

CLIFTON CAMPVILLE WITH THORPE CONSTANTINE PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023 at 7PM

Present: Cllr Bostock. Cllr Leedham. Cllr Nicholls, Cllr Bennion, Cllr Amsden, Cllr Green  
Clerk Sue Hughes. 7 members of the public.

1 **Apologies for absence**

Cllr Bent – Chairman

In the absence of the Chairman, Cllr Green proposed that Cllr Nicholls would take the Chair.

This was seconded by Cllr Bennion.

Cllr Nicholls welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed new member Cllr Edward Leedham

2. **Approval of Minutes of AGM held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022** - Taken as read and signed as a true copy.

No Matters Arising

3 **Annual Council Reports** - Read out by the Clerk and was as follows:

**Good evening**

In the absence of a chairman's report, please find a Parish Council report for the year 2022/23.

Firstly, thank you to all the Councillors for their continued support and their representations for this Parish. Your dedication is very much appreciated.

**Calvin Bent** - Our previous Chairman for several years has stepped down as both a Cllr and Chair and we extend our thanks to him for all he has done and wish him well in the future and send him our best wishes.

**Robert Leedham** – Robert has served on the Parish Council for many, many years, some as Chair, and has been an active member for all those years, rarely missing a meeting and participating in all events, but we hope to still have his involvement. Robert, your knowledge, and presence as a member will be truly missed, and we wish you all the very best for the future. We hope to see your continued attendance at PC meetings in the future.

**Queens Platinum Jubilee –**

Donations were made to The Millennium Green Trust and a Hornbeam tree was purchased and planted to commemorate this event. The PC donated money to the school so they could buy a new bench for the playground.

For their 'Quiet Area,' money was also donated from the PC for the village Platinum party and a marvellous time was had by all.

**The Queen** – In September 2022 the country mourned the sad loss of Queen Elizabeth II, and the PC observed a minute of silence at their following meeting as a mark of respect.

**Annual Donations**

Donations were made to:

SASA (St Andrews School Association)

Millennium Green Trust

Clifton Campville Village Hall

Haunton BKV

Haunton BRCD for ground maintenance

St Andrews Church graveyard

British Legion – poppy wreaths

Tamworth Have a Heart for their maintenance of the 2 defibrillators in the village.

### **Events**

Training - For the second time, the PC organised defibrillator training. This was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. Keith from 'Have a Heart' charity delivered the training and the PC donated £100. We thank Keith for all the hard work he does for this charity and as previously mentioned, maintaining the machines we have in the village. A new defib is soon to be fitted in Haunton and the PC will help with costs towards its update.

Annual Litter Pick – Due to the bad weather, this event was sadly cancelled, however, we hope to reschedule this very soon.

### **Highways**

Parish Council's continued monitoring of highway deterioration and the flooding saga in Main Street will be continued.

Parish Councillors have detected a progressive worsening of highway conditions and have developed a new strategy with Parish Councillors being more proactive whereby greater usage is being made of the Highways' Dept website and a more intense listing of specific defects. The feedback from Highways now seems more animate with evidential photographs of work done and advance notification where major work is involved.

### **Speed Awareness**

After concerns were raised about speeding traffic through the village, SIDs were purchased. These Speed indicator devices are due to be fitted in the very near future.

### **Allotments**

Allotments are still available to hire via the PC and the upkeep costs are paid for by allotment holders.

**Finances** – The PC has a healthy bank balance and an internal audit by an external accountant was carried out for the 2022/2023 financial year.

After the report was read out, Members thanked the Clerk for her work during 2022/2023.

**4. Community Reports** – read out by Sue Wadham on behalf of the Millennium Green Trust and was as follows:

The Millennium Green Trust are very grateful to the Parish Council for the funding they give. The routine costs of upkeep have continued to rise. The Trust pays Lichfield District Council to carry out the routine mowing of the grass and the wild meadow areas, and to empty the dog bins and litter bins. The total cost is now almost £1,800 per year. In addition the cost of insurance is £850 per year.

The key priority for Trustees during the last 12 months has been the maintenance and on-going upkeep of the Green.

In addition to the routine strimming, weeding, clipping etc that is undertaken by the Trustees themselves and other volunteers we have replaced the seats on the swings (£531), replaced the anti-slip surface chicken wire to the landing stage around the pond, repaired some of the fencing and strengthened some fence posts.

To commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee, a hornbeam tree (*Carpinus Betulus Fastigiata*) was planted near to the main entrance of the Millennium

Green. This will reach a height of about approx. 7 metres with about a 3 metre spread after 20 years. The Parish Council paid for the cost of the tree and the Trustees covered the cost of the plaque (£130).

In May last year, in a new development, several herb barrels were placed around the Green - thyme, sage, mint, oregano, rosemary, and one with a small bay tree - encouraging people to freely pick the herbs.

The very dry weather last summer meant that the herb tubs, Jubilee tree, a newly replaced walnut tree and some other small saplings required regular watering. Unfortunately the closest source of water is the tap in the Churchyard making the watering a significantly taxing job. This led us to invest in the autumn in guttering and water butts to collect the water from the roof of the storage container to help during future dry spells.

We have continued to develop the range of children's activities and attractions - the Fairy Glen is very popular with little ones, as are the different Find & Hide painted stone projects. This year these have included a special Easter creatures theme as well as a spooky Halloween theme. These have been done in conjunction with the Art & Craft Club.

As usual the Trustees carry out monthly visual inspections of the Green, document Quarterly Safety Inspections and pay for Lichfield District Council to carry out an Annual Inspection of the Play Equipment.

This year has unfortunately seen some acts of vandalism. The Parking signs have been removed several times .... None of us have been able to work out why! Also shortly after the Country Fair last June white graffiti was sprayed on the Notice Board and two sides of the storage container, and a couple of the trees. One of the youths responsible later apologised and spent some hours scrubbing the container and cleaning the Noticeboard. The Police Community Support Officer was very helpful. The Trust held a 'restorative' meeting was held with the youth and we are hopeful that such behaviour will not be repeated.

More recently there has been digging of holes in the copse and damage to the bark of some of the trees. One tree has had a wide band of bark removed. The Trustees main concern is to get the wilful damage to stop rather than taking a punitive approach. Members of the local village Facebook group have been asked to assist in ensuring that their children, grandchildren etc. understand that this is not acceptable and that it will potentially kill the trees. So far this appears to have assisted in the situation.

The Trustees 'commissioned' a specialist arboriculturist - an expert in Woodland Management who has local connections - to walk around the site with two trustees to verbally give his thoughts and advice free of charge.

The Green was described as very well planted and maintained with Oak, Ash, Silver Birch, Scots Pine and Chestnut trees with Holly and Yew bushes interspersed.

He noted some evidence of previous Ash Dieback on the tips of branches and twigs however the trees appear to be recovering and are therefore valuable specimens. Following his recommendations Trustees have removed a number of trees as part of a 'thinning out' exercise with the removal of dead, damaged and overcrowded trees. For thinning out purposes male Ash trees have been removed rather than female Ash trees and keeping the oak trees has been a priority.

He advised that the biggest risk to the trees are Squirrels, Ash Dieback and Needle Blight on the pines. Careful monitoring is necessary for signs of Ash dieback and Needle blight. Healthy trees are better able to deal with diseases and increasing light to the pines with the removal of one of the larger pines may assist.

He explained that the biggest risk is the damage being done by squirrels

particularly to the native broad leaved trees which can result in large areas of woodland being destroyed. The specialist has recommended consideration of special squirrel traps. This is something that the Trustees have discussed and will be giving further careful consideration.

In terms of future plans in addition to the squirrel problem, we are currently looking at ice risk measures following the tragic deaths in Solihull last winter, and we are exploring options for making the Green more user friendly for people with poor mobility and for those pushing buggies. This is in its very early stages and Trustees are currently looking at Natural England's report on 'Opening Access to the Countryside', the 'Countryside for all Good Practice Guide' published by Paths For All

This year we have welcomed a new Trustee, Mr Nick Ingram who has replaced Clive Boydell. The current Chair, Liz Ellis, has stated her intent to stand down as Chair after the coming AGM but will remain as a Trustee.

The current Trustees are therefore:

Jason Chandler, Liz Ellis (Chair), Nick Ingram, Olivia Lee, David Lodge, Bob Patchett, Christine Warburton (Treasurer) and myself.

Our Annual General Meeting is being held here on Wednesday 24 th May at 7.30pm

Sue Wadham

#### 5. AOB

The Chairman from Harlaston PC suggested to members that both Parish Councils could join forces and arrange a mutual Speed Watch team to work together during the next year. This item is to be discussed at a future meeting.

**Next Annual Parish meeting 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

The meeting was concluded at 7.23pm