

# Minutes of Holbrook's Annual Parish Meeting

held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 at 7.30 p.m. at the Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr John Ambrose (Chairman) Cllr Robert Allinson, Cllr Mel Holmes, Cllr Sally Ingleton, Cllr M Pittman, Cllr Justin Stephens, Councillor Mary McLaren, PC Katie Jarrett, Simon Lockyer, Head Boy and Head Girl from RHS and representatives from Holbrook Helpers, Holbrook Events Team, Holbrook Society, Holbrook Village Hall Committee, The Bowls Club, the Flower Club, Churches Together, The PC's Climate Action Working Group (Greener Holbrook Greener World), The Swan Football Club, the Parish Recorder, the Community Self Help Group, the Quoits Club and members of the Parish (38 attendees in total)

In attendance: Jo Hazlewood (Parish Clerk)

- 1. Apologies** were received from 2 residents, Cllr Denise Martin and County Cllr Simon Harley
- 2. Introduction and welcome:** John Ambrose, Chairman of Holbrook Parish Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the meeting was a meeting for the Parish to come together and share news about their organisations as well as an opportunity for people to raise any matters for consideration, but as this was not a Parish Council meeting, no decisions would be made at the meeting.
- 3. Payment of Peppercorn Rent:** To make the payment of the peppercorn rent for the Reade Field, to representatives of the Royal Hospital School. Cllr Ambrose explained that the first presentation of the reed for the Reade Field was made in July 1968 in the presence of the Queen Mother at the opening of the Fire Station. The lease started on 15th July 1968 and runs for 99 years. The Head Boy and Head Girl of the Royal Hospital School received the Holbrook reed on behalf of the RHS
- 4. To receive a report from the Royal Hospital School:** Simon Lockyer, Headteacher of RHS, thanked HPC for the reed. He reported that the Greenwich Hospital relationship with the royal navy has been very strong and is currently re-establishing. He said that the Admiral of the German navy had visited the RHS recently. He also told the meeting that this was the 9<sup>th</sup> and final time he would receive this reed as he is handing over the reins to a new head in September, who he felt sure would want to continue to be involved in the community. He thanked residents of Holbrook for their continued support of events at the RHS.
- 5. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023.** Copies of the minutes were tabled at the meeting and were on the website. Approval was proposed by Cllr Holmes on and seconded by Cllr Allinson and was agreed by all. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.
- 6. To receive the Annual report of the Parish Council from the Chairman, Cllr John Ambrose.**  
Cllr Ambrose thanked fellow councillors for their support during the year and for the experience they bring to the council. He also thanked the clerk for supporting the

council throughout the year and himself in his role as chairman. He said that Issues are often raised by residents at council meetings and encouraged residents to come along to regular monthly meetings to do this. Issues have included pot holes, car parking, the sports centre and the surgery. Where possible, the Council do try to resolve them or contact the appropriate authority. Sometimes there is little or nothing that the parish council can do which can be frustrating to members of the public and equally frustrating for the Council, but he assured residents that the Council investigates all options available to it. Sometimes, issues are common with other parishes on the peninsula. The Shotley Peninsula Parish Council Alliance now exists to discuss and voice mutual concerns, such as the increased traffic at the Freston crossroads and the need to improve it.

Cllr Ambrose thanked both the District Councillor Mary McLaren and County Councillor Simon Harley who attend Holbrook Parish Council's monthly meetings.

He also thanked the Community Caretaker, the Village Hall Management Committee (especially David Rose), Holbrook Helpers, Holbrook Society, Holbrook Events Team, the P3 group, Greener Holbrook Greener World, the Community Self Help Group, the Neighbourhood Plan Team, the Community Speedwatch Team and the many others who quietly work to make Holbrook a good place to live in.

He said that Holbrook had a buzz about it: with monthly film nights, the village meal, Holbrook Society events and a successful village fete. He added that next month a new event "beating the bounds" would take place on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May.

Finally, looking forward he said there was still work for the Parish Council to do in the year ahead, including replacing the pavilion on the Reade Field and how the sports centre at the Academy can be made available for further community use.

#### **7. To receive the financial report from the Responsible Finance Officer:**

The Clerk/RFO of the Council reported that The Parish started the year on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 with an opening balance of £69,845.44 and closed on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 with a balance of £71,951.56. She reported that The largest expenditure items for the year were the remaining cost of converting the street lighting to LED lamps, an additional defibrillator sited at Abbots Way and a new accessible gate for the Reade Road end of the Reade Field. The Council are grateful to the County and District Councillors for supporting the purchase of the defibrillator with grants from their locality budgets. Within the total funds carried forward are reserves of £29,000 towards the new pavilion. Thanks go to Holbrook Society for donating the majority of the funds from the 2023 Holbrook Trail and to The Swan Football team for their fund-raising activities for the pavilion fund. Other reserves are held for replacing essential equipment and funds from a grant from Babergh DC to continue the Fitness classes for another year. The Council are awaiting delivery of a new slide and log traverse for the Reade Field playground, which will be part funded by a grant from Babergh. The Council continues to invite applications for grants during the year, up to a maximum amount of £500, from local charitable or non-profit making organisations who provide facilities and services for the benefit of the local community. Applications should be made in writing, or by email, to the Clerk. Applications will be considered in the late Autumn when the Council sets its budget and approved grants will be paid during the following financial year. Copies of the Receipts and Payments

statement for financial year 2023-2024 were tabled at the meeting and were on the website. As soon as the accounts had been audited, the auditors' report will be published on the website, together with a copy of the audited accounts.

**8. To invite Cllr Mary McLaren, Babergh District Council to address the meeting.**

Cllr M McLaren presented her annual report and invited questions. The full report is on the Website. Cllr McLaren thanked the Parish Council and residents for their support

**9. To invite Cllr Simon Harley, Suffolk County Council, to address the meeting.**

Cllr Simon Harley was unable to be present but his full report is on the website.

**10. To receive reports from representatives of other village organisations.**

(a) Joy Squirrell from **Holbrook Society** highlighted all the many events organised by Holbrook Society – the full report is on the website. She mentioned that the next Holbrook Trail and Open Gardens will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> June and invited suggestions for future events.

(b) Christine Holmes **Greener Holbrook, Greener World**, gave a brief report about the activities over the previous year. Currently there are approximately 30 people on the mailing list and invited anyone interested to join. Meetings are held on 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at The Methodist Church. Recently a family event - Hedgehog Hooray was held on the Reade Field as well as various events throughout the year held in collaboration with Holbrook Society. GHGW will be at the Village Fete, together with representatives from Babergh's Climate Action Group.

(c) **Churches Together**: Steve Mann, Holbrook Methodist Minister, introduced himself and commented on how well the Churches in Holbrook work together. He said he would be happy to come to any local meetings in the future.

(d) PC Kate Jarrett: **Community Police Officer**, told the meeting that she covers 28 villages whilst working part time. Her role includes schools' liaison and she has 20 schools in her area. She deals also with investigations and long term problem solving and any anti-social behaviour. She will continue to contribute to the Parish Papers. She enjoys her visits to Holbrook and feels it is a very safe place to live.

(e) Trevor Gibbs, **Community Self Help Group**, explained what the group has been doing over the past year. He said they have 16 active members – work has been carried out on The Cut, washing down the road signs locally, and clearing the footpath on Primrose Hill, which was very overgrown. However Suffolk Highways have now stopped the work on Primrose Hill. The group has trained 3 people who are qualified to carry out this type of work, but Highways have suggested further work would need traffic lights and road closures. The group has worked on the bus shelter at the end of Woodlands Road and are about to start on the Compasses bus shelter. They put photos of the work they do on Shaun's Shorts and get excellent feedback from the public. A full report is on the website.

(f) Fran Williams – **Parish Recorder**. The full report on the website. The Parish Recorder said she takes photos around the village of any changes and invited people to send her any photographs they may have, as there is a real lack of photos from 1995 onwards and she would like this to be redressed.

(g) Les Jolley gave a brief update on the work of the **Village Hall Committee** – he particularly wanted to emphasise the enormous contribution of David Rose who had been chairman of the Village Hall Committee for 42 years and he felt he would be an impossible act to follow.

(h) Les Jolley also gave a brief outline of activities in the **Bowls Club** – They had 4 teams running – their Monday team were runners up in their league, the Tuesday team won their league, but the Wednesday team moved down a league. They were now also playing a Thursday evening team. He encouraged people to come and play, emphasising that it is a very equal sport and is definitely not just for older people. The Bowls Club will be open on the Fete Day and anyone can have a go. Carpet Bowls take place between September and March. The primary school children had been invited for a taster session and this will be repeated in the future.

(i) **Quoits** – Olly Abbott reported that Holbrook Quoits team were runners up in the cup and the league. They play on Saturday evenings and practice on Wednesday evenings. He encouraged people to join them. He also told the meeting that on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, the British Championships are being held in Holbrook.

(j) **The Swan Football Team:** Olly Abbott reported that The Swan Football team had finished the season 4<sup>th</sup> in the premier league, their first season in that league. They were about to play in a cup semi-final. The team had raised funds for the new pavilion and also held a charity football match recently for leukaemia where they raised over £2,000.

(k) Fran Williams gave a brief report on the activities of **Holbrook Helpers**, the full report is on the website. She encouraged people to join the list of drivers as there is an increased need to provide transport to take people to medical appointments.

**11. Members of the Public** were invited to raise any matters of interest or concerns. No additional matters were raised.

**12** Cllr Ambrose concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and invited them to stay for light refreshments.

The meeting closed at 20.23 p.m.