

# PASTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Martin K Campbell, Well Cottage, High Street, Southrepps, Norwich NR11 8AH  
Telephone: 01263 834551 E-mail: nnparishes@tiscali.co.uk

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 3rd May 2018 in the Church, Paston

Present: N Bardswell, (Chairman), M Brett, P Clabon, D McKeough, L Nicholson,  
Cllr B Smith (NNDC), and 2 members of the public.

1. Mr N Bardswell welcomed all those present with apologies received from C Emberson
2. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on May 4th 2017 were taken as read.
3. Chairman's report

The Parish Council continued to manage the village facilities that it's responsible for: **Planning applications** have been scrutinised and commented on. The main planning focus has been the continued development of the Holiday Village. We also monitored their site – there had been concern about demolition spoil dumped on the site containing asbestos which was finally removed under County Council supervision last summer (2017).

**Highways** The County Council are not going to give us a 30 (rather than 40) m p h limit through the village centre as we have asked, which they say they will only do on stretches of road where there are houses on both sides. But following concern about children crossing the road by the village centre on their way to and from the bus, the County Council have put in a foot path on the corner of Vicarage Road so they can cross at a point where they can see further both ways. The cost of £3,200 was shared equally between County Council and Parish Council funds. We have asked for a railing to complete the safety provision.

**"Affordable Housing" in the village** Is something the Parish Council would like to see – which would have to be a mixture of ordinary market housing and what's called "affordable housing" for people in need on the housing waiting list. There have been two problems. One is that no site we have suggested has been regarded by the Council as suitable. The little field off Bears Road looked the most obvious site for development but has been ruled out by the County Council (we think wrongly) because of difficult vehicular access. The other problem is the Council's policy of generally speaking allowing new housing only around market towns and larger villages, which we feel risks leaving small villages like Paston declining when we should be evolving, adapting and growing. We shall persevere.

**Coastal erosion** continues to be a concern, and the Parish Council is represented on the Coastal Forum and the Gas Terminal Liaison committee. Paston village itself is sufficiently inland not to be under threat in the foreseeable future, but not so the northern end of the Parish at Stow Hill. The policy in recent past has been not to spend money on sea defences where erosion will lead to loss only of relatively few homes and of agricultural land – the Council have an erosion forecast map assuming loss of the sea defences and cliff erosion re commencing. This shows the sea having taken by 2105 the Holiday Village and the Hill Side chalets. However, the Government have decided the gas terminal must be protected, through which passes possibly a third of Britain's gas. So next year vast amounts of sand dredged from out to sea is to be deposited on the beach to reverse or halt its gradual sinking – an experimental solution being pioneered in Holland. It is hoped by the coastal engineers this will prolong the life of the defences, which may avoid or postpone the erosion scenario.

**Footpaths.** The Parish Council has given support and provided evidence for an application to register Sandy Lane and Yarmouth Way on the "definitive map" – these run from Stow Hill west to

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Knapton Road and east past the Holiday Village to the cliff top. The application is to register the paths as used on foot, horseback and bicycle (no motor powered vehicles).

**The Sir William Paston Charity**, for the benefit of poor people in Paston, runs the alms-houses. Cris Emberson a Parish Councillor is a trustee Thanks are due to him and the current Trustees for bringing its finances under control. In particular they have now repaid a loan which the Council made to tide them over a serious cash flow problem.

**The Church** re ordering the installation of water and facilities now looks to be going to happen. This was planned by the village committee including three Parish Council representatives. As well as providing better access to the Grade 1 listed building and its features which are of importance to our national heritage, it will provide a gathering and event space for village use, which there hasn't been since the old village hall closed. The church finances generally are uncertain as most of its maintenance and insurance is now paid for by about 6 local people, but the reordering should ensure its survival The Council has given a £500 grant towards upkeep and improvement of the churchyard which will help particularly with the new garden of remembrance..

**The Playground.** A couple of years or so ago the Council circulated the village saying that the children's playground needed either serious money spending on it or to be closed, and asking whether they really wanted a playground. The answer was a resounding "Yes!" In response, as everyone knows, two Parish Council members Denise McKeough and Maggie Brett took up the challenge and have now planned and raised enough funding – a staggering £40,000 - for a full re-equip, which is to be started in a few months' time. Many thanks and well done to them.

**Daffodils and flowers.** A spin off from the playground project - volunteers from all over Paston planted many 100's of daffodils last autumn which brightened up early spring around the Pond and Bears Lane. Planting is continuing under Denise and Maggie's guidance.

**Administration** going forward will be complicated by new regulatory requirements. We have needed an updated much longer clerk's contract and we are going to have to get used to working within the new EU General Data Protection Regulations, ("GDPR") which require any organisation to get people's consent for holding their contact and personal details

**The village website** is now required by Law to enable everyone to read Parish Council meeting dates, minutes, reports and accounts. It also serves to give news and comment on things of concern and interest to Paston residents. <http://pastonparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/> We welcome everyone to supply things to put on it.

**Thank you** finally to Elizabeth Purdy our former chairman who retired last August after some 25 years on the Council, to our councillors for their hard work, and to Martin Campbell our clerk who to ensures our smooth running, and everyone in the village who has helped with everything that's going on – a few years ago it seemed difficult to arouse interest in the village but now everyone rallies round enthusiastically, like with the playground and planting projects. May this community spirit continue and grow.

## 4. Other reports:

4.1 SWP Charities - Chris Emberson reported that private funding allowed the almshouse refurbishment – new kitchen, electrics, heating, carpets and redecoration. The result is very pleasing and the new tenant will move in shortly.

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## 4.2 Paston Heritage Society - no report

## 4.3 Paston Community Project

Our project is now getting near to realisation, with planning permission now granted for residential development of the old village hall site, the sale of which hopefully will provide much of the funding. The village hall site incidentally is held by the Norwich Diocese in a trust and the way it has been done was the only way the value in the village hall site could be retained in Paston

The plan (by way of recap) is to lay on water to the church, install toilets and kitchen at the rear, and remove some pews, reduce the length of others and move the font, all to make a gathering space.

This is to meet two objectives,

- 1 to enable greater access to the wall paintings and features the importance of which is, exemplified by their having featured in a television documentary presented by Helen Castor, and that the Paston family are the subject of forthcoming exhibitions in Norwich and at Yale University in the USA, - it's quite a responsibility for a small village like ours looking after an important part of our national heritage and
2. to provide Paston with an event space, lacks since the former village hall was closed due to lack of support.

Our thanks to those of the Parish Council and Church Council on the steering committee looking at all the possibilities and options, and to Philip Burton for carrying through and implementing our decisions.

## 4.4 Paston PCC

**St Margaret's** church having been kept open there can go on being held funerals and weddings Sunday church services are held once or twice a month. Not the congregations of 40 to 50 people that the service records show 50 to 60 years ago but we have kept going the 700 + tradition of Christian worship in St Margaret's. As reported separately the project planned jointly by Parish and Church councils progresses and now looks as if it's going to happen.

Thanks to the Community Payback Service the churchyard is now under control and we have gradually been tidying it up. Also as previously reported last year, we were asked to move the memorial plaques from the base of the tower. So we are establishing a new garden of remembrance by the lynch gate. We are going to move there the plaques and, where they are preserved, the actual caskets of ashes. The Diocese required us to get permission from relatives of every person on a plaque, some of whom took a lot of time and research to track down but we've now managed that. Or thanks to Philip Burton for the immense amount of work he's put in on this.

We were grateful for the £500 grant from the Parish Council towards upkeep and improvement of the churchyard.

Financing the church becomes ever more difficult. We receive donations and fees for weddings and funerals and we can usually get a grant towards for any major repair or improvement expenditure..But it's not generally appreciated that most of the day to day expenses of running maintaining and insuring the church are now borne by a dwindling band now of only about six people. On top of which we pay "parish share" like a levy to the Diocese and also a contribution to our group of 7 churches. In 2017 the Diocese levy was roughly the same again as the total church running costs If this were less we might be able to insure the church for its full rebuilding estimate,

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rather than just a quarter. We hope that the use of the reordered church may bring in enough income to keep it going. Time will tell.

4.5 Policing matters – no reports

4.6 Paston Great Barn - no report

4.7 NNCT - no report

4.8 NNDC - Cllr Smith reported on the Bacton gas site liaison and the sandscaping project.

4.9 NCC - Cllr Maxfield talked about the new charges for waste disposal, fly-tipping and speeding issues.

5. Open meeting - Hilary Cox (marine Conservation society) gave a short talk with pictures about the Cromer Shoal Chalk Reef, a reef 2½ miles off the coast from Weybourne to Happisburgh. She showed the meeting many examples of the plants and sea creatures which inhabit the reef. There would be meetings and consultations about its preservation and importance.

The meeting closed at 19.55

Signed ..... Chairman

Date ..... July 2018