



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COLD ASH PARISH
HELD ON Thursday 20th April 2023**

Present:

Cllr Fenner, McArdle, Adams, Wilding, Marsh, Clark & Hanks
Linda Randall, Parish Council Clerk
District Cllr Beck – Clay Hill Ward
District Cllr Simpson Cold Ash Ward
50 residents from the Parish

1. Apologies

Cllrs Verner & Murray

2. Minutes and Updates from 2022

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28th April 2022 were signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

3. Parish Council update by Chairman of Council

Cllr Fenner took the members of the public through the Parish Councils work over the past year dealing with 59 planning applications, carrying out routine maintenance which included grass cutting, footpath maintenance, and running the 7 streetlamps within the Parish. **Cllr Fenner** also explained about the improvements that had been taking place in the Wildlife Allotment Gardens, with further works taking place, Feedback of praise for the volunteers work had been received. **Cllr Fenner** asked how many parishioners used the public library and approx. 15 residents said they did use it, which was encouraging, She explained about various projects that were being considered and asked for volunteers to come and assist the working group already set up. **Cllr Fenner** then thanked both the District Councillors, who were retiring after many years of service, for all their help and support to the Parish Council.

Cllr Clark arrived at 7.15pm

4. Neighbourhood Development Plan – Cllr McArdle

Cllr McArdle brought the residents up to date with the NDP. He took the parishioners through the steps that had been taken so far and what would be happening in the next stages. There is a detailed presentation which is available

on request from the Clerk

5. Wildlife Allotment Garden – Mr C Sayer

Mr Sayer gave a presentation on the Wildlife Allotment Garden (WAG) he gave details of where it was situated and what had been happening over the last year, which included opening new accesses, reintroduction of animals in the grazing fields and maintenance of footpaths. There had been a lot of work to encourage wildlife and restore meadows, with tree and hedge planting. A new area would have a formal opening on the 8th May with many community events taking place. The area had been used for the jubilee the previous year and he thanked Mr Taylor for creating the beautiful beacon which was in permanent situ in the area. He also thanked the new tenants of the grazing Felds for reintroducing animals to the area. A copy of Mr Sayers presentation is available on request from the Clerk.

Questions/Comments

- Mrs Neville asked if all areas were open to the public. She was advised yes apart from the grazing fields.
- Cllr McArdle also thanked Mr Goodwin for his hard work in that area.

6. Downe House School – Mr M Godfrey

Mr Godfrey, from Downe House School, introduced himself as the deputy head, he also lived in the Parish. He had been deputy head since 2021. He advised that currently there were 580 girls attending the school with approx. 350 staff looking after them. The school had been in the Parish for 100 years when it relocated from Kent. It is a full boarding school with some day users. There were two free bursary places offered to residents of the Parish if they met the criteria. He explained the school was attended by pupils from all over the world. There were also 2 schools in the Middle East and the school also owned a chateau in France where the pupils could go for a term to improve the French language. He explained that the school had close links with Kennet School based in Thatcham. He asked residents to come and visit the school and request to be added to the mailing list where events were advertised.

Questions/Comments

- A resident asked for information regarding bursaries.
- Another resident asked if the school had links with the other schools in the parish and was advised it had.

7. Tennis Club – Mr P Townsend

Mr Townsend gave an update on the Tennis Club. He explained that the Cold Ash Tennis Club was the 2nd largest in Berkshire. The club now had an online shop where sportswear and equipment could be purchased. There was a new coach who was training on Saturday mornings. A new seating area was about to be installed which will make watching matches safer. The courts were being refurbished in June of this year and would be laid in the Wimbledon colours.

8. Community Groups:-

- **Greening Group**

Mr Marshall gave a presentation from the Greening Group which included Climate

Change and maintaining a sustainable future. He explained this was an important matter for all. The group had formed in 2009 and there were many activities with in the Parish which assisted with climate change including regular swap shops, litter picking, recycling plastics and advice on issues such as power cuts and insulation. His full presentation is available on request from the Clerk.

- **Heritage Group**

Mr Davidson updated residents on the Heritage Groups virtual museum, he asked everyone to remember the web address and have a look the address is:- ColdAsh-Heritage.org. This website had been developed by Mr Don Gibbs. He gave details of how to use the website and encouraged everyone to have a look. **Cllr Fenner** asked if the group got involved with listed buildings and blue plaques but was advised this was West Berkshire Heritage Groups area.

- **Phoenix Flower Arrangers**

Mrs Simpson gave a brief presentation on the Phoenix Flower Arrangers, she advised they met once a month on 3rd Wednesday at Acland Hall at 2pm. Some of the members had been part of the group for 25 years. She explained flower arranging had changed over the last few years with less use of oasis as this was bad for the environment. The group visited local gardens. She asked if anyone was interested in becoming a member to contact her off Mrs A Ruddy.

- **Cold Ash Boys & Girls**

Mr Lamb gave a presentation on the Football Club. He explained that since the pandemic numbers had risen on children joining the club, the number playing now had risen to 350. They had expanded the group to include Cold Ash Wildcats and Squad Girls. Mr Lamb thank the Parish Council for the use of the Recreation Ground and also thank Mr Goodwin for his help.

9. Questions from Members of the Public

District Cllr Beck updated the Parish Council on various issues in the Manor Park ward including:- The use of the Manor Park field for sports use had been met with resistance. West Berkshire Council was evaluating all sites and the results of a Public Consultation. Another site had become available near Newbury collage, and this was being viewed favourably. He also advised that Passey's Yard had obtained authorisation from DEFRA to operate on a new site in Great Shefford. Incineration at the current sight was ceased at the end of March but due to issues at the new site some incineration had now resumed. This is being investigated. Cllr Beck felt that Cold Ash Parish Council should consider joining Newbury Town Council to carry out a speed review in the Waller Drive area. He explained both parishes needed to be involved as the area ran through both parishes.

A resident advised the Parish Councillors of the current issues with pot holes on

