



Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting

Held on Thursday 1st June 2023 at 7:00pm at
Datchworth Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Sara Miller, Andrew Wood, Charlie Groves, Mark Light, Dean Goodman, Emma Norman, and Julia Florence.

In Attendance: Locum Clerk – Andy Short, 43 members of the public

MINUTES

23/APM/001 - To receive and accept apologies for absence:

Apologies were received and accepted from :-

Cllrs. Pat Perry and John Wringe, The WI, Colin Skuse, Tony and Anne Charles.

23/APM/002 - To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28th May 2022:

Resolved

23/APM/003 - To receive updates on actions of the last Annual Parish Meeting:

None.

Introduction: Cllr. Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced all the councillors. Cllr. Miller cited several examples where groups of people in the village have come together and collaborated to achieve amazing things e.g. The Pre School, Village and Church Hall and The Sports clubs. The overall desire is for the Parish Council to be part of the network of support in the village. We have limited funds, and occasions where difficult decisions have to be made which pleases one party but not another, but the overall principal is; it good for the village? And if it is, what can we do to help?

23/APM/004 - Presentations by Village Organisations:

Datchworth Fête Nick Miller

Nick explained the first fête was held in Datchworth in 1928 on the second Saturday in June. It continues to be a fun event run by an army of enthusiastic volunteers with approximately 1500 attendees. Planning is started early in the year by a fete committee.

Profits are shared with local village groups e.g.:- All Saints Church, The Village Hall and many other local organisations and charities.

This year the fête will be on Saturday 10th June

Furniture Friends Catherine Jupp

Catherine explained that Furniture Friends is a small local charity run by volunteers and is linked to the Church. The Charity deliver locally recycled furniture free to where it is most needed. The only expenditure is running and maintaining a transit van. Furniture comes from donors and housing associations and is stored in two garages in Hertford, provided for free from a housing association but additional storage is always needed. An increase in demand has been seen due to the cost-of-living crisis. Volunteer/ drivers and extra storage space needed so please spread the word.

Sports club Andrew Wood (Woody)

Woody stated The Sports Club have applied and been granted planning permission and for a new clubhouse, there will be a slightly larger footprint at the rear to accommodate women and girls changing rooms, toilets and larger doors for a disabled access.

Future Fundraising to include 'Datchfest' (with 5 bands) which is on the 22nd July plus re-introducing a fireworks display.

Please note all are welcome to visit the club to have a drink.

Cricket Adrian Bennett

The Club started in 1921, the intention is to expand to include ladies.

Membership and bar takings go to a central pot which is under pressure due to a falling membership (150 down on pre Covid). This means the cost of maintenance of rugby and cricket pitches (30k, 20k solely for cricket) must come from fund raising alone with an army of volunteer support.

This is a facility for all to enjoy, come along and watch play or join.

I'm sure you will agree with me this is a stunning spectacle and a benefit for the Village.

Bowls Steve Arnold

Steve talked through the 40 plus years history of the bowls club at The Turkey Farm site, opening in 1982. The current membership and announced 11 new members were signed up during a recent open weekend. He talked through the number of matches and other social activities, summer and winter and the detailed the intensive maintenance required pre and post season.

He added that the guides have opportunities to play outside and in the village hall, 'Short Mat'

The Horns Lisa Shadbolt

Lisa opened talking about her extended family and their relationship with the village. She said Mark has been the landlord of the Horns for 13 years and has a long history of holding events (e.g. Gin and Beer festivals) and supporting the community. He is very keen to strengthen this bond with Datchworth and the people of the surrounding villages.

Lisa talked about the desire for the Horns to help in any way they can e.g. leafleting, PTA meetings, posters and fundraising.

All Saints Church Susannah Underwood

Rev'd Susannah shared details of the church build quality and the maintenance required for a Grade 1 listed building which is over 800 years old. All costs are met through grants and donations which need to total 75k pa to keep the church running. She expressed a massive thank you to everyone who had donated to this cause.

Reference was made to the splendid Platinum Jubilee celebration where all parts of the village came together with great spirit to deliver something special and fun for all.

A foodbank collection in the foyer of the church is for both residents to use, anything leftover goes to Stevenage foodbanks.

Lastly, she passed on information about Stuart our local head teacher who is moving on to be replaced by Mrs King (rugby player and champion hammer thrower!).

Datchworth Museum Geoff Gilbert

Geoff presented to the hall that the museum is housed in a Victorian Cottage, a former blacksmiths, left 'as was' in 1953. It was opened in 1991 and refurbished by local people to become the museum as you see it today. The museum is open to the public on the 3rd Sunday of every month, entry is free.

Internal museum visits are offered to local schools plus support for younger people to visit other museums eg RAF Hendon. A team of volunteers run the museum.

Datchworth Village Hall Richard Selwyn

Richard, the new Village Hall Chair who has taken over from Sara Miller due to her new role as Chair of DPC, explained that the village hall now has eight trustees including Anna Carrick, Louisa Edwards and Pam Hill who have recently joined the committee. A working group has been formed to organise 'Let's Get Together' events. Dates for your diary 30th September and 9th December.

We would like to wish members of the new parish council every success with their endeavours to promote collaboration fun and positivity in our lovely village, thank you.

Datchworth Climate Action Group Lynne Sampson

The group was set up encouraging people to think about Global and local environmental issues. We pitch our self mostly as a surplus or vegetables and items that people make for us.

We have a stall at the Turkey Farm on the first Saturday of each month from 10am to Midday, happy to see you there just for a couple of hours, especially if you have anything surplus in your garden. The stall sells donated locally grown vegetables, fruit, preserves, chutneys, seedlings, pickles and herbs.

The money raised goes to climate related charities.

As a celebration for three years could we relocate for one session onto Datchworth Green in October?

Digital Inclusion Julia Florence

I want to say a huge thank you to Anne Barker who isn't here tonight, she was the councillor who kicked off this initiative. For those people who don't know it is a weekly 'drop-in' IT health session held at the village hall on a Tuesday afternoon for a couple of hours, it is funded by CDA. Help (and cake) is offered in a sociable space for issues with mobile phones, laptops etc. It has been running for about 17 months so in total 52 sessions have taken place which amounts to 104 hours of free digital support provided by 1170 hours of the volunteer's time. If you if you know anybody who would appreciate this type of help, please let us know and if you have the skills and want to volunteer.

Classic Car Club Nick Miller

We are an informal group of like-minded car owners, predominately in Datchworth and surrounding villages. We currently have about 20 active members and are kindly allowed to meet in the Tilbury car park on the first Sunday of the month to drive out to various shows. In the past we have worked with Herts air ambulance charity who approached gather 25 red cars take part in a photo shoot at North Weald airfield for their Red calendar year. We are hoping for our display at the fete is enjoyed by everyone and if you have an old car and you fancy coming out with us give me a call.

Stevenage and District Model Railway Club Steve Simmonds Chairman

Model railway club which has over 60 members opens 3 times per week (Monday, Thursday nights and Wednesday mornings). Recent improvements include lighting and flooring with plans to re-lay the club circuit which is 40 ft x20 ft.

If anyone is interested to help or improve any of their practical skills

Details on website

[Stevenage & District MRC – Railway Modelling in N, OO and O Gauges \(sandmodelrailway.org.uk\)](http://sandmodelrailway.org.uk)

23/APM/005 - To present Citizen Awards:

Cllr Miller advised that three members of the Parish had been nominated for Citizen Awards in recognition of all their time and commitment to our Parish over the years. Nominees were: Bala, Anne Barker and Jo Sampson.

Bala and Jo thanked the community.

Cllr. Miller will present Anne Barker her award later in the week.

23/APM/006 - A few words from our Community Ranger:

The Community Ranger duties are still being undertaken with weekly inspections of play equipment to identify any health and safety issues. My aim is to continue keeping Datchworth Bulls Green and Burnham Green clean and tidy.

East Herts Council have now taken over the emptying of bins in Datchworth however, I am still having to make interim empties from time to time.

We have issues with Village Green bins being used weekly with bags of household waste and if you see anyone doing this please let us know.

23/APM/007 To receive the Datchworth Parish Council Annual Report 2022/23:

Annual Report 2022/2023 Cllr. Miller presented an edited version of Cllr. Jane Dodson's report (former chair).

Our thanks go to all Councillors past and present who have played an active role in supporting the Parish Council and to our wonderful Clerk Sue, who has stepped down to commit more time to her family and house refurbishment project. Particular thanks go to Cllr. Tony Stowe for his support as Vice-Chairman and to our County Councillor, Ken Crofton for his encouragement and support.

Our website has an enhanced 'Report a Problem' area on www.datchworth-pc.gov.uk where any issues relating to the Parish, such as potholes and dumped rubbish, can be reported.

Cllr Barker has worked hard to deliver another popular initiative for our community – the Strength and Balance Classes, which have been fully funded by EHDC (until mid-April) and from then by a grant from Sports England via Herts Sports Partnership, part of the University of Hertfordshire.

Datchworth Parish Council signed up to EHDC's Lottery as part of the conditions for being awarded the grant for Health & Wellbeing. Please do try and support this programme as a percentage of ticket sales income will come to DPC.

Datchworth Parish Council and Community Development Action Herts continued to run Digital Inclusion classes to help people to use IT and thus reduce social isolation and the inability to access vital services. The classes have been very popular.

We plan to install a Health & Well-being Trail in the Turkey Farm with funding from East Herts District Council 'Large Community Grant'. The idea is that there will be several 'stations' around the perimeter of the Turkey Farm that will be linked via a designated route, identified on a map. There will also be 'chatter benches' and each station will have a QR Code with a link to our website and various exercises and MP3 sound recordings and include a motivational quote and local heritage and environmental information. They'll also be made from recycled plastic.

Councillors work voluntarily for the Parish Council covering many issues, including: land queries, planning, recreation areas, highways issues, staff matters, legal issues and grants to name but a few.

Aside from Councillors, I would like to thank our other team members, namely our outgoing Clerk, Sue; Wendy Prowle our Responsible Financial Officer who continues to do a sterling job regarding all things financial and Nick Kleanthous our Community Ranger who always has a smile on his face and takes great pride in looking after the appearance and safety of our Parish. Please join me in thanking your former Councillors, Clerk, RFO and Community Ranger for their hard work and dedication to your Parish over the past year, a team that constantly strove to improve facilities and services for the benefit of Datchworth Parish and its residents.

23/APM/008 Question Time:

Horns Can we host a beer festival in August 2023?

Response DPC agreed to review the legal and logistical aspects of hosting on Bulls Green and will feedback in due course.

Cllr Miller closed the meeting at 20:30pm.