

North Cadbury & Yarlington Parish Council

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“Draft” Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting
Held as a consultative virtual meeting via Zoom software on
Wednesday 14th April 2021 at 7.00pm

Councillors Present (remotely):

Malcolm Hunt (Chairman)	Alan Bartlett (Vice Chairman)
Sue Gilbert	Karen Harris
Andy Keys-Toyer	Bryan Mead
Archie Montgomery	Alan Rickers
John Rundle	Katherine Vaughan

In Attendance (remotely): C.Cllr Mike Lewis, the Clerk and two members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 2021 North Cadbury Annual Parish Meeting.

In Memoriam for HRH, The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, 1921-2021

The Chairman opened the meeting with a short statement and a minute's silence, following his sad death on Friday 9th April 2021.

“As my Captain General throughout my RM career spanning 35 years, I met him on many occasions. In 1991, my late wife and I were honoured and privileged to host him as our house guest in the Falkland Islands. We were able to experience some of his foibles and his many qualities at first hand. He was a man of considerable intellect with a very broad range of knowledge and interests upon which he held, often, very forthright views which he was not shy to articulate with vigour. These are reflected in his private library in Buckingham Palace in which there are 11,000 books, including 14 written by him, which demonstrate the extraordinary breadth and depth of his interests. There are 634 on religion, over 1,000 on wildlife and conservation, 780 on birds, 600 on equestrian matters, 494 on sport, a few novels and 990 on poetry and art. One of his biographers has written of him that he was one of the most irascible, outspoken and downright rude public figures and yet he was also one of the most visionary, enquiring, hardworking and effective. But above all he was a constant, loyal, devoted and loving support for HM The Queen throughout their 73 years together. He has enriched the Nation and this country will be a duller, blander and poorer place without him. Could I now invite you to spend a minute to remember and give thanks for the extraordinary and unselfishly given life and work of HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.”

- 01. Apologies for Absence:** Received from Janet Montgomery (School Governor and Tennis Club), Caroline Joneleit-Hope (St Michael's Church), Sarah Newsom (North Cadbury and District Gardening Club), Sam Davey (North Cadbury Allotments)
- 02. Minutes of the North Cadbury Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2019** were received, agreed and signed as a true record.

03. Parish Accounts for the Years Ending 31st March 2020 and 2021: The Clerk circulated copies of the PC Receipts and Payments Account 2019-20 (audited) and 2020-21 (unaudited).

04. Report from County and District Councillors:

a. C.Cllr Lewis reported that the current key aspects for both Somerset County Council (SCC) and South Somerset District Council (SSDC) is the unitary debate on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The Secretary for State will announce his decision in June or July 2021, which will change the structure for both Councils in the future. It is anticipated that there will be going forward more support for Town and Parish councils, in the cases submitted by both Councils, which is a critical element.

Cllr Lewis reported that SSDC had agreed to invest £10 million in the Octagon Theatre, Yeovil, from central government through its Arts fund, to increase the size of its auditorium, bringing it in line with the 21st century.

Cllr Lewis stated that there are always the ongoing issues with Highways and, from the District perspective, planning; hopefully one day both major issues will be resolved.

Following a question from the Chairman, Cllr Lewis spoke regarding the letter from the Secretary of State to the four district councils in Somerset. He is concerned about the way the district councils are proposing to hold a poll or a referendum, as the consultation period for LGR closes on 19th April 2021, leaving only five days left if a councillor wishes to comment on either 'One Somerset' (SCC) or 'Stronger Somerset' (district councils). He is also concerned about the way that the district councils are putting forward a proposal for a poll or a referendum as he is concerned it will confuse the electorate over the consultation he is holding and the district councils will not have the results of their polling until late May 2021; by which time it will be too late to change or influence his decision. The four district councils were currently seeking legal advice to determine whether there is a legal case to hold a poll or a referendum.

05. Parish Reports:

a. Chairman of the Parish Council. The Chairman previously circulated his 'Review of the Year'; his full report is included in Attachment 1.

b. North Cadbury Village Hall (NCVH). Mr J Rundle read out the report on behalf of Mr R Russell, Chairman of NCVH. "North Cadbury Village Hall was closed from March 16th 2020 until 7th September 2020 due to the pandemic. After re-opening the uptake was very limited and was mainly the Toddler Group and the Daisy Foundation plus our September Committee meeting and our AGM in October with facemasks and socially distanced seating but all other meetings have been 'virtual' via e-mails. The hall was closed again from 5th November until 12th April 2021 when staged re-opening began. The playing field was reopened on 6th July 2020 with strict social distancing rules in place. Gradual easing of these rules is ongoing to date.

During the year, we have continued weekly cleaning and playing field grass cutting. We took the opportunity during the summer to have the hall floor refurbished and completely repainted the walls and woodwork in the foyer, disabled toilet and main hall. Everything is looking much brighter now.

Our planned playing field upgrade for 2020 was postponed, however, the preparation work has been ongoing and we now expect to continue with the project this year.

At Christmas the Camelot Players produced a virtual pantomime with a limited cast number and mostly videoed at home by each individual. The final scene was recorded on a one-to-one basis in the main hall and the edited production of Cinderella made available on the play groups website over the holiday period.

The hall cottage continues to be let but routine inspections have not been possible. Maintenance has been limited to our tenants own efforts.

Despite a loss of hall income, we have been fortunate to receive a series of discretionary grants from SSDC that has helped us through the lockdown period.

Currently we have 16 committee members (Trustees) but we have had one person who sadly passed away and will be deeply missed. I wish to thank everyone for their support during the year.

We are hopeful that this ongoing year will see a rapid improvement in the nation's health and that we can resume our activities as they were before the pandemic."

c. Galhampton Village Hall (GVH). Cllr A Rickers gave his report as Chairman of GVH.

"2019 was the first year of being open for Galhampton Village Hall. This was a very successful year with various events ranging from coffee mornings, film nights, theatre events and dinner evenings. The hall also supported a number community events such as children clubs, bridge and table tennis. The committee had planned a full calendar for 2021 but were forced to close as of 16 March 2020. During the various lockdowns the Hall has adhered to the Government guidance and formed a Covid sub-committee to work through the various guidelines.

The Hall has had a small number of Hirings during the pandemic and these have been done in accordance with advice sort from ACRE and SSDC. The Hall has received a considerable amount of money in Grants from central government totalling approx. £20,000. During the various lockdowns the Hall has maintained its gardens and the village playing fields.

As lockdown is eased the Hall is preparing for re-opening in line with government guidelines and is in the process of preparing its events calendar for 2021. The Hall committee is also planning to utilise some of the grant funding to refurbish the equipment in the playing fields. This includes a number of adult fitness activities for around the outside.

Finally there have been a number of changes of personalities of committee and a new Chairperson has been selected [Mr A Rickers].

d. North Cadbury Allotment Association. No report received. Cllr Keys-Toyer advised gave a brief report following the allotment inspection on 7th April 2021. The overall appearance of the plots is very good with all plots having been cultivated. There is however, one exception, but this will be monitored over the coming months and any necessary action will be taken in due course. Although all the plots are occupied, there is currently a waiting list of at least three people from North and South Cadbury and Woolston.

e. North Cadbury and District Gardening Club. The Clerk read out a report on behalf of Mrs Sarah Newsom, Chairman: "2020 was a difficult year for everyone and like other clubs and societies across the country, North Cadbury and District Gardening Club was unable to meet on a monthly basis apart from the months of January and February 2020. However, during the summer the Club held an Open Gardens event in July 2020, and an outing to Burrow Farm Gardens near Axminster. Both organised in compliance with Government regulations. As was the Autumn Gardens Outdoor Event held in September 2020.

Volunteers continued to maintain the wildflower patch, the rose garden and the stone trough in the village.

To date this year, the Club has not been able to hold meetings in the Village Hall, but a quiz evening was organised in January via Zoom and the AGM was also held via Zoom on the 20th January 2021. At the AGM the Chairman, Mrs Heather Keys-Toyer, and the Secretary, Mrs Mary Hadow, stood down from their respective roles and we thank them for their work over the last three years. Mrs Sarah Newsom was elected Chairman and Mr & Mrs Graham Jennings were elected jointly as Secretary.

The Club has a programme of events for 2021 but it is still rather uncertain has to how much we will be able to do. The next meeting on 21 April will be a talk via zoom. It is hoped to hold the annual Plant Sale on Saturday 29 May outside the Village Hall and in June we plan to organise a visit to a local garden for members. In July we are looking

forward to holding a social evening and we have hopes that the Annual Show will go ahead in early August. And then we hope to go back to holding our monthly meetings in the Village Hall.”

f. The Church of St Michael the Archangel, North Cadbury and Galhampton Chapel. The Clerk read out the report on behalf of Mrs Caroline Joneleit-Hope, Churchwarden. “There are no changes to report in 2019. We continued to hold a variety of services across both villages over the course of a month, (following the same pattern explained at the 2019 AGM), providing at least one service each week within the Parish. The coffee morning, afternoon tea, pre-school group and Lego club continued to gather momentum, offering social connections to a wide section of the community.

The two concerts in 2019 were both well supported and plans were underway organising the 2020 events when the pandemic hit. Fortunately, the spring event in early March was able to go ahead, and we had a wonderful evening with the late Sir Peter Alliss. All other events had to be cancelled.

Pursuant to Government guidance the churches had to close their doors at the end of March 2020, but both churches in this Parish re-opened for private prayer in June, and public worship recommenced on 4th August. Thanks to the expertise and kind assistance of Dan Gruner we were able to offer open-air services in the Churchyard for Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Day, and pre-recorded services during Advent and into 2021.

The Rector co-ordinated the launch of the Camelot Support Network across the Benefice at the beginning of the first lock-down, and provides twice weekly email reflections and updates in the form of Cutting Edge Camelot.

Work has begun addressing the repairs to the fabric of the building, identified in the Quinquennial Report mentioned at the 2019 AGM. We still have a long way to go, but the repairs to the roof are now completed, and our next project is a replacement boiler for the broken heating system.”

g. North Cadbury Women’s Group. Pauline Moylan previously confirmed that the Women’s Group had not met during lockdown and had nothing to report. She did not anticipate that they would meet until July 2021 at the earliest.

h. Cary and Camelot Table Tennis Club. Nothing received.

i. North Cadbury Tennis Club. The Clerk read out the report on behalf of Mrs Janet Montgomery, Secretary. “Play was very intermittent last summer due to COVID-19 interruptions... No matches took place or Club Nights, unfortunately. When we were permitted to play, we opened up membership with a significantly reduced membership fee, which actually brought in more local players which was very welcome. Play has now resumed and Club Night will be starting next Monday the 19th April. The Club has entered one Team into the Mixed Tennis League for match tennis this season.”

j. North Cadbury Primary School. The Clerk read out the report on behalf of Mrs Janet Montgomery, Chair of Governors. “The last year has brought all of the obvious disruptions that COVID-19 has caused but I am pleased to report that the school has remained vibrant and supportive to all pupils and parents. Through the tremendous Team of Head Teacher and all staff (and volunteers) at the school, we have provided on-site tuition for the children of key workers whilst at the same time providing comprehensive learning packs and online tuition for all pupils who remained at home. We are looking forward to an uninterrupted and as normal as possible Summer Term at school.

Of particular significance this year is a substantial Grant being awarded to the school for the replacement of some of the temporary classrooms which will lead to three permanent classrooms being constructed and fully integrated with the main school building. We have consulted with the Parish and some near neighbours and we hope that the positivity shown will be supported by South Somerset Planners, where the planning application now sits.”

k. Parish Paths Liaison Officer (PPLO). The Clerk read out the report on behalf of Mrs Susan Fone, PPLO. “During the Covid 19 epidemic and consequent ‘lockdown’ there has

been a huge increase in the number of people walking Rights of Way. There has been a growing interest in the location of paths and the consequent reporting of faults via the SSDC interactive map <https://www.somerset.gov.uk> Report a problem with a public right of way and personal contact with me.

The enthusiasm for the maintenance of these RofW comes from people of all ages and physical abilities. In line with Covid 19 guidelines, the walking groups were suspended, but the desire for walking the footpaths and bridleways has grown over the last year. In response to this enthusiasm we have written and mapped eight circular walks in the combined Parish of North Cadbury, Woolston, Galhampton and Yarlinton. We have obtained a grant and a donation enabling the purchase and erection of four display cases and the printing of large maps for these cases. Each part of the Parish will have a board showing the circular walks, all following Public Rights of Way. (Some of the routes are those identified in the residents' questionnaire for the Neighbourhood Plan.) In addition we have prepared instructions and small maps to accompany each circular walk. Four walks begin at North Cadbury Shop, three at Galhampton Village Hall and one at Yarlinton car park by the church. On the ground, all the walks have new signage including wooden plaques with the path numbers from the SSDC interactive map. (We are extremely grateful to Marcus Gilbert for making each of these plaques by hand and attaching them to posts on each walk.) Eve Wynn, our County Council RofW Ranger, has been very complimentary about the work he has done.

Cross crop compliance continues to an issue, but it is noticeable that many more farmers have been very co-operative and have taken out clear one metre swathes at the beginning of the growing season to enable the paths to be accessible. We are grateful to those who are doing this. Not only does it enable walkers, but also prevents walkers straying throughout a cropped field.

With greatly reduced manpower Eve Wynn continues to give great repair and maintenance help within the Parish. However funding from CC is limited and we are grateful to the PC for the funding of two days footpath work last year.

I am indebted to the Parish Council Rights of Way officer, Councillor Katherine Vaughan and to Councillor Sue Gilbert for their unstinting work to support Rights of Way in the Parish."

I. Camelot Short Mat Bowls Club. [Report received after the meeting from Richard Rundle.] "There has been no activity of any substance to report over the last two years. The club will wait to be advised by the English Short Mat Bowls Association (ESMBA) as to the correct protocols to adopt once the hall is open."

06. Matters Raised by Members of the Public:

a. A resident wished to make a few 'thank you's'. Firstly to thank the PC for its grant to Citizens Advice South Somerset, which has been working frantically throughout the lockdown period and is used by many in the local community. Secondly to the PC for supporting NCVH both financially, by funding the grass cutting on the playing field and personally, by attending events. The Playing Field was very well used during 'lockdown', especially by families with young children. Thirdly, to thank all those involved in producing the parish's circular walks. Having such walks available throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and especially the lockdown periods, have greatly benefited the mental health of all those who were able to use them. The circular walks will also be of great benefit to those recently arrived in the parish who may not be familiar with all the walks around the villages. She also thanked the landowners for maintaining the footpaths. Finally she wished to thank the PC for the onerous task of following through on all that is required, to keep up with regulations and to act on behalf of the residents.

b. The Chairman and Clerk confirmed that the Yarlington Annual Parish meeting would be held via Zoom on Wednesday 5th May 2021, followed by the Annual Parish Council and ordinary meetings.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.50pm.

SIGNED.....

DATED.....

Attachment 1

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 1 April 2019-31 March 2021

GENERAL

1. **Covid Lockdowns.** This has been a very strange period and unique in all our lifetimes. Since 23 March 2020 we have been subject to 3 different lockdowns of differing severity. These have all impacted on our work and have meant that most of our meetings since that date have been conducted remotely by Zoom, which, while it is an adequate replacement in the circumstances for the real thing, it provides a far from satisfactory means of taking important decisions.

2. **Local Government and Elections.** Due to the lockdowns, the local elections due in May 2020 were postponed for a year and, for the same reasons, those same elections were postponed further until May 2022. Likewise the usual annual Parish Council reports and meetings in May/June 2020 were cancelled.

And alongside this the process around the Review of Local Government has been slowed. Consequently, we shall not know whether our local Government will be under a Unitary Authority Council in Taunton or whether local Government in Somerset will be divided east/west until late June 2021. This decision, whichever way the Secretary of State for Communities decides, will clearly impact on the way Parish Councils work in the future.

3. **The Composition of the Parish Council (PC).** During the period covered in this report, there have been a number of comings and goings on the PC. Two have left us. Alan Brain who was a very effective overseer of our Highways issues and Mike Martin who packed a lot into his 3 years, first by being the leader of the team which in 2017, produced the Community Plan and then consequently he initiated the work which was to put into effect the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, a subject he had felt strongly about for some time. This was to take its toll and lead to his departure from the PC. In their place, Sue Gilbert, Karen Harris, John Rundle, Bryan Mead and Katherine Vaughan have joined us. Additionally Darren Brown joined for an all too brief period before he had, reluctantly, to stand down for personal reasons.

PLANNING

4. During the period under review, the PC has considered 21 Planning Applications (PAs) in 2019/20 and 15 in 2020/21. The restrictions imposed by Covid 19 have necessitated some adaptation to our normal practice of viewing all PAs onsite with as many Cllrs as can be mustered.

5. **Down Ash Farm.** In Nov 2019, Julius Longman and his Agent, Janet Montgomery, gave a presentation to the PC on their proposals to build a development of 65 homes on the west side of the A359, opposite the Cadbury Business Park. Such was the interest and concern at this that over 50 members of the community attended. The PC listened to the proposals and await news of an Application being put to SSDC. This has not yet occurred.

6. **Boon Brown/Paul Longman Proposals.** On 28 October 2020, Andrew Tregay of Boon Brown, representing Paul Longman, presented their proposals remotely to the PC to develop 80 homes on Clare Field, which lies at the bottom of Ridgeway Lane. They were invited to return to the PC to provide further details prior to submission of plans to SSDC. Since then the phosphates issue has intervened and nothing further has been heard from Boon Brown.

7. **The Neighbourhood Plan.** The PC resolved to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in early 2019. This would be an enormous task and would take approximately 2 years to complete. It would

involve a lot of hard work. A Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG), comprising Mike Martin (Chairman), Richard Rundle, Barrie Board, Alan Brain, Sue Cox, Bruce Critchley, Tim Gilbert and Andy Keys-Toyer was appointed. Messrs Board and Critchley resigned after a brief period. A considerable amount of work was done and progress made, particularly after the consultant, Jo Witherden of Dorset Planning, who had been involved in the preparation of about 25 such Plans, was appointed in September 2019. The work involved took its toll, however, and in October 2019 Sue Cox stepped down, but continued to assist with communicating updates to Galhampton residents and, in 2020 Mike Martin, Tim Gilbert and Alan Brain all resigned. They were replaced and a larger team appointed. Malcolm Hunt (Chairman), John Rundle, Alan Bartlett, Brian Morris, Tamsin and James Bruce-Gardyne, Nigel Humberston and Rich and Anna Scott all joined the Group. Progress has been made, the Plan is in Draft form, an effective and good relationship has been created with the Strategic Planners at SSDC and we are on course to complete the Plan by the autumn. To discover much of the detail so far available please refer to the Neighbourhood Plan website - NorthCadburyneighbourhoodplan.org

OTHER MATTERS

8.. **Highways** Under the watchful eye of John Rundle, it has been possible, as a result of a close relationship with John Nicholson at County Highways, to maintain a good situation on our roads and lanes - until Covid hit!! The staffing problems and the impact of other Covid restrictions have had a very negative effect on roads and lanes throughout the County and, while the problems multiply, the problem areas are known about and reported. There is little that can be done before the summer months and a degree of lifting of restrictions with them. All are asked to be patient and understanding.

9. **Finger Post Refurbishment.** During the last two years, the work to refurbish the fingerposts in the Parish has been completed. The team of volunteers put together by Andy Keys-Toyer and John Rundle has done a magnificent job. The results are self evident.

10. **Communication.** The PC has always been very conscious of the need for improvements in the effectiveness of our communications with Parishioners. For those who are interested, the information is 'out there'. Where possible we use Next Door, we also put a summary of our PC Meetings in an insert with each edition of Excalibur but more significantly, our new and vastly improved website (thanks to Alan Rickers and the Parish Clerk), contains a lot of information of various kinds as well as many useful links. I urge you to use it. And lastly, if anyone has questions on any matter, any member of the PC will do their best to answer the question or point you in the right direction.

MPJ Hunt
Chairman

14 April 2021