

**SHADINGFIELD, SOTTERLEY, WILLINGHAM AND ELLOUGH JOINT PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish Council  
Held at Shadingfield Village Hall on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Cllr Chipperfield, Cllr Ellis (Chair), Cllr Gartley, Cllr London, Cllr Potter, Cllr Scuffil, Cllr Sheldrake, Cllr Wilson.

A. Downes (Clerk)

Members of the public

**Apologies and absence**

Apology from Cllr Barne, Inspector Liz Casey, Cllr David Ritchie.

**Chairman's Report**

Good Evening, and on behalf of my fellow councillors and our Parish Clerk, I would like to welcome you all - guest speakers, our parishioners and other members of the public. If any of you don't know me, my name is Caroline Ellis and I have been Chair of this joint Parish Council since November of last year when our Previous Chair, Mr Martin Davidson, stepped down after many years of service, both as a councillor and latterly, as I said, as our Chair.

Our annual Parish meeting is a little different to our ordinary Parish Council Meetings - which is also open to the public and you are welcome to attend. Our Annual Parish meeting serves to celebrate our Parishes, our achievements and our plans for the coming year and beyond. I'm also hoping that some of you may be encouraged to get more involved in our parishes, and maybe even consider joining us on the Parish Council. 2019 is a year when all Parish Councillors are obliged to step down, all prospective councillors (both new and old) must be nominated and, if necessary, elections held. This process takes place every four years and was recently completed. This year, we have 12 seats on the Parish council and only 10 nominations were received across the four parishes, so we still have 2 seats available. If you think you might be interested in joining the PC, please have a chat with one of us at the end of this evening, come along to another PC meeting or contact our Clerk, Andrea.

The Year 2018/19 has seen a number of changes; we have had the pleasure of welcoming some new members to the Parish Council - Cllr Robbie London and Cllr Helen Gartley and we look forward to welcoming Mr Steve as a councillor when we all officially take office on 7th May. As I mentioned earlier, our previous chair Martin Davidson resigned as chair and kindly agreed to stay on until election time but did not seek nomination, so we will now say goodbye to him as a Councillor and take this opportunity to thank him for his service over the years. Our Parish Clerk, after only a little over a year with us, also left us last year, so we saw November in with a new Clerk - Andrea Downes, and a new Chair; it's been a steep learning curve for us at times, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Councillors, particularly those more experienced than I, for their support and guidance at this time.

So, what's been happening? Well, we finally unveiled our Shadingfield and willingham Village sign in the summer of last year, on a sunny, Sunday afternoon. While this was largely paid for by fundraising in the village, principally at the Shadingfield Fox pub which hosted a number of events, the Parish Council did make a financial contribution towards both the cost of the sign and the plinth that supports it. The Village Hall committee also generously contributed to the cost of the plinth, and Sotterley SawMill donated the post that the sign is mounted on. There are still plans to finish the base of the sign to make it more suitable to sit on and we hope to see this completed in the Summer.

November saw the centenary of the end of World War I and I was honoured to be able to visit the military grave in Sotterley Chapel churchyard, as a representative of the Parish Council, and lay some flowers and say a prayer. We look forward to Mr Jim Laws of the Sotterley Chapel Preservation Trust sharing more information about this grave with us later this evening.

We have started community litter picks in our parishes - the most recent being held on 2nd March, before the spring burst of growth. Cllr Barne has been the driving force behind this; unfortunately, he can't be with us this evening but he has asked me to share credit with and thank all those who have volunteered each time. In particular, we have had good support from the Beccles Scouts, Beccles Town Council 'bombers' who lent us litter picking equipment, Waveney Norse who promptly cleared the rubbish collected and our local MacDonalds who sent representatives to join our many

Chairman: ..... Clerk: ..... Date: .....

community members on our last pick. There are many who continually clear rubbish along the verges year round as well, all of which help to keep our Parishes clean and beautiful. I hope this is an initiative that will continue and gain increasing support and involvement from all; I'm sure we all want to enjoy an environment free from litter and mess.

We have had some problems with the speed signs at either end of the village on the A145 this year; new batteries had to be purchased as they were failing to hold their charge, and then one of the units was discovered to be faulty. Furthermore, we had to find a new volunteer to change and recharge the batteries on a weekly basis. Fortunately, one of our residents has been able to take this responsibility on and we are looking into whether the faulty unit can be repaired or if it will need to be replaced; if the latter, we would probably look for a solar powered unit, so we can reduce the maintenance. I hope we all still find these units have a positive effect in reducing speeding through our village and are worthwhile retaining.

Our play area and playing field at the corner of Sotterley Road and London Road was looking a little sorry by the end of last summer so we have tidied this up - a project largely driven by Councillor London and Councillor Barne. The existing equipment has been repainted, new swing seats have been installed, plastic spikes to deter pigeons have been installed above the swings and new decking has been fitted on the bridge from Chartres Piece to the playing field. We have also taken steps to get rid of the moles on the playing field in time for the Easter holidays, which appear to have been successful, although a visit to the playing field yesterday revealed two new mole hills - so I guess we'll have to have another go at those. It was reassuring, however, that the traps put down were not interfered with.

The goal nets on the goal posts were in a very poor state, and I would like to publicly thank our former Chair, Cllr Martin Davidson for personally purchasing and replacing these - a generous and practical farewell gift from him to the community.

The future of the playing field raises some important questions; while the Parish Council has made provision in its budget for further improvements, equipment and development of this area is likely to be costly. However, we believe there is broad support for improving the playing field so that it is more accessible and can be enjoyed by more members of the community, as supported by the questionnaire results of the neighbourhood development team survey. There are funding opportunities available that we need to look at and it may be that we need a different organisational structure to take this forward. It is not a project to be taken on lightly, and we will need to have a solid plan that will see us maximise funding opportunities and engage the community to ensure we deliver what you want. We have some initial ideas, but if you would like to get involved or offer ideas, please do get in touch with one of us; if we aren't directly involved, we will be able to put you in touch with a councillor who is. It seems likely that we will need a project team for this that extends beyond Parish Councillors, so if you have project management or practical skills that would be useful, or if it's just a subject that's important to you as someone who is a regular user of this facility, please do come and join the team.

As well as the permanent improvements to the play area, we would like to hold a Summer Fair on the playing field next year - I'm afraid we've left it a little late to arrange one for this year - but planning for this will probably start in the Autumn, so please let us know your thoughts on this - what you'd like to see, when you'd like it to happen, that sort of thing. Keep an eye on the noticeboard and our website for more information on this.

Other projects for the future we have been discussing recently are having a defibrillator installed in the village and starting a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Again, if you have experience or views on this, please do get in touch. I would reiterate that the start of all Ordinary Parish Council meetings have a section when we are open to comments and input from members of the public.

Finally, I wish you all a pleasant evening, thank you for your time, and I'll now hand you over to our next speaker.

**Graeme Dyer (Shadingfield Village Hall Committee Chair)**

The Committee took on the lease of the building in 2002/2003. The place was falling down. They had to rebuild the toilet block. The car park was just a mud pack. Cars couldn't get on there. They had to have a concrete base put under the hall. The floor, wiring, heating and windows all had to have work done. This cost approximately £120,000 in total. There is still work that needs doing. The roof needs insulating. More money is needed. The car park needs completing at a cost of £10 to £20,000.

The building is available for everyone.

Chairman: ..... Clerk: ..... Date: .....

The lease is 25 years and there are only 8 years left. Graeme is looking to retire and they are looking for new members to keep the Committee going.

They raise money for other things and help out as much as they can.

They have bands use the hall twice a week on a Monday and a Thursday. They hold a Table Tennis Club which is thriving. They have 12-14 members at this.

There is a Dinner Club once a month for approximately 40 pensioners.

The Parish Council use it once a month.

The Church use it occasionally and there is some singing takes place there.

Are there any questions?

Who do you lease it from?

From the Diocese. The building was originally given to the village by somebody for educating the children religious ways. It was then given to the village and the villagers ran it ever since.

How many days a month is it actually used?

Part days Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Any funerals for people in the village is given for free otherwise it costs £11 for three or four hours. The hall isn't very big but it has a very good kitchen.

Any restrictions on what it can be used for?

No restrictions (except Bouncy Castles).

One resident raised an issue of noise when the bands leave. It causes upset of their dogs.

Graeme said he would come over and have a word with the band members.

Has a conversation taken place with the Diocese about extending the lease?

Graeme said there is a chance providing there is a new Committee willing to continue.

### **Tod Sullivan (Sam's Clubhouse)**

Absent

### **Rev. Phil Miller (Parish Update)**

Rev. Phil has been around for 3 years and he looks after a Benefice of 9 Parishes (Ringsfield, Iketshall St Andrew, Redis, West, Brampton, Stoven, Sotterley, Shadingfield, Weston, Ellough, Willingham St. Mary). His main job is to tell people that God loves them at weddings, baptisms, Church services etc. Rev. Phil was on Inside Out in February on BBC1 because they found out St. Margeret's, Stoven is on the 'Historic England Places of Worship At Risk Register' which means it needs a lot of money to maintain it. The Government had the Taylor Review looking at the funding of rural churches and places of worship. They recognised that these are important buildings being looked after by very few people. Stoven has a congregation on a really good day of 10. The building needs £93,000 of work doing to it just keep it still. It has no running water, a sink or a toilet. Across all 9 churches they need to find £450,000 for the beautiful medieval buildings. Rev. Phil's job is to tell people that God loves them but we also have to look after these buildings because they are special to people. They have historical connections to them. As a Diocese they are working on 'Growing in God – Growing in Depth, Growing in Influence, Growing in Number, Growing Younger'. It's about the Church being at the heart of the Community. He will be at more Parish meetings.

They will be running events at St. Margeret's Sotterley for fundraising. He said that Tom and Anna are very keen to have the Church as a Parish Church and not just the Church on the Estate. They intend to run book clubs and film clubs, perhaps at the Village Hall. They want to look at a cycle way or a walkway around the Churches.

There is a Facebook page 'Hundred River Wainford Benefice'. The website is

[www.hundredriverwainfordbenefice.org.uk](http://www.hundredriverwainfordbenefice.org.uk).

Last weekend there was a Flower Festival at Shadingfield. Shadingfield is great because there is a car park.

The Churches are open all the time. They are there for a time of peace and quiet or even for a look at the fascinating architecture. Every 5 years the buildings are inspected and Rev. Phil went for an interesting look with their Architect. There is evidence of change from over the years.

History books will be produced about the Churches.

Services are every Sunday at Shadingfield at 11am.

### **Jim Laws (Sotterley Graveyard Military Grave)**

#### **The Military Grave at Sotterley Chapel**

November 2018 marked the centenary of the end of the First World War. This was a time for wide reflection on the sacrifices made by the generation that fought in a conflict that, it was hoped, would end all wars by showing how impossibly destructive they are.

Chairman: ..... Clerk: ..... Date: .....

Last November, The Royal British Legion wanted to make school children of today more aware of the epic struggles that ended a hundred years before. They sent out a request to engage with local schools, to the custodians of every graveyard in the UK that contain a military grave. We, the Parish Council and the Sotterley Chapel Preservation Trust, wrote to Brampton School but had no reply. This website page has risen from our researches in November.

All military graves have a common shape and style of Headstone, which you will be familiar with, if not from visiting a military grave, from seeing the huge graveyards in France and elsewhere. Naval examples have the anchor motif.

In Sotterley Chapel Graveyard we have one such grave, for John Stephen Easey, born 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1880, died 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 1919. So, there is a question straight away; why does John Easey have a war grave when he died a year after the end of hostilities?

To explain this, we need to look at his war work. John Easey was a fisherman, working out of Lowestoft. He lived on farming country, rather than the shore, as did many men who earned their living seasonally from the land and the sea.

John Easey's home on shore was on Sotterley Common, a name still used to describe a few houses towards Hulver, near East Lodge. There was an Inn called the Falcon, and a blacksmith's shop. There was a shop that sold food and everything a family needed, about a mile away at Wrentham West End. The name Sotterley Common is a throwback to pre-enclosure days, when the cottage marked the north-Western boundary of a large area of low-quality land, jointly owned by the Commoners.

John had a wife, Ellen May, and 5 children and they lived in a cottage with 6 rooms. He was the eldest of 8 children and his Father, Herbert, was an estate worker in Sotterley. On the Sotterley War Memorial there are 2 names from the Easey family, John and his youngest brother, Bob, a private in the Grenadier Guards, who was only 20 when he was killed in 1918. He is buried in France, along with thousands of other soldiers, in Vaux Hill cemetery, Pas De Calais.

Returning to John's seafaring; this was a very useful occupation for the war effort in 1914 and he was recruited to be 2<sup>nd</sup> Hand on a trawler, which was converted to find and sweep mines, seaborne bombs planted by the enemy in our shipping lanes. Sweeping or clearing mines was extremely dangerous and the casualty rate was high. Trawlers or Drifters with wooden hulls were ideal for mine sweeping. <http://www.gwpda.org/naval/atrawler/86wd.htm> Ted Frost's 1985 book *From Tree to Sea* shows exactly how a wooden Drifter was built, with exquisite hand drawings, as remembered from 1916. ISBN 9780861380336.

The exploits of the Lowestoft trawlermen were celebrated in, when written, the second most popular music composed by Sir Edward Elgar after *Land of Hope and Glory*; *Fringes of the Fleet*, with words by Rudyard Kipling- *The Lowestoft Boat* is a featured song.

After being played in music halls through the middle war years it went out of vogue. The first recording I found was by some modern singers in a church with a piano but thank goodness there is also the original Elgar recording from 1917, which suddenly makes some sense of the music and of Kipling's boisterous lyrics, available on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fh1HEzFL8ks>

Finding out about John's naval career has been quite difficult. He is shown as having served on HMS Pekin but so have many more seamen than could fit on one trawler. I discovered the answer very recently.

In order that the provisions of the Naval Discipline Act could apply to a naval base with non-navy vessels, at least one of the fleet had to have a real Navy name. In this case HMS Pekin referred to the Grimsby Minesweeping Division and Trawler No. 24 was also called HMS Pekin. In fact, John Easey served his later years on Richard Roberts, a castle class minesweeper-trawler, in the Royal Navy Reserve.

You may have already guessed why John died as a serviceman a year after the armistice. There were thousands of mines in the North Sea and the work of clearing them carried on for several years. In 1919 John's flotilla were working further north than Grimsby when he was taken ill. The reason isn't fully explained anywhere I could find. *Illness* is the cause given, which could cover anything from a heart attack to influenza, which was a worldwide epidemic at that time.

Chairman: ..... Clerk: ..... Date: .....

Because the flotilla was working inshore, John was taken from the ship and his place of death is recorded as Crescent, Rosyth, Dunfermline. Looking for Rosyth Crescent, Dunfermline proved fruitless but again, using Navy logic, a search for HMS Crescent revealed that she was an old cruiser used as a base ship, giving her name to another Royal Navy establishment based on Rosyth. Having a proper sick bay and doctor on board, HMS Crescent would have been the best place to take John Easey but alas to no avail. The Easey family believe that John died of Spanish Influenza.

So, John Easey died on war work, a year after the last mines were being laid. He was buried in his local churchyard with a standard military grave, for which £10 per year is paid for upkeep, by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. At the request of the Royal British Legion there was a brief ceremony of Remembrance at the grave on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November last year, marking a hundred years from the Armistice. Perhaps there should be one this year, for John Easey's centenary.



Jim Laws, 25.04.2019

Any questions?

*How far back do the graves go in Sotterley Chapel?*

Approximately 1882 when the graveyard was consecrated by the Bishop of Norwich.

*Is it possible to have a green plaque near the gate saying 'Commonwealth War Grave' at Sotterley Chapel?*

Mr Laws said it is a good idea and he will look into it.

### **Rachel Bunn (Sotterley Fair)**

Sotterley Country Fair is on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June and it is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of running in the event. Rachel's father is part time Game Keeper for the Estate and following the loss of his wife Tessa and Miles Barne offered to have a small charity fundraising event which raised £3,500 and last year they raised £11,000 in a day. This was with 3,500 visitors. It's about a family fun day, accessibility and raising money for local charity. It's a true community event. The hope is that this year will reach £50,000 over 5 years. Over 20 local charities have been helped. The charities this year are Chedgrave MS Therapy Centre (mandatory every year), Sunbeams (a local learning disabilities day care), Suffolk Lowlands Search and Rescue, Faith, Sotterley Church, East Coast Truckers, East Coast Hospice, Clinks Care Farm, Brainwave, Shadingfield Village Hall. New events for this year, Ferret Racing and Alpaca Walking.

Chairman: ..... Clerk: ..... Date: .....

There will be Classic Cars. The Waveney Preservation Society have made it their Annual Show for the year. Dog show, Birds of Prey, a beer tent and live music. There is no pitch fee for a local charity.

There is a Facebook page.

The entrance fee is £5 per person.

### ***Cllr Ted Potter (Neighbourhood Plan)***

At the beginning of 2017 there was a discussion about developing the Neighbourhood Plan and it was unanimously voted for.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan? They've been around for about 7 or 8 years. They came in with the Localism Act of 2011. They give communities more involvement and engagement in how they wanted their Parishes to develop over the next 10 to 15 years.

They form part of a hierarchy of plans.

There is a National Planning Policy Framework which is a very high-level document including things relevant to the Parishes such as protecting the countryside.

The Local Plan. This defines mainly looks at housing requirement and development but there are also other relevant things like protection of the environment.

The Neighbourhood Plan gives local residents an opportunity to comment about the types of housing and character etc. However, the rules state that this can't contradict or undermine the other plans. They have to be in line with the NPPF and Local Plan.

Some issues that were raised from the questionnaires that went out are speeding along the main road through Shadingfield and dog fouling. Although they may not fit directly into the main document, we are trying hard to work them in to it.

How far have we got?

The first thing to do was to decide what area to cover. The area of the Neighbourhood Plan is *almost* the same as the Parish map. There are a couple of houses in Redisham that had to be excluded that squeezed in to Shadingfield but they were left in case Redisham developed their own NP.

Once Community agreement was received to go ahead it then had to go to the Parish Council for their agreement. It then went to Waveney District Council for approval. Once this was received a Project Team could be set up which included Parish Councillors and members of the community.

The team varies between 6 and 12 people.

Questionnaires were distributed last year and attendance at Sotterley Fair as an information gathering process. Discussions have taken place with the District and County Council. Lots of information has been gathered to draft the document. It will have a brief summary and four main sections.

A full description, what it is, what it does and how it fits in with the other plans.

A detailed description of the Parishes as they are now and some of the issues.

A section on visions and objectives for the plan – available to look at after the meeting.

The key part of the plan is the policies (housing, environment, sustainable transport, facilities and amenities, businesses and employment).

The main purpose is not only a document for the District and Parish Council to use but a document for residents to see how decisions will be made in the future.

Development in the countryside is severely restricted and only allowed in exceptional circumstances (building extensions).

There has been a proposal on the local plan of a development to the east of Woodfield Close and an additional area to the east of Chartres Piece. There has been a reduction of development (from 40 houses to 10 houses) due to an objection from residents and the Parish council. There is however an opportunity to say what types of houses we want there.

The environment raised comments that people like living in the country, protect green spaces, protecting foot paths and cycle routes. Also considering green energy.

The business and employment aspect was welcomed for small businesses and working from home. Everyone favoured the development at Ellough but not coming out further into the parishes.

Once the draft document has been put together which is very much community led, it will go out for consultation. Following that the plan will be finalised and go out to the local planning authorities. It will then go out to a nominated external examiner who will go through it and check that everything complies and make suggestions. Once the changes have been adopted the document will go to Council and then go to a referendum of all the local residents of the Neighbourhood Plan area. If it is voted in favour it will be adopted and will then become a formal statutory part of the planning regulations for the Parishes.

Cllr Potter asked that whoever receives it gives honest feedback.

### **Clerk's Report (Website, Finances, Responses from Councillor questions – Police Report)**

Chairman: ..... Clerk: ..... Date: .....

The Clerk advised that she had started last November and that it had been a huge learning curve as she has become Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Website Manager etc. She thanked the Councillors for their support and making her feel so welcome.

She explained that there have been small changes to the website.

Suffolk Highways and roadworks.org have been added due to the roadworks that took place recently on the London Road and the fact that during July there are going to be major roadworks at the Public Hall.

In Your Area has been added as it's a host for all the local newspapers and includes news, community page, events etc.

There is a link to the new bus timetable.

The Clerk is happy to accept any suggestions for additions to the website.

The income for the year was £12,331.54

The expenditure was £12,332.60

The precept has remained the same as year with no rise.

The Clerk attended a Locality Meeting with the Police earlier in the day at Lowestoft Police Station where she asked Inspector Casey the 3 questions that were posed by the Council:

**1. How much is collected for policing in Beccles through Council Tax and how much is spent on policing in Beccles?**

**Are we heavily subsidising other areas?**

Can't answer that.

The Clerk asked the Chair if she should contact the Police Crime Commissioner for this information? The Chair and Councillors responded positively.

**2. What is your Police Patrol strategy for SSWE?**

As there is very low crime there is very low demand. There has to be a record and evidence of phone calls for police to be allocated in areas. The advice is if someone is unsure if it is a 999 call, ring it anyway and the call handler will filter and deal with the category. This way an incident is recorded and the statistics will show where more policing is required. Inspector Casey has to attend regular 'bidding' meetings. Bidding can only happen where there is evidence of requirement.

**3. In your opinion what is the value of establishing a Neighbourhood Watch in the Parishes and are the police involved? How does it work with such a dispersed population?**

Absolutely have a Neighbourhood Watch. They are a vital source of feedback for the police. Inspector Casey can send an officer to explain the process.

The Clerk asked if she should invite someone to PC? The Chair and Council requested an invitation to the police for Neighbourhood Watch Scheme advice.

The Clerk advised there are Police Connect leaflets that alerts you by text, phone call and email to local crime.

There is a big push on keeping property locked during the summer months

**Reports from other organisations**

None received

**Questions and comments from the public**

A member of the public asked about Sam's Clubhouse. The Clerk explained that it is a venture that has been started by Access Community Trust. It's a place for people with mental health issues as a collaboration. You can go along for a drink and something to eat or you can go along and help by washing up, decorating, putting chairs out for events. Someone can go along and help on a rota system where the gift of volunteering that is so good for your health. It's perfect for people who struggle with social isolation and loneliness.

Chairman: ..... Clerk: ..... Date: .....

The Chair asked for people to offer suggestions for things the Parish council can help with for the community. The Clerk advised there are some funds available for use. The Clerk advised that we aren't just limited to the Parish funds. There are funding opportunities available from locality budgets within the District and County Council.

**The meeting closed at 20:10**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.  
THE PARISH COUNCIL ABIDES BY THE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL CODE OF  
CONDUCT 2007. THE CODE OF CONDUCT IS AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION BY  
CONTACTING THE CLERK**

**Parish Clerk: Andrea Downes 63a Ingate Beccles Suffolk NR34 9RX**

**Tel: 07960 298473**

**E mail: [clerkshadingfieldpc@mail.com](mailto:clerkshadingfieldpc@mail.com)**