

## Ixworth Annual Parish Meeting

The minutes of Ixworth Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 at 7.00pm at SET Ixworth

Present were Cllr Ben Birrell, Chairman of the Parish Council, D Cllr John Griffiths & nineteen residents.

Also present were representatives from Ixworth Primary School, Green Ixworth, Ixworth Recorder, Ixworth Patients Association, Rev Karen Burton (St Mary's) Robins Copse Wildlife Group, Ixworth Village Hall, Ixworth Association, and Ixworth Events Group.

The role of clerk for the purpose of recording the minutes of the meeting be undertaken by Mandy Adlington.

### Minutes

The minutes were duly signed as a true record of the previous meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave the following report;

Hello all, thank you for attending, as you are aware the last year has been a dark time for us all, I'm pretty sure none but the most senior amongst us can remember a period of history when hope and light was so difficult to come by, the world came to a standstill and our community, friends and family suffered loss and bereavement.

However amongst the dark we have found light at the end of the tunnel, although not out of the woods yet and with a fair way to go our community rose to the challenge and made the best of a bad situation.

From within our parish, community projects were set up to support each other, individuals and groups used the pandemic to prove that when faced with a confusing and uncertain future we would put the needs of our community first, No one was left behind and everyone was looked out for. From medicine delivery to food runs, new friendships were formed, bridges were built, and our community was made stronger.

For that we should all be proud.

To those groups and individuals that made this happen we thank you.

Obviously because of the pandemic all non-essential community projects and groups were suspended however looking at the list of local organisations that have turned up tonight to speak and update us on what's been going on its very clear that the down time has been used to plan for the future, which is very reassuring and provides us with hope.

From a Parish Council viewpoint, we have had said goodbye to some old faces, of which we are great full for their service whilst at the same time the electorate have chosen some new faces to represent and caretake the village, we welcome those people and look forward to building on our solid foundation. As a new chairman I hope to be able to add to the good work of the previous chair whilst adding some of my own methods and leadership style to the Council.

For those that read my magazine article will know that I have a strong focus on the community engagement, increasing awareness and community participation of the work that we can do to maintain and improve the village. With Parish Council guidance I aim to set up working groups that will give interested villagers and Councillors the opportunity to work together on specific projects that will add to the quality of life for parishioners, more details will be published as and when on social media, the magazine, and the minutes.

Something new coming to the village is that we will now be exploring live-streaming our meetings, so that you can see what is being done as its being done, real time democracy and decisions.

One of the biggest things to happen already, thanks to a combined effort of the Ixworth association, Jigging trust, Ixworth SET and you the parishioners is the forming of a youth club, bringing back an aged old tradition that provide the children of the village mental, life and friendship support, funding has been approved by all parties involved and we hope to get this up and running as soon as we can.

I would like to thank all parties involved and especially Mike Jones for making this happen.

The neighbourhood plan is very close to completion, it will be with the Parish Council shortly and then sent to West Suffolk District Council for approval, then it will be down to you the villages to approve it in a referendum.

With exciting new developments and groups, our community is looking stronger, healthier, and more exciting every week, the future is bright and we have lots to look forward too, so without further ado, I will pass the podium over to those very community groups, school, and institutions for updates.

The following reports were received from the various groups attending.

### **Ixworth Church of England Primary School**

Lyndsey Allsopp, Had Teacher of the school gave the following report –

Thank you for inviting me to share Ixworth Primary School's 'look to the future.'

Our school vision is "On a journey together where learning has no limits." We have certainly been on a journey over the last two years and in order to look to the future I need to tell you of our past achievements and how we plan to build on these.

Ixworth Primary staff were quick to embrace online learning and we had set up an online classroom as soon as school was closed in March 2020. Our online offer was quick to develop to meet the needs of our children and families. We supported families well with regular calls and parcels.

Although relationships have been strengthened between families and school, it has been difficult to maintain the usual contact that goes hand in hand with a local primary school. Events like Sports Day and Parents Evenings have had to be virtually shared in order to keep everybody safe and as a result it has not always been easy to maintain these vital connections.

We know that when we go back to school in September, we need to involve our parents as much as possible again in school life: we have a brand new looking school as a result of a £500,000 Conditions Improvement Fund bid that we are desperate to show off to our parents and friends. We are planning guided tours with our school governors. If you want to come along, please let me know.

Good teaching, good progress and consistency in attendance were key for our children with their return to school on March 8th of this year. There were inevitable gaps in knowledge and understanding. Our teachers and children have worked hard over the last four months and it has been great to see the progress that has been made.

Our key priorities for next year are to develop the teaching and learning of handwriting and spelling across the school, a new approach to the teaching of early recall of number facts and a new curriculum to teach children how to best manage their feelings. We want to get our parents in early on to share these new approaches with them.

Numbers to our wrap-around care - offering breakfast and after school support - have begun to increase since lockdown three ended - we are determined to develop this offer again in the new year so that we can support as many of our many working families as possible.

Our nursery numbers took a hit last year. We asked our parents what would make our nursery provision more appealing and they said that we needed to offer full time places. As a result we now offer morning and afternoon sessions to children the term they turn three and we have two full time staff. Numbers for September are nearly three times that of last September and we are looking forward to developing the outside provision thanks to an Early Years grant from Suffolk County Council.

Staff recruitment and retention during this period has been tough: we have lost teachers as a result of Covid and the impact it has had on theirs and their family's health - mental and physical. I am pleased to say that we now have a full complement of staff - including some newly qualified teachers - bringing in new ideas and energy to an experienced and strong senior leadership - a great team to move forwards within September.

With a new term we are hoping for a long awaited visit from Ofsted. The school is well overdue its next inspection and has come such a long way since the last report that it received. We are looking forward to showing inspectors the great things that are going on in our school - teaching and learning, links with families and the community, support for wellbeing through an enriching, board, and balanced curriculum.

Finally we are making plans to get out and about in our beautiful village once again: we are hoping that regular visits to our church and library will return in September, that we can start to use our local High street and shops to support our local area studies in history and geography again, that we can renew relationships with our friends at The Beeches.

We will be launching a whole school project in September linked to letter writing and want to send letters to our local community groups and establishments to reconnect. If you would like to be involved in this project, please do let me know - have a chat with me afterwards so I can take your details or message us on our Facebook page.

I started with our vision and that is where I will end. We are on a journey together where learning has no limits. We would love you to be part of this journey too. Thank you for listening, have a lovely summer and see you in September!

## **Green Ixworth**

Mr Roger Spiller gave the following report –

In the past weeks terrifying scenes of massive death toll in the German Floods and forest fires in NW US, Canada and Siberia will have hopefully shocked our government into actions which will reduce Global Heating. But it is not just governments who need to act. The natural and built environment is ours and crucial to our wellbeing. Green Ixworth is keen to work with others so that together we can make Ixworth an even better place to live our lives in full.

Green Ixworth is coming up for its first birthday and our first in person meeting will be next Thursday in the Courtyard Cafe (Pykkerell) at 7.00pm. Our guest speaker will be Sir Kenneth Carlisle, owner of the Wyken Estate who will share his experience of making 21<sup>st</sup> Century farming friendly to the environment. His is just one example, along with Dairy Farm in Ixworth, of environmental improvements already taking place on a large scale in our neighbourhood often with too little fanfare.

Notwithstanding Covid, our existing work plan is well advanced: initial planting in Crown Lane is complete with approximately three hundred trees and bushes plus a myriad of wildflowers and work has started cleaning up the river, both of which are designed to create a green corridor around and within the village. Our proposal for a Green Bridge to permit wildlife as well as people to cross the A143 is being worked up in conjunction with the Parish Council. Pollution in all its forms: Particulates and Nitrous Oxides, (both damaging respiratory function), Carbon Dioxide, and Noise all harm our community. West Suffolk were kind enough to provide two Nitrous Oxides metering devices in the High Street and at Mulley's Roundabout.

The river will be our major work for the next few years and owners of riparian (river and bank) rights are being contacted for consultation over their wishes for the river. At this stage we are seeking to: clean and prevent further pollution of the Black Bourn, expose the gravel bed, open up public access to parts of the riverbank, create a Green Corridor with a rich habitat for wildlife and improve the fish stocks. Steve Wilson is leading the project. A bird life survey started in March.

There are several areas where we would like to work with the local schools to both help and to encourage young residents to play their part in making Ixworth fit for the future and the schools may well have their own projects like a community orchard. In many respects I am glad to say the young are in many ways already ahead of we oldies.

To enable residents to enjoy the natural environment we need to see more footpaths and access and are working on both.

We are making our voice heard locally and nationally, commenting on many consultations particularly on planning issues, a crucial aspect of our environment, where detailed work has been done. Our draft response to the White Paper on the Future of Planning was adopted by the Parish Council for their response and we now hear that the Parliamentary cross party Select Committee has supported almost all the positions we took. Particularly wanting to involve residents more in planning consultations rather than the Government proposals to reduce them.

We have already started working with other organisations to enhance the Natural and Built Environment in Ixworth: Suffolk Wildlife trust, Environment Agency, Natural England, West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council. We are working with the SCC over the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership program to help communities reduce their Carbon Footprint. This activity is endorsed by the Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council. Details are available at the Green Ixworth display stand.

We have also sought to engage with developers, with variable success, to seek improvements in their landscaping and to encourage them to provide tree screens before work starts and mini forests within developments. We shall be also engaging with West Suffolk Planners over developments and continuing to provide researched material for the Parish Council.

When some of us first discussed setting up GI last summer, during Covid, we were unaware just how many people related to what we are trying to do. Our two Councillors, John Griffiths and Joanne Spicer have not only been helpful with advice and making contacts but contributed generously from their Locality Budgets, similarly with the Ixworth Association. Denny Brothers (printers) have helped with printing. When we were tree planting the Parish Council offered residents funding to plant trees under the BBC Plant Britain scheme.

We have a display of some of our activities and a chart of various projects currently underway or planned and details of the Climate Change Partnership program. We shall be happy to answer any questions you may have after the meeting. Not everyone can clean up the river or dig ground but each of us in our own way can make a difference. Do visit our display where you will also find membership application forms for those who would like to join our work to enhance the environment in and around Ixworth.

Like you we want to preserve what is best in Ixworth and make it even better especially for future generations.

## **Ixworth History Recorder**

Mrs Sue Spiller gave the following report –

I have been the History Recorder for the parishes of Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe since February 2019.

The History Recorder Scheme, set up by Suffolk Local History Council, was the first such scheme to be set up in the UK and I am one of 254 history recorders in the 484 parishes of Suffolk.

Part of my role is to keep a record of the present time; because today is tomorrow's history. I wrote an initial report about Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe in March 2019 and have produced annual reports for 2019 and 2020, documenting events and changes throughout each year.

I collect newsletters, leaflets, election pamphlets and newspaper cuttings, etc. and these, together with my annual reports, are taken to Suffolk Archives, where they are catalogued and made available to the public. A second copy of each report is deposited in Ixworth Library.

Another part of my role is to ensure the survival of valuable local history items which might otherwise be overlooked or lost forever. However, this task is already admirably carried out by Steve Wilson, Ixworth's unofficial archivist, so I work alongside Steve. We look out for documents and artefacts of local interest and if anyone is clearing out granny's attic and finds anything of relevance to the history of Ixworth or Ixworth Thorpe, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

The role of History Recorder is very flexible and in addition to the above:-

- I regularly contribute local history articles to *The Ixworth Newsletter* and *The Ixworth Magazine*;
- I help Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe residents, and descendants or relatives of residents, to research their family tree or their house history;
- I am cataloguing resources relating to the history of Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe for use by current and future village historians;
- I have put all of the records of Ixworth Cemetery onto an Excel spreadsheet and am in the process of producing a plan of the cemetery to tie in with the spreadsheet;  
I hope to do something similar with the records of St Mary's Churchyard and to publish the information on-line for the benefit of family historians and descendants of those who are buried there;
- I am currently writing a history of the First Ixworth Women's Institute from 1918 until it closed in 1964 and am on the lookout for photos, documents, and memorabilia from that time. If you are a child or a grandchild of a member of Ixworth WI before 1964 and could arrange for me to have a chat with that member, I would be extremely grateful.

During the first lockdown, I wrote the history of *The Pykkerell*, which was a joy to write because the pub has such a long and interesting history. I am most grateful to The Ixworth Association for a grant towards its publication. It is on sale at The Pykkerell, Ixworth Library, the Mobile Post Office van, and Greene King Beer Cafe, but there are a few copies for sale over there.

Any profits will be donated to the Friends of Ixworth Library and I am hoping to build up the local history section of Ixworth Library.

Above all, my aim is to make the residents of Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe as enthusiastic about local history as I am.

## **Robins Copse Wildlife Group**

Mr Adrian Harmer explained that Robins Copse was opened by the Parish Council, but the wildlife group look after it on their behalf. Robins Copse is an area in Walsham Road which is open to everyone to come and walk around or just sit peacefully enjoying the area. In the future the group are hoping to work with RAF Honington on a possible project.

Currently there are only four members. The group would welcome anyone who would like to join, and I can be contacted on - [adrian.harmer@gmail.com](mailto:adrian.harmer@gmail.com)

## **Rev Karen Burton – St Mary's Church**

Rev Karen expressed her pleasure at being invited and seeing so many people attending. Rev Karen expressed her sadness that during the Covid 19 lock down the Churches were all shut, which was a terrible loss to many people as many felt they needed a place to go at this challenging time in our lives. St Mary's adapted, and all services went online for eighteen months with lots joining online to take part. The Church is now once again open

each day and services have started in person again, we are not able to sing at present but hopefully that restriction will be lifted soon.

Over the coming months we will be holding a few more events including the Flower Festival and Hymns and Pimm's, please come along and enjoy being able to meet with other people from our community.

I look forward to seeing you all soon and if you need any assistance, please contact me.

### **Ixworth Patients Association**

Mr Graeme Norris gave the following report –

“To be or not to be?” Should the Patient Association continue or fold?

The Association was formed back in 1988 to support the work of the GPs by organising talks on medical matters, raise money for equipment not covered by the NHS and manage a transport service to enable frail patients to visit the Surgery - this saved GPs from having to spend time travelling to make house calls and so have more time to treat patients.

The Practice recruited a number of GPs to join the founder Dr Cannon - a charismatic and charming doctor. The Association ran well attended education events, bought equipment, and recruited over thirty volunteers to taxi patients.

Alas, personal events around 2006 led to first Dr Harpur then Dr Cannon leaving the Practice he had established. Disappointed, most of the active members of the Association left. Only the very occasional talk was organised, it became a struggle to raise funds and the Association withered. The transport service managed to survive only through the selfless efforts of the drivers.

By 2018 there was no chairperson, only four active members, six drivers in their late seventies and apparent little interest from the staff of the Surgery. The April 2016 claimed desire of the NHS, that GP Practices should encourage patient participation groups is perhaps judged by the award of 35p funding per patient in the GPs Contract...

Seems like it was “Not to Be.”

A conversation at the beginning of 2019 with Dr Hart on the reasons behind the schism that occurred between the Partners and the mounting pressures the NHS faced - in particular, the increasing workload - led to an appreciation of the wariness doctors felt towards complaints and criticism. In some ways, there was a fear patient participation would become another route to voice short comings and consume scarce professional time.

As a way to discover if there was a role the Association could usefully play, it was suggested that the imminent survey by Suffolk Public Health of the “Need for Care,” by postcode, might provide a clue. The survey showed in great detail the medical issues in the neighbourhood of Ixworth. In essence

- More could be done to detect heart disease and possible stroke.
- More could be done to screen for cancers and follow up.
- Diabetes and lifestyle choices were a challenge.
- Identifying dementia earlier and supporting their carers/relatives was a concern.
- Stopping smoking campaigns were still needed

All topics that were being addressed nationally and much was already being done by the Surgery.

Indeed, Ixworth has a specialist respiratory care nurse and a social prescriber to offer wellbeing lifestyle services.

Needs that were relatively unique to the Ixworth postcode were:

- The marked increase in fractures in the elderly.
- A significant rise in anxiety and depression in young teenagers.
- The interest in the new atrial fibrillation (AF) monitors to identify potential stroke victims.
- The number of Dementia Care Homes in the locality.

Action to help the GPs tackle these topics seemed within the capabilities of the few Association members.

“To Be”!

With the help of generous funding from John Griffiths, our West Suffolk Councillor, Sir Frederick Hiam Charitable Trust, British Sugar, nearby Parish Councils and local Charities, the Association began to research what it could do. New people were then encouraged to join the Association - we were "To Be" - and the Association is:

- Organising balance and strength classes to prevent osteoporosis.
- Funding sessions to support young people with anxiety and depression.
- Supporting trials of AF monitors.
- Encouraging musical events in local Care Homes and carers lunches.

(Alas, however, covid has rather restricted activities last year but we should pick up momentum soon).

## Complexity

The proposed linking of medical treatment and social care to provide a more integrated care service, has also provided a purpose for the Association. Each individual organisation in the vast web of the NHS, plus various Local Government Social Services, are doing their best - but the only person who sees the treatment of an illness from end to end is the patient themselves. Only the patient can experience what is working well and not so well? Only the patient can see that the well-meaning efforts in one organisation are being undone by equally well-meaning but contrary efforts in another.

Feedback is important to iron out these inevitable problems. By listening to patients and sifting out the underlying causes, the Association can help communicate suggestions for improvement to the appropriate agencies involved.

## "To Be a Voice"

An idea is to run regular feedback events in the various villages around Ixworth to seek the experience of patients. The planners of the new West Suffolk Hospital will seek us out for the insights we can bring. The patient representatives on the proposed various Integrated Care Service Committees will want to hear our thoughts. We could provide patients with a "Voice" - show that patient participation could be worthwhile - certainly worth the 35p at least!

If you would like to know more about the Association - and perhaps take an active role - please contact me: graemenorris46@gmail.com Thanks.

## **Jiggins Memorial Village Hall & Playing Fields**

Dr Stephen Mann gave the following report;

Before I present the report for 2020-2021, I would like to thank all the trustees who have worked so well in my absence while I recovered from knee surgery. It is sometimes said that this like other Trusts of its kind are run by old duffers but for many the post retirement era is the only time we can make a real return to our communities.

However, it would be good to have all age groups represented on the board of Trustees and as we go forward into an exciting period where organisation and fund raising are the big challenges we face. Then younger volunteers will be essential. I hope that many will volunteer but it will be necessary to pick Trustees who have the desired skills as laid down by the Charity Commissioners.

Of course covid saw a complete cessation of income from lettings although the library did manage to function for part of that time. Again I would like to thank the Library staff and FOIL for their continued efforts. But especially I would like to thank our intrepid fund raisers who have continued to work although in reduced circumstances.

In other financial matters this last year saw the completion of setting up the new Trust and although our accountants experienced difficulties which resulted in working from home the year's accounts were completed and they record the complete transfer of assets, which is Cash, Land and Buildings to the new trust all in a proper and audited fashion. Leases to both Suffolk Libraries and the Bowls club were successfully negotiated.

We did experience during the year some problems with residents who required access to their properties across Trust land. In the end the trustees agreed to curtail all access to the recreation area to foot access alone. This will be done over the next year in the form of agreements with all residents. Those that do not have current access will be given access if they wish it.

We also experienced an outbreak of fly tipping. Unfortunately, this continues but a new CCTV monitor will we expect lead to prosecutions.

The Village hall environment has deteriorated over this covid year and will be addressed as we proceed throughout the summer.

For the future we will continue to develop our collaboration with SET Ixworth School and the use of recreation sporting facilities. As you will hear in a moment the setting up of collaborative youth facilities. The absence of clubs paying to use football field has led us to look at alternative uses and designs for the recreation area and we will shortly be commissioning a survey to ascertain what uses and facilities you as Residents would like to see in this area.

I have mentioned youth facilities. We have reached, with SET Ixworth school and agreement to use part of their facilities and both the Jiggins Trust have put aside funds for this project. However, this requires some full time professional input from paid youth workers. The trust is indebted to Mike Jones, himself a professional youth worker and a Trustee for the work and time he has put into this project. So far, we have not been able to obtain all the grants that are needed to kick start this in the Autumn term but the Parish Council has agreed to partially fund

### **Ixworth Association**

Ann Matthews and Paul Cook gave a brief overview of the forming of the Ixworth Association. The Association produces and publishes eight newsletters and four magazines per year. The revenue from fees received from advertisements in the magazine go to producing the magazine. Revenue through the Covid-19 pandemic had fallen as advertisers withdraw their adverts during Covid 19. However, any revenue remaining we try to assist groups within the village by the way of grants. Recently, we helped Sue Spiller to publish her book on the Pykkerell. We are hoping to republish Mr Frank Beans book, Mr Dean wrote various articles on the village, and all were put together in a book.

Mr Cook reported that even though revenue dropped the Association did still have a healthy balance so please approach us if you require a grant for your organisation. The association is also working on a website which we hope will be ready over the next few months.

### **Events Group**

A representative of the newly formed Events Group gave a small talk on what the group hope to be able to do over the coming months and years. The group has been formed to organise events throughout the year to bring together the community to celebrate events throughout the year. One major event of the year is Christmas which we are hoping to make larger each year and this year we are hoping to close the High Street to hold a Street Fair as well as turning on the Christmas Tree Lights.

Next year we are hoping to be able to arrange something for the Queens Platinum Jubilee. If anyone is interesting in joining the group, please contact us through Facebook.

### **The Royal British Legion Ixworth & District Branch**

The following report was received from The Royal British Legion Ixworth & District Branch

Like many organisations, it is now two years since our activities were reported to this forum and there is a great deal of time from March 2020 until now virtually where our activities were curtailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ordinarily, many people generally associated themselves with “the Legion” during the Poppy Appeal and Remembrancetide each Autumn. However, whilst that maybe when things are most prominent in the public’s minds, our work goes on all year round – and Remembrance is never confined to just a seasonal two week window each year. This year is the centenary anniversary of the Royal British Legion which we commemorated with a short commemoration at the war memorial in May.

Membership of our branch remains healthy with fifty-one members. Many continue to think that a criteria for membership is that you have had to be serving or have served within the armed forces. Whilst that historically was a criteria, that has not been the case for many years, and we would therefore strongly encourage anyone who would like to support the legion on a local branch level to get in touch where we can signpost you to becoming a member. As a branch, we meet on the last Thursday of every month in the Greyhound from 7:30pm and we are looking forward to restarting our meetings from this month on Thursday 29 July.

Each year our members look forward to our Winter Games night tournament – a programme of pub games where neighbouring branches come along and compete in a series of friendly games that then culminates in our Presentation Dinner Dance that is also held as a further gesture towards the anniversary of the branch. Although

we were unable to hold that this year, under our latest umbrella, the community has had an active branch in Ixworth for 37 years since 1984.

We often undertake different trips in ordinary times which have included visits across the Channel to battlefields in the Somme and Ypres Salient and closer to home, we have been very fortunate to undertake visits to the National Memorial Arboretum, the Royal Hospital Chelsea, and the Poppy Factory all of which have been very popular amongst members and non-members who have been warmly welcomed.

In recent years, Remembrance has had a particular following in the village with swells of people gathering along the High Street and attending the church service on Remembrance Sunday. We hope that we will be able to get back to this as pandemic advice continues. In the meantime, some of our willing and retired volunteers are looking forward to finally being able to kickstart the refurbishment project of the telephone kiosk in Stow Road. Quite understandably, this had to be shelved due to COVID restrictions but with this now over, we are eager to get moving with this and thank the Parish Council once again for this opportunity and their ongoing support with it.

Additionally, whilst many of our plans to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War had to be cancelled, we are still hoping to belatedly commemorate that significant, historical peacetime milestone with a memorial bench that we have been in talks with the Jiggins Trust.

Thank you to everyone across the community for their continued support and we hope to meet more of you and welcome any of you who might like to become members in due course.

The Chairman, Cllr Ben Birrell, thanked everyone again for attending and to all the groups who gave a report on their group or organisation. The evening has been great for us all to get together and realise what a great village we all live in.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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Signed

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Date