

**Minutes of the Cold Ash Annual Parish Meeting
held at 7pm on Tuesday 30.4.2024 in the Acland Memorial Hall,
Hermitage Road, Cold Ash RG18 9JH**

Hosted by Cold Ash Parish Council (CAPC) to
showcase the achievements of Cold Ash Community Groups and Organisations

Present

Cllrs M Fenner (Chair of CAPC), I McArdle, P Murray, H Codling, J Wilding, A Morrow and P Adams
R Jardine, CAPC Clerk & RFO

13 parishioners

3 representatives for Cold Ash Boys & Girls FC

4 representatives for Cold Ash Tennis Club

1 representative for Cold Ash Volunteer Groups

1 representative for Downe House School

- 1 Cllr Fenner welcomed those present and thanked everyone for attending. Apologies were recorded for Cllr B Clark.
- 2 The minutes of the Cold Ash Annual Parish Meeting held on 20.4.2023 were approved and signed.
- 3 Cllr Fenner reported for Cold Ash Parish Council
 - 32 Planning Applications have been considered for consultee comment by CAPC since the previous Annual Parish Meeting.
 - the Council is Trustee of The Poor's Allotments & Recreation Ground Charities. Charity assets include Hermitage Road Play Area, Hermitage Road Car Park, Allotments and the Wildlife Allotment Gardens (WAG),
 - the Council has maintained it's own assets as well as those of the Poor's Charity including:
 - weekly litter picking of the Recreation Ground and 3 play areas
 - play area inspections
 - grass cutting – Glebelands Cemetery, the closed churchyard, Ashmore Green, Recreation Ground and the WAG
 - hedge cutting – Recreation Ground and Orchard
 - Tennis Courts
 - emptying of litter bins
 - street lighting
 - dog waste bins
- 4 Cllr Murray reported for Cold Ash Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group
 - after 7 years of work, the NDP Referendum will take place on Thursday 2.5.24. Parishioners will have the opportunity to vote on the adoption of the NDP.
 - the NDP is a set of planning policies, developed by local residents, to ensure that new developments are appropriate for Cold Ash Parish.
 - examples of these policies include Stop Sprawl, Save our Green Spaces and Zones for Village, Urban Fringe and Rural.
 - if adopted, West Berkshire Council will use the NDP when making Planning decisions for the Parish.
 - parishioners are invited to address queries or expressions of interest in the NDP to the Parish Clerk clerk@coldashpc.org.uk

5 Cllr McArdle reported on the Wildlife Allotment Garden (WAG) as a member of Cold Ash Countryside Volunteers

- Cold Ash Countryside Volunteers meet weekly on Thursdays at the WAG and have undertaken the removal of barbed wire, clearance of invasive species, clearance of fallen trees and management of dead wood, the repair and replacement of fencing, work to maintain and improve nearby footpaths and have cleared a watercourse through the site.
- the WAG has become a biodiverse area with restored meadows, wildlife habitats, new hedges and trees and a pond.
- it is a great place for people to enjoy the countryside, get exercise and rest. Several successful events have been held.
- there is livestock on the grazing fields.
- areas that had been inaccessible for decades are now opened up.
- the volunteers work in partnership with Newbury & Thatcham Green Gym and West Berkshire Countryside Society.
- the Cold Ash Countryside Volunteers stop for coffee at 11am each Thursday and all are welcome to join them for a coffee, a chat and to find out what the group are working on.

Cllr Hanks reported as a member of the Cold Ash Fundraising Group

- Cold Ash Fundraising Group was formed with one CAPC Councillor and 3 parishioners to provide new recreation facilities at Hermitage Road Recreation Ground.
- the Group commenced their project early in 2023 and successfully completed in January 2024 with the provision of a new bike shelter, multiuse goal end and a concrete table tennis table.
- the project was made possible by generous donations from parishioners and community organisations including Cold Ash Boys & Girls FC, Cold Ash Tennis Club, The Liebreich Foundation, Downe House School and St Mark's Church, plus Member's Bids from West Berkshire Council. Fundraising was facilitated by The Good Exchange enabling match funding from Greenham Trust and a grant from Peter Baker Grants. CAPC also made a contribution from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies.
- the new facilities are regularly used by all ages. It is possible to borrow equipment from the Parish Clerk for table tennis.

A member of the public suggested that the location of any new equipment should be carefully planned in future so as not to impact other activities.

7 Representatives of the Community Groups present were invited to speak:

Cold Ash Boys & Girls Football Club

- the Club is entering its 20th year providing grassroots football to local children.
- the Club currently provides for more than 300 children aged 4-18 years in 26 teams.
- Despite challenges due to personnel changes in the last year, the Club is growing due to the hard work and commitment of its volunteers.

Cold Ash Tennis Club

- the Club will be open to new members from 1.6.24 and assured parishioners of a warm and friendly welcome.
- the Club is working with The Poor's Allotments & Recreation Ground Charity to provide a new booking system to facilitate booking the Tennis Courts for non-members – more information coming soon.
- there is a possibility of coaching for young people also coming soon.

Cold Ash Volunteer Groups

- CAVG runs a bank account on behalf of four voluntary groups in the Parish: The Cold Ash Parish Heritage Group (CAPHG), the Cold Ash Parish Greening Group (CAPGG), the Bulletin and the Welcome Pack.
- new members are welcome to all of the Groups.
- parishioners are particularly encouraged to visit the Heritage Group website <http://coldash-heritage.org/> where a wealth of local information has been provided.

Down House School

- the Director of Community Engagement spoke about the School's enthusiasm at opening its doors to parishioners whenever possible. Parishioners are invited to contact the School's reception to be added to a mailing list for regular events including musical performances and guest lectures.
- the School has a volunteer day on 1.7.24 where all pupils will be out volunteering for the day. Please contact ligginsm@downhouse.net if you know of any opportunities for volunteering that might be appropriate.

There were no further questions or comments from members of the public and the meeting closed at 8.35pm. Cllr Fenner thanked everyone attending and invited all to remain for further refreshments.

Signed by Chairman:

Date:

DRAFT