't determine where you can go but merely determine from where you start. Onwards and upwards!

4. To receive presentations from Community Groups:

A representative for Lover Community Trust, who run and manage The Old School building and Lover Green, spoke to provide an update on works which have taken place. Lockdown was used to push on with renovation works to The Old School. Various works completed include the installation of sliding doors providing direct access to the green, new flooring, new community room and currently obtaining quotations for full catering facilities. Due to the pandemic it was not possible to run the pop up post office or Darling Café this year and it was operated online instead raising £12,000 and money raised for the pre-school was over £1,000.

With regards to Lover Green, there has been lots of maintenance works completed to the footpaths and small orchard area. Duke of Edinburgh volunteers have assisted with the maintenance works. The Asset Grant provided by the Parish Council was used for tree maintenance works and to install bollards to prevent unauthorised entry to the Green. The Green was used in lockdown for exercise and will open for football training. The Parish Council were thanked for their support financially and also their general support.

5. Parish time capsule – to discuss the idea of a COVID time capsule:

A parishioner suggested the idea of a parish time capsule to document the pandemic. It was suggested that it could perhaps be open during the Census year of 2031. It was agreed to put the suggestion on the next Parish Council agenda for the Council to discuss and progress the idea.

6. Any general questions to Parish Councillors from residents who are on the electoral roll for Redlynch Parish:

A parishioner spoke to thank the Parish Council for the last year especially the Christmas tree, the new bench at Bowers Hill War Memorial and the improvements at the playing fields with the installation of the zip wire which he was first to try! He also praised the well looked after and laid out cemetery which is always a pleasure to visit. As a result of the Parish Council's article in the parish magazine regarding the "Get Out, Get Active" project he is hoping to set up Walking Football.

A member of the local Speed Watch team spoke to highlight the ongoing issues of speeding on The Ridge. He attempted to emphasise the importance of monitoring speeding particularly along The Ridge at the advertised Police Surgery which was supposed to take place last week but there were no Police in attendance and no one in the shop (the location it was advertised to take place) knew anything about the event.

It was agreed that enquiries would be made as to why the event did not take place.

7. Close:

With no further questions Cllr Budworth thanked those present for attending and the meeting was closed at 7.57pm.