

SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Held on Monday 22nd May 2023 at 7 pm
In the Village Hall, Middle Street, Shepton Beauchamp**

Present: Cllr Nigel Wylie Carrick (Chair)
Nick Brunton (Cowleaze Meadow volunteers)
Richard Martin (the Shepton Beauchamp Charity)
Clive Davies (The Parochial Church Council)
Tom Dawson (the Events Team)
Cllr Andrew Rowsell
Cllr David Bourn
Cllr Tim England
Cllr Angie Joy (Village Hall Committee & Singing Group)

In attendance: Stella Davies (Parish Clerk)
9 members of the public

There were display stands from: Shepton W.I.
Shepton Arts & Craft Group
The Events Team

Tea & Coffee was supplied by members of the Village Hall Committee and Events Team

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Sharon Humphreys (Events Team), Joan Kennedy (St Michael's Guild), Kate Wylie Carrick (Shepton Beauchamp W.I.), Lesley Knipe (Shepton Bell Ringing Group).

2. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th May 2022

The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 16th May 2022 were approved.

3. Report from Chairman of the Parish Council for 2022-23

The Chairman reported that over the main events over the last year. He congratulated the Clerk who was now CiLCA qualified which means the council now has a General Power of Competence. Work has been carried out in the Platinum Jubilee Garden (named in commemoration of the late queen) and roses were now being planted. On the recreation field the lines in the MUGA have now been repainted. The Parish Council now produce a quarterly Newsletter which goes out with The Web magazine. The Parish Council continues to give grants and receipt recipients have been Cowleaze Meadow, the Events Team and the village hall. The council is here to support the activities in the village and any group in the village can apply for a grant. The most striking change that has happened in the removal of the 24 leylandii trees in the recreation field, which has made a huge difference. There is still more work to be done. The remaining leylandii will stay for a while, but some of the branches are already cracking, so this will need to be tidied up in due course. We have created an ecology corner for bees and insects to use. We issued a bus questionnaire - over 80% of people wanted a better bus service to destinations of Ilminster, South Petherton, Yeovil and Taunton. The favoured drop-off points in the village were The Duke of York, Silver Springs and Piece Lane. We have put this request forward. 66% wanted a timed bus service, whereas others preferred a bus service that you called when you wanted it. 100% of people wanted disabled facilities on the buses and 73% wanted our bus service to be electric. The Chairman thanked Cllr David Bourn for doing the work behind the questionnaire.

In terms of income and expenditure the accounts remain healthy. We had a planned overspend this year, mainly due to the removal of the leylandii and this has caused a reduction in our reserves. Expenditure was nearly £43,000 and our total income was £26,000. The AGAR mandatory return will be published on our notice board and on our website from 19th June. The next budget is calculated to be balanced. We always hold a reserve of £15,000 available should it be required.

In the next year we are planning to register our land with the Land Registry, which has been held up due to Covid19. We hope to put an interactive footpath map on our website, which will show when our footpaths are going to be cut. We have a Ranger who will cut any footpaths that are overgrown, but we do only get one formal cut from Somerset Council on the majority of our footpaths and two cuts on a minority.

The SID is currently located near the school as there is a road safety drive within the school, which we commend. One of the suggestions was to put a speed hump opposite the school which had not met with favour with the Somerset Highways department. We are currently collecting the data which will show the speed that traffic passes the school.

The Parish Council will be sending out a questionnaire about the recreation field with the next issue of The Web, to see what the villagers want us to do. We will probably only be able to do one thing every couple of years.

Where the Leylandii have been removed, the council hopes to create a 'coronation row' of English trees. The slope will be planted with wild flowers in due course.

The way the government is run has changed. Previously we had a county council with four district councils. The district councils have now been dissolved and there is one Unitary Council in Somerset. This council will interact with us through Local Community Networks. We are part of the Crewkerne & Ilminster network. There are 31 Parish councils and 2 town councils in this network, so it is quite large. They will consider what is required within the area.

4. Report from The Parochial Church Council

A couple of months ago, Stella and I attended a choral concert in a church in what would be considered as an affluent town in Somerset. The concert was excellent and during the interval the church warden spoke and said how lovely it was to see the church so full. Then he raised the issue of the finances of the church. He said that the upkeep of the church was expensive and he was asking for donations to a collection at the end of the concert. There were collection plates for cash donations and they even had a machine to take card donations. Impressive organization I think you will agree and both exits of the church had collection plates. As the joint treasurer of St Michael's, I can emphasise with the church warden's sentiments as the upkeep of a church is very expensive. Please do not worry as I am going to make a similar plea this evening. By the way, the collection plates at the concert were overflowing and must have gladdened the heart of the church treasurer.

Like all organizations, the church suffered with the restrictions due to covid and services were suspended. However, that is now behind us (hopefully) and the congregation has returned. One of the highlights of the year was undoubtedly the carol service which was held on Christmas Eve. There was a large congregation which always adds to the atmosphere in the church and it was a very enjoyable service.

There are a number of people who should be recognized. Geoff Wade who manages to split his time between eight churches in the local diocese – a difficult task I am sure you will agree. Also, there are the people who give freely of their time to support the church whether it is making scones and cakes, sewing parachutes to launch from the church tower, maintaining the paths or working to a rota to unlock and lock the church every day. All these wonderful efforts are recognized and they were shown in the fund raising on the Sunday of the Coronation weekend with cream teas and parachute launches. Thank you to all who contributed and it is appreciated so very much.

As I sit here writing this on the lap top, I am listening to Classic FM. They have just played Howard Goodall's wonderful arrangement of The Twenty-third Psalm (perhaps better known as the music on the vicar of Dibley). It seems very apposite.

5. Report from The Shepton Beauchamp Village Hall Committee

Angie Joy said that they were a small team of trustees and they had been hit very hard with Covid. A few users had decided to run their classes by Zoom and had not returned. They had also lost the pre-school which was their main source of income. The Parish Council have supported the village hall and given them a grant to buy the new chairs. They are reintroducing the annual flower show this year on Saturday September 2nd and hoping the village will take part. They continually promote the hall for bookings and these are on the increase. The Events Team continues to support the village hall very well. It is essential that the hall is used as there are still overheads to be paid. There are currently 3 yoga classes a week and the singing group, the art group and the W.I. use the hall. Thank you to those who support it.

6. Report from The Shepton Beauchamp Charity

The Shepton Beauchamp Charity started in 1886. It is a collection of charities for the benefit of residents of Shepton Beauchamp; some of the charities are several hundred years old. The income of about £1,500 a year is generated from rent received from three small parcels of land owned by the Charity.

Any resident can apply for one of two main grants:

1. Educational, which covers students, who have been resident in the village for 3 or more years, going to university or starting an apprenticeship and any village educational establishments.
2. The Over 70's Christmas Box which is a small payment, paid in early December, to help with the cost of Christmas and is payable to residents who are 70 years old or over and have lived in the village for 3 years or more.

In 2022 the charity paid out one educational grant and the Christmas box was paid out to 46 residents.

7. Report from Shepton Beauchamp Primary School

There was no report from the Primary School.

8. Report from The Events Team

Having put on a fabulous event for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and depleting the funds, the events team have been working very hard since her Majesty's death to fundraise for the King's Coronation so the village could have another street party to celebrate the occasion. We normally hold a street party once every two years, so to have one the year after the jubilee was somewhat of a feat.

The events held, included various film and music nights, a quiz night, Burns Night supper and a race night – all of which were very well attended and the village supported us in our endeavors.

In addition, in November 2022, we held our first Bonfire and Laser light show at the Rec, with a very good turnout and we hope to repeat this event again in November 2023 with permission from the Rec team. This was our first such event at the Rec and we learned what needs to be done in future and will be making any necessary alterations this coming year. We were disappointed with some snide comments on Facebook afterwards regarding the bonfire and claims that asbestos was being burnt, but we dealt with this swiftly and professional testing confirmed that this was never the case. The bonfire construction will be under review at a later stage this year.

In 2022 we arranged for poppies to be displayed around the village for Remembrance Sunday and the last post to be played and we organized the village Christmas tree from our funds and held the Christmas market.

Our funds are now back to a workable level and this enabled us to hold the Coronation street party, free of cost to the village, by funding all the entertainment and supplies for the children, followed by The Decadettes, a disco and musician, Jay, for the main street party, as well as providing portaloos and hiring in banqueting chairs. We worked with The Duke of York, FOSS, the Church and Cowleaze in this regard and the event was hugely popular with a fantastic turnout. Thankfully the weather was kind to us! The official road closure was approved by the council and relevant licenses and insurance were in place.

More events are set for each month for the remainder of this year, where we hope to build up funds again in readiness for Bonfire Night, including a French themed film night on July 15th in the village hall and a 1940's night on 14th October, again in the village hall.

We continue to provide activities for the village which people can enjoy and at the same time raise funds for our ongoing programme of events. These events are advertised in the Web, on Facebook and by means of leaflet drops and signage throughout the village.

This year we celebrate our 20th year of the Events Team.

The events team currently

Ian Brown, Mark Brown, Dave Burwood, Amy Cook, Tom Dawson, Sharon Humphreys, Michele Hutchinson, Liz Sanderson & Claire Uren.

Tom mentioned that if anyone in the village would like them to arrange a different event, please let them know as they welcome new ideas.

He was asked if they were going to run another 10k race and he thought it unlikely. A 10k race is the most difficult to run because it is half road and half cross country and the professional runners do not want to run across fields. The expenditure is high due to the cost of medals etc.

9. Report from Lethbridge Recreation Ground Committee

The Clerk said that there was no report as the committee no longer existed. The accounts for their year 2022/23 had been forwarded, which showed they had just over £800 left. The Chairman said the Parish Council now had responsibility for the recreation field, with Cllr England as the chair of the recreation field committee. The Chairman thanked him for the work he was doing.

10. Report from Cowleaze Meadow volunteers

Nick Brunton said that a few of them were at the meadow recently doing some work, when a couple of ladies came and sat on the benches in the dog-free zone. They had walked from Kingsbury Episcopi and walked there as it was a lovely place to stop.

Committee and Volunteers – Current Chairman is myself, Nick Brunton. Treasurer is Jan Pniok. We currently have 12 volunteers. New volunteers are always welcome to join us, contact details are on our noticeboard at the front entrance to Cowleaze Meadow.

Funds and Fund-Raising – Money in the bank as at 31 March £814.77. The Income and Expenditure Account y/e 31/03/2023 is attached. During the year we were awarded capital grants totalling £3,000. Together with the funds generated by our fund-raising activities in 2021/22, the funds were applied to the purchase of a battery powered ride-on lawn tractor (£5,139.08) and battery mower (£537.00). We were also grateful to receive a Maintenance Grant of £650 from the Parish Council.

Activities over the past year – We have:

- Continued to maintain the network of paths
- Tidied up the willow tunnel • Trimmed hedging and cleared fallen branches
- Arranged the professional removal a willow tree
- Saved and sown yellow rattle, cowslips and other wildflower seed
- Planted additional trees along the rear boundary
- Refurbished our notice board, entrance signage and picnic benches
- Continued our monthly plant life survey
- Mowing the public footpath connecting to Cowleaze Meadow
- Organised two Wacky Races events in Cowleaze Meadow as part of the village 2022 Platinum Jubilee and 2023 Coronation celebrations

They were looking to put a memorial bench for Roger Cripps in Cowleaze.

Nick said he would personally want to thank all the volunteers who regularly give up their time. The Chairman thanked Nick and his team for all that they do.

11. Report from St Michael's Guild

Joan Kennedy had contacted us to say that St Michael's Guild no longer meet as the numbers have depleted.

12. Report from Shepton Beauchamp W.I.

As ever the WI programme last year was varied and interesting. It was good to have a first whole year post Covid. The year started in June with a session of chair yoga with Sarah Wilmott, which was a great success as it was tailored to meet all levels of bendability. In July we welcomed Nigel Bovey of the Salvation Army who talked about the Skeleton Army and their marches drawing attention to the problem of alcohol. August's meeting was arranged by members and Jeanie Knight talked about her Facebook page and we all made models of Glastonbury Tor with Spaghetti and Marshmallows!

September was a return visit from Martin Parsons who spoke on the use and abuse of photographs. We discovered that the camera CAN lie!! In October Paul Bygrave, nurseryman of renown, talked about the

planting at Forde Abbey with beautiful slides and many, many helpful tips. November's meeting was cancelled in the midst of gales and storms but Nanette Wale came to the Christmas Party and not only showed everyone the art of decoupatch but also gave everyone the opportunity to make themselves a bauble for their Christmas Trees.

In February Martin Wale talked about the lighter side of his career in the Met Police with many amusing anecdotes. He was followed in March with a behind-the-camera talk from Barbs Hampshire, whose family had taken Bobby Bear to the BBCs The Repair Shop. That month saw the most entries for the monthly competition with a huge number of much-loved bears brought along. Each with a fascinating story behind them. April was a craft evening and Sara Finch taught us all how to make a Dorset Button as well as telling us the history of Dorset Buttons.

May's AGM saw the committee re-elected (there had been some changes during the year). Two new posts were created, Wellbeing and Social Secretary.

Looking forward, we now open our doors to members at 7pm so there is time for socialising before the meeting and are arranging informal outings between meetings. Numbers remain good and the Shepton Beauchamp WI is in good heart.

If anyone is interested, we have brought the programme for the next 6 months - and cake!

13.Report from Shepton Singing Group

We have been running this for a few years and like most groups, Covid took its toll, however numbers now vary from 8 to 18 and we meet on a Tuesday evening 7.30 – 8.30 pm.

We are a very sociable friendly group and we sing for fun. We are not a choir but a group who like to sing a wide variety of music and the opportunity of meeting up.

14.Report from Shepton Art & Craft Group

The Art Club has been running for 30 years plus. Until recently, we hadn't recovered from closing for Covid, the numbers lowering to just 3 or 4 per session.

We decided to change the meeting from an evening to a Tuesday afternoon session to see if we could encourage more people to come along. The cost is £3 for 2 hours.

We also changed the programme so that someone would do a workshop at least once a month, as we have a lot of skills between us. We charged £5 per session. The workshops that we have held so far have proved to be very popular. We held 2 lino print workshops and we had 17 people attending the first one and 10 the second one. We also held a drawing workshop which 9 people attended. We may have to increase the price per session for the upcoming workshops, as we supply all the materials and this is more expensive than we first realised.

It has been busier since we have been running the workshops. We have had people coming from Barrington and Ilminster to attend the workshops.

There will be timetables going out about three months in advance. We have in the pipeline encaustic wax painting, collage, mosaic, jewellery making and an requested another lino cutting workshop at a later date.

We currently have £80 in the bank account and £81.10 in petty cash.

At this point the Chairman suggested they consider applying to the Parish Council for a grant for art and craft materials to support their activities.

15.Report from Shepton Bell Ringing Group

Bell Ringing is an ancient art in the UK which is sadly in decline. At Shepton Beauchamp church we have a light ring of 12 bells ranging approximately from the weight of 4-11 cwt.

Our main practice night is on a Monday between 7.30-9.00pm, but bell handling training starts at 7.00 prior to the main practice and occasionally other nights by arrangement.

Learning to handle (control) a tower bell takes many hours but once this is mastered can lead to a lifelong hobby and social life. The band of ringers at Shepton come from most of the parishes in our Benefice and our aim is to progress with our ringing and to be able to ring at all the churches in our Benefice prior to Sunday service at least once a month. (5 churches in the Benefice have bells that can be rung). We will also ring for any celebration (weddings, funerals etc). We recently rang at all the Benefice churches to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. (Unfortunately, not all at the same time as we have insufficient ringers).

Anyone can learn to ring from 8 - 100 years. The cost is your time and commitment (as well as the instructors time)

Where else can someone use thousands of pounds of equipment at no financial cost to themselves? Have a tour of our bells and ringing chamber.

Come and join us - either turn up outside Shepton Beauchamp church tower by the metal steps on a Monday night (7.00 pm) or contact me (Lesley) on 07793 617763.

The Chairman of the Parish Council closed by saying what a diverse range of activities we had in the village and if anyone was interested in setting up a new group activity then that would be welcomed.

He thanked everyone for attending and for those who had supplied the refreshments and cakes and those who had brought along a stand.

Meeting closed: 7.55 pm