

**PARISH OF RINGSTEAD**  
**MINUTES OF PARISH MEETING**

**15 MAY 2023 – 6.30PM - RINGSTEAD VILLAGE HALL**

Chairman - Cllr W Jacob (WJ) – Chairman of Ringstead Parish Council

Taking Minutes – Simon Lee (Clerk)

Also in attendance:

Cllr J. Barnett (JB), Cllr B Crowfoot (BC), Cllr V Everitt (VE), Cllr S Little (SL) & Cllr D Rice (DR)

Nine members of the public were also in attendance, together with the guest speaker Mr Charles Le Strange Meakin.

The Chairman welcomed and thanked all those present for attending the meeting.

**Apologies** of absence had been received from County Councillor A Jamieson, Parish Councillor Noel Shelly and Mr A. Martin-Smith.

1. The **minutes** of the Annual Parish meeting held on 17 June 2019 were agreed signed as a correct record by the Chairman.
2. **Reports from public bodies:** County Councillor Jamieson had submitted a detailed report attached to the minutes.
3. **Reports from Groups:**
  - a) **Friends of St Andrew’s Church:** report attached (submitted by Andrew Martin-Smith).
  - b) **Village Hall Management Committee** – report attached and read out by DR (Chair of Village Hall). A question was asked about the cost to repair the perimeter wall, and DR confirmed that it was in the order of £1500.00.
  - c) **Trustees of the Great Ringstead Allotment Charity** – report attached (submitted by the Chair).
  - d) **Parochial Church Council** - report attached (submitted by the Chair)
  - e) **Table Tennis Club** – report attached (submitted by Richard Hendriks) and read out by the Clerk.
  - f) **Bowls Club** – report attached (submitted by Roger Pincott) and read out by the Clerk.
  - g) **Carpet Bowls Club** – report attached (submitted by Mo Cavell) and read out by the Clerk.
  - h) **Making Space** – report attached (submitted by Peter Gyton) and read out by the Clerk.
  - i) **Parish Council** – The Chair read out his report (attached).
4. **Guest Speaker**

The Chair welcomed Mr Meakin who gave an interesting history and update on the work of the Le Strange Estate.

Mr Meakin spoke about the work of the estate including the tenanted farms and focus on regenerative farming practices; property management; sustainable forestry operations;

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

Date \_\_\_\_\_

diversity of nature conservation activities along the coastline, and the work to support local communities, including the provision at peppercorn rent of Village Halls and playing fields.

Mr Meakin explained that it was not the policy of the Estate to rent properties to the holiday market, but to make them available to local people who worked in the area. A strong connection had developed between those volunteering for the RNLI and living in Estate properties.

Mr Meakin advised that he was keen to bring a Borough focus to the settlements along the north-west coast and had been instrumental in helping to establish the Hunstanton Advisory Group.

A number of questions were raised, including concerns by parishioners about the closure of the footpath north of Foundry Lane to Thornham Road Mr Meakin agreed to investigate the issues raised.

Asked about whether the Park would be opened to the public again on Thursdays, Mr Meakin explained that bird flu was still prevalent in the local area and that a review would be undertaken in the near future.

When asked about was what metaphorically his “seed and weed” issues, he spoke about the positive nature of conservation work being undertaken across the Estate and work to refurbish the Hall Gardens and their open for Old Hunstanton’s Flower Festival and other events. In terms of weed and irritations, Mr Meakin spoke about the challenges with the Downs being used by off-road motorbikes and small 4x4 vehicles.

The Chair asked about the potential for holding guided walks in the Park to learn more about the history of the Estate, and its geology. An interesting fact emerged that the Park has the best esker in Great Britain.

The Chair thanked Mr Meakin for such a thorough and insightful presentation.

The meeting closed at 7.32pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Reports for Annual Parish Meeting May 15 2023**

### **Ringstead Parish Council Annual Report**

#### **Personnel**

In May 2022, Carol Nelson, after many years of service as a councillor and chair of the Council, decided to stand down as chair and a councillor. The Council and the village owe Carol a great debt of gratitude for all her hard work on behalf of the village.

Bill Jacob was elected to succeed Carol as Chair

Also in May 2022 James Howard resigned as Clerk. Following a process of advertisement of the vacancy, applications, short-listing and interviews Simon Lee was appointed Clerk in July 2022.

Also following advertisement of the vacancy for a Councillor, three people expressed interest, and following a selection process, Jane Barnett was co-opted to the Council.

Councillor Jim O'Shea fell ill during the summer and very sadly died in December 2022. The Council was represented at his funeral.

#### **Business**

The Council has continued to meet monthly, with usually a full attendance.

Business has consisted of

- i) monitoring the finances and making a budget, including a precept for Council Tax for the year 2022-23
- ii) Considering highway related items
- iii) Agreeing new leases for the Playing Field and the Village Hall
- iv) Arrangements for celebrating the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the King's Coronation.
- v) Monitoring the Playing Field and grounds maintenance contract
- vi) Reviewing Policies and Procedures
- vii) Nominating a Trustee to the Great Ringstead Allotment Charities
- viii) Considering planning application
- ix) Drafting a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### **Ringstead Village Hall Report May 2023**

In the past year the flat roof of the Hall has been redone, the external pipe work replaced, and the wall along High Street repaired after a section collapsed.

Last summer the Lunches and Teas for Open Gardens were successfully held in the Hall for the first time, followed by the Jubilee Celebration in June (due to the inclement weather). It has proved a popular venue for Art Exhibitions, and since last August a Quiz Night is held on the first Thursday of the month. A fundraising Race Night was held in October, followed by a Bingo evening in November. Both these events help towards the cost of maintaining the Hall.

Table Tennis, Carpet Bowls and the Art Club use the Hall on a weekly basis, and there is a quiz night once a month, and Making Space (drop in) is held on the first and third Thursday of every month.

## **Great Ringstead Allotment Charity (Charity No. 1103778)**

### **Object of the Charity**

To apply the income for any charitable purposes for the general benefit of the inhabitants of Ringstead, including the prevention or relief of poverty and other charitable purposes, including individuals and organisations..

### **Endowment**

Great Ringstead Allotment Charity comprises Ringstead United Charities, the Great Ringstead Allotment Charity and the Great Ringstead Allotment for the repair of Highways. These were merged in 2014, under a Scheme of the Charity Commission dated 1 March 2007..

Ringstead United Charities, established by a Charity Commissioners' Scheme in 1908, comprised endowments bequeathed at various times to the Rector, Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the parish, for the benefit of poor inhabitants. These were a bequest by a Mr Read, a member of a family of considerable landowners in Ringstead in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of a rent charge of £1 a year on two farms in Heacham; the 'Land Buyers Money' left by an unknown donor of the interest of £9 4 shillings and 11 pence; a rent charge of 8 shillings a year on 9 acres of Land left by a Mr Daniels; a rent charge of £1 a year on land left by Laurence Hocknell, rector of St Andrew's 1587-1626; and a rent charge of 10 shillings a year on land in Ringstead left by Timothy Swift, Rector of St Peter's, in 1719.

These were subsequently combined with the Fuel Allotment comprising 58 acres 1 rood 15 poles awarded under the Great Ringstead Enclosure Act of 1782 (now Ringstead Downs on Burnham Road) to provide turf for the poor to cut for fuel and the Chalk Pit in the Downs, amounting to 3 acres, to provide material for the repair of roads in Ringstead,

### **Income**

This currently derives from rent for the Common from Courtyard Farm Trust of £1;440 payable in April and September..

### **Current Funds**

The current balance is £9.089 – 81. This includes money held in a designated fund for the annual Ringstead Pensioners Christmas Lunch fund..

### **Trustees**

Stephen Ward and Robbie Robson came to the end of the terms of office in 2022, and did not wish to continue. The Parish Council advertised the vacancies and in the absence of any applications, Bridget Crowfoot and Bill Jacob offered to be nominated. Mart Harvey resigned as a trustee in September 2022 and following further advertisement Ruth Goulden applied and was nominated as a trustee. Tony Best continues as a trustee.

### **Grants**

**In 2022 grants of £400.00 each were given to 10 parishioners towards heating costs.**

### **Friends of St Andrew's Ringstead**

While this has been a quiet year for FOSAR in terms of expenditure other than some remedial work on the outside of the Church we have continued to build up reserves thanks to well supported events. Particular thanks go to Mrs Rosemary Beeson who has retired as Secretary this year.

### **Table Tennis**

We have been playing most Tuesdays throughout the year, We are a small group who play for fun.

All are welcome we are a friendly group.

We intend to play most Tuesdays This year feel free to come and have a game £3.00 a night for hall fees.

### **Ringstead Bowls Club**

The club has started it's 2023 league season. Up until this year we have been in a good financial position. This year we appear to have lost a couple of our sponsors which will make a big difference when we come to preparing the green for the winter. This year we have not only had to find £140.00 for our Third party liability insurance, we need to get the mower re-sharpened which will be around £180.00, unless they find we need new shaft bearings or bottom blade which will add more cost.

We advertised for new players, unfortunately nobody turned up. This is not just our problem there appears to be a shortage of people who want to play out door bowls. We need 9 players for a match but only have 11 on the books, so when it gets to holiday time we could be in trouble raising a full team. We are continuing to try to attract players but have not yet been successful.

### **Ringstead Carpet Bowls**

2022-2023 has been a very successful year for the club. Not only have we maintained our membership but we have also increased it to include past members from pre covid times. Due to the excellent attendance from members we have a healthy balance in our funds, so much so that we were able to invest in a scoring board, easily visible during games and dispensing with the need for pen and paper.

We all look forward to and enjoy our Wednesday afternoon's entertainment and were reluctant to finish at the end of April, so it was agreed that we would continue throughout the summer months as an experiment. This will also help towards the upkeep of the village hall as well as providing an all year round club which is very much a social occasion as well as a sporting activity.

The village hall is a very suitable venue for carpet bowls as it provides the length needed for the players and carpet as well as the bowls at either end of the carpet. The recent addition of the new heating system has made a big difference to the warmth of the hall in winter and will hopefully be needed as air conditioning in the summer months. As our numbers have increased we have tried to add another carpet alongside to allow two games to be played simultaneously. Alas the unevenness of the floor makes this impossible so we have to become more skilful at avoiding the opposition's bowls!

## **Ringstead Parochial Church Council 2022-23**

### **Clergy**

The congregation at Ringstead were very sorry to say farewell to the Revd Rachel Dines on her appointment to be a team vicar in the Dereham Group of parishes to be based at Swanton Morley, and to the Revd Kirsty Allan on her appointment to be priest-in-charge of St Mary's parish in Jersey. They both contributed greatly to church and village life.

### **Services**

During the vacancy pending the recruitment of a new Team Rector services will continue as normal and be taken by retired clergy. The point of contact for Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals is Peter Cook, the Rural Dean, at 01485 517157.

There was a record turnout for the Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial. There were also good attendances at Christmas and Easter.

There was 1 Wedding, 1 Baptism, 3 Funerals and 4 Interments of ashes.

### **Finance**

Open Gardens, the major fundraising event for the church, in June was a great success, raising over £7,638-15. Many people worked very hard to achieve this for which the PCC are very grateful.

The PCC's income otherwise was £16,125-34 and expenditure was £18,500-51 of which £12,300-37 was the parish's share of the costs of providing clergy for the eight parishes of the Hunstanton and Saxon Shore benefice.

### **Parish**

A successful concert entitled 'Chosen with Love' was held in church at the end of September. Largely led by members of Bridget Crofts' family it raised £700 in her memory to support students learning musical instruments.

On the initiative of the Rector 'Making Space' was initiated in the Village Hall on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 10am to 12noon for people to drop in for coffee and meet one another. It has been successful in providing a space for members of the village and visitors to meet one another. The Rector also initiated a Quiz night on the first Monday of the month, which has attracted a good attendance, including visitors.

### **Maintenance**

A group of volunteers met every second month to clean the church and in the spring and autumn a group of volunteers met to tidy the Churchyard. The Parish Council generously make an annual grant of £600 towards cutting the Churchyard grass. The Churchyard trees have been reviewed and dead branches removed and a tree cut down.

A programme of maintenance on the church is underway. The gutters have been cleared, and work on the downpipes and soakaways has been commissioned. Repairs to the tower window are in hand, Repairs to the clock and its winding mechanism have been instructed, and a report on the bell is awaited.

Numbers of people work to sustain the life of the Church in the village, for which the PCC is very grateful.