

MINUTES OF LAMYATT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Lamyatt Village Hall – 7pm – Wednesday 24th May 2023

Present: Paul Chadwick (Chairman); Romy Smallwood (Minutes); Malcolm Frapple; Mike Cooper; Jonny & Kara Tapp; Ern & Jen Richards; Hilary & Keith Pascoe; Helen Rutter; Anne & Kevin Sherrard; Victoria & Simon Lang; Ned Newton; Sylvia Anderson; Simone Ash; Nick Smallwood; Caryl & Dick Joyce; Martin Stansbie; Jonathan Orrell; David Colman. (24)

Apologies: Anne Skinner; David Ash; Denise Wyatt

1. **Welcome:** The Chairman. Paul Chadwick, welcomed those attending and provided a short excerpt from the Annual Meeting of 100 years ago, when Rev. Barnes was in the Chair. It dealt with some of the same issues as today with regard to footpath repairs but also a dangerous playing field, and a proposal to open the village school half an hour later for British Summer Time. Paul invited those who had an interest in looking at the Minute book to contact him.
2. **Police Report:** The Acting Beat Manager did not attend.
3. **The Minutes of the Annual Meeting 2022** were proposed for approval by Helen Rutter and seconded by Nick Smallwood and **agreed**.
4. **Reports from village committees/groups:**
 - a) **Lamyatt Village Hall Trust:** Jonathan Orrell (Treasurer & Secretary) gave a short resume of activities held at the Village Hall including, films, TV, live sports events and the Coronation screening plus entertainment, yoga, pilates, and bridge classes
Most of those who helped to organise events were in attendance at the meeting and he encouraged that word was spread to encourage others to participate. He said that the finances were in a fair situation with an amount in excess of £20,000 held in a current account, with more held in a reserve account. He also explained that event income was required to not only cover annual Hall expenditure but also to build up funds for long-term replacements. He encouraged villagers to rent the Hall for private events where the charge for residents was £10 per hour. He commented on the recently installed solar panels and battery and said that this would be the first full summer ahead of usage which should indicate a reduction in electricity payments.
Jonathan was grateful to those who have provided funding in the past for the Hall. Anne Sherrard confirmed that Shakespeare in Lamyatt event would be held on 8th July with tickets on sale from Friday and posters were to be displayed at the end of this week. Simon Lang congratulated those who organised the Coronation event which he thought was very enjoyable. (See separate written report)
 - b) **Parochial Church Council:** Jen Richards provided information on the Church activities over past year, thanking those who volunteered in some shape or form to keep it going. She mentioned that Lamyatt had now been recognised as one of the 'Thankful' villages as it hadn't seen any of its parishioners die in the armed conflicts of WW1 & WW2. She called on all to support the Church as it is one of the key aspects of the village. (See separate written report)
 - c) **Welch Alms House Charity:** Four Trustees of the Welch Alms houses were present at the meeting and Paul, the Secretary to the Charity, welcomed Keith Pascoe as Trustee in place of David Ash who has retired from the role. He offered thanks to David and to Simone for all their help as good neighbours. The Chair of The Alms house Trust is Freda Gibbons and she has been a Trustee for some 31 years. She is a good source of memories, along with the Minutes of meetings, for the Charity.

No 2 Welch Alms house has new residents, Tim and Lynn Goat, who replace Alan Ayers who has been able to re-locate to a farm cottage at his place of work, after two and a half years. Advertising for new occupants was carried out and five applications, all eligible under the criteria dictated by the Trust, were received. It wasn't suitable for one applicant and after consideration by the Trustees the Alms house was offered to the Goats. The maintenance charge paid by residents of the Alms house is spent on maintaining the fabric of the building. The recent Quinquennial report has indicated necessary repairs but these are sometimes difficult when the properties are occupied. Paul suggested a list be compiled of skilled people in the village or known to villagers who would be willing to help with repairs when required. (See separate written report).

5. **New Local Govt arrangements**

Following our Mendip Councillor Michael Gay standing down in March 2023, along with Nigel Hewitt-Cooper as County Councillor who stood down in March 2022, we now have two new councillors in the newly formed Somerset Council for this electoral division- Clare Sully and Alex Wilshire. They are currently finding their feet as the new authority came fully into being only on 1st April 2023. Thanks were recorded to Michael and Nigel for their commitment as elected members helping to represent Lamyatt and the wider area. Planning issues will be dealt with by an East Area board.

Paul has been involved in a pilot scheme to look at rural isolation within a local 'Somerset Local Community Network' involving the larger towns of Bruton, Castle Cary and Wincanton. The Network has been looking at the impact of rural isolation for young people and the need for local transport. If anyone is interested in participating in these issues or others that emerge then Paul asked them to contact him.

6. **Highways Issues:**

a) **Traffic Management:** Shortly after the Parish Meeting last year new signs discouraging HGVs from driving through the village appeared at the entrance roads. Despite initially suggesting a high cost for these, the Council has made no charge. No one voiced any concerns currently on HGV through traffic. It was suggested that when roads in Bruton were closed, notice and signs should be placed discouraging vehicles from using the village road as an alternative route. A red Volkswagen was recently recorded travelling at speeds well over 60mph and driving dangerously around the corner at Lamyatt Lodge. It was travelling too fast to log the number plate. Villagers were encouraged to be alert should the vehicle, or others, travel at potentially dangerous speeds through the village. Paul has alerted Highways to the incorrect speed signage recently painted on the highway coming out of Bruton on the Wyke Road.

b) **Potholes & drainage issues:** A number of villagers had reported potholes in the past year. This week several were filled but some left unfilled as, despite their close proximity, they had not been marked for repair. Paul will make the point to the new Councillors that it is time wasting for all concerned to do some and not others, thus necessitating repeat visits. Keith Pascoe alerted that there was a blocked drain outside his house. This is probably linked to one outside the Village Hall which is also blocked. Drains in the village were cleared last year but some have remained blocked. Paul has asked Julie Vaughan to take pictures of the drain outside the Hall when next there is a significant downpour so that the extent of the issue can be demonstrated to Highways.

c) **Footpaths & Bridleways:** We still await SM13/9 being formally extinguished, as otherwise it will continue to show on the OS & other maps. As agreed last year, it has not been usable for some time as it was originally incorrectly plotted on the Definitive map back in the early

1950's, and subsequent building work in the 1960's has now closed what would have been the actual footpath. David Ash as the principal landowner has applied for it to be extinguished and Paul has asked the Council again that this be expedited to avoid future confusion.

The Council look after Badger Lane Bridleway and the Portway Hill Bridleway, but Paul had recently strimmed the top of the Portway path and no doubt Neil Mantell will look after the lower portion in advance of any action that the Council can take this summer. Thanks were given to Simon Lang for looking after some footpaths on the Evercreech side. Villagers were encouraged to help with other paths, gateways and stiles to keep them clear.

Victoria Lang mentioned the need to check the state of the path and footbridge on SM 13/14 where the timber edge has collapsed into the stream due to a fallen tree last year. Caryl Joyce offered to help clear a path or two if need be if equipment could be provided. Paul would check the bridge.

Keith Pascoe felt that the path to Wyke from lower Portway Hill (SM 13/4) was often not visible and it was confirmed that, if need be, it was permissible for a volunteer to cut it if the landowner is unable to do so.

The Mendip Ramblers have as usual been very active voluntarily replacing damaged stiles and now replace them with new metal gates as provided by the Council. Simon Lang alerted that attention was needed to the bridge on the route towards Natterjack (SM13/11). Paul broached the idea of a Village walk across the footpaths to the Natterjack with a drink before returning and it was agreed that this would be worth doing.

7. **Planning issues:** Planning Decisions are now dealt with by an Area East planning board for Somerset Council. Paul has spoken to Tom Clothier regarding the Wyke Farms recent planning applications, and he has confirmed that the new cheese storage facility should be completed by Autumn, with the work to form a new 'Ivy's Dairy' currently ongoing. No one had any complaints relating to odours/noise from the biodigesters. The only other significant application this past year was for a new build, under a local Planning Policy, opposite Chapel House. This has not yet been determined. Several villagers made comments on this application, both for and against, and Paul emphasised the importance of communication with neighbours before submitting an application.
8. **Update on Broadband:** Romy Smallwood gave a short resume of the recent meeting arranged by Wessex Internet to confirm their intention to supply fibre to the premises in Lamyatt. It is hoped that after many false promises by various internet companies that this one might now materialise as villagers were still only getting 1.5/2MB upload/downloads speeds from the copper wires. (See separate written report).
9. **The Pheasant Shoot:** The shoot was reduced last year, with the number of pheasants released much lower as the operator had hesitancy due to the bird flu epidemic. No problems were reported.
10. **Winter preparations:** Malcolm Frapple agreed to continue as emergency contact for 4x4 support if villagers required assistance in bad winter weather conditions. Any villager who had access to 4Wd was invited to advise him that they could also assist. Those close to the salt bins in the village were asked to monitor, as usual, that they are ready for use.
11. **Parish Finances:** Paul reported that the Parish Meeting finances had improved from last year's balance of £1412 to this year's £1512. He explained that the last three donations over the past 3 years had come principally from the same source in the absence of any precept.

He was grateful to Bullbeggar Cider and those who had donated their electricity refund payments.

He explained that it had previously been suggested by donors that their funds be held for footpath improvements, or signage and suggested the possibility of making a footpath map for installation on the side of the bus stop to commemorate the recent Coronation.

The Financial Statement was circulated at the meeting, and he confirmed the account had been independently checked. The statement would be displayed as usual on the Parish Noticeboard over the next few weeks inviting any that wished to see the Bank Statement and cheque book. After that he would submit it by the deadline of 3rd July. The Financial Statement was **agreed**. Paul will look into the possibility of an interest-bearing account as rates have now risen. The bank account is currently held in Shaftsbury.

12. **Any Other Business:** No concerns were raised with regard to waste collections and those present were satisfied with the service. Any problems can be reported on the Council website, and Paul asked that anyone without access to internet could be provided with help to report if required.

Paul had checked with Anthony Ffooks that he is a Farm Watch representative and advised that anyone can check the FarmWatch website for reports of any local crime incidents recorded on there. There is no Neighbourhood Watch in the village but if someone wants to come forward to register the village then this could happen. There was a recent burglary at Rectory Cottage where the burglars returned three weeks later but, on this 2nd occasion, were disturbed. If anyone in the village had a camera that monitors vehicle movements then this would be useful in future as this could help the Police. It was important to notify the Police of any suspicious activity or thefts, and to use the village email system to advise others. The Police can provide advice on security and potentially step-up patrols. Simon Lang suggested that the PCSO be asked to visit the village to familiarise with residents and layout. Jen confirmed that The Church protects its belongings with suitable protection. Further advice could be sought about any further action that villagers might take.

Close of Meeting: Paul thanked all those who attended, and the meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

He advised that the Minutes would be available in a week's time, with a possible interim meeting next November, or sooner, should significant matters have arisen, otherwise the next meeting will be the Annual Meeting to be held in May 2024.