

Minutes of Parish Assembly

Held at the Village Hall on at 7.30 May 31st 2022

Present Chair Peter Korwin, councillors Tasker, Whymark and Crispin-Moyes present along with the Parish Clerk Kay Shorter.

No members of the public were present so the meeting took the informal format of a discussion as to reports from various organisations in the village, as below.

Parish Assembly reports from some of the clubs and charities within Preston St Mary

The parish Council has seen a few changes since the last Annual Assembly we said goodbye to Richard Martin our chairman in the saddest of ways. Kate Hanlon has also resigned from the Parish Council. We have 2 new Councillors since the last meeting Sara Whymark and Gillian Crispin-Moyse who I'm sure will be an asset to the council as we go forward.

The Parish Council along with Babergh Council have purchased a Defibrillator unit which will be installed at the Village Hall as soon as possible.

The Parish Council has still covered the cost for the Preston Parish Paper to be printed alternate months, which we feel sure is a welcome asset to the village. Keeping us all up to date with what is going on.

The various clubs that are run by volunteers throughout the year in the village have sent these reports to update us all in what is happening in our village.

REPORT RE THE VILLAGE HALL

I have just re-read last year's report to this meeting and I am pleased (and rather relieved) that so much of that report is now obsolete. Twelve months ago we were still awaiting final sign-off for the large Babergh D C grant. That duly arrived and work started in earnest in August. As you can plainly see, we have made tremendous progress on the re-enlivenment of the premises. All that remains is to tidy up a few areas of the garden.

Thanks go to so many people and organisations, but I reserve my thanks here for those volunteers, not just the trustees but others, who have committed their time and money towards getting the "incidentals" done. Incidentals, in this case, have meant over 240 hours of freely given time and several thousand pounds of expenditure through gifts and donations. You all know who you are – and this is a public declaration of gratitude to each and every one of you. "We couldn't have done it without you all", to quote a line from one of the songs performed by the Pop-up Choir at the Formal Opening. Now the Trustees are faced with the challenge of getting things back to where they were in the hiring of the Hall to various groups and increasing the use of the premises for family gatherings and celebrations. The kitchen really is of a commercial standard that will cope with sudden demands of catering for large groups. Capacious toilets also feature, including access to all areas for less mobile users. Come and see for yourself! The four weekly clubs (Table Tennis, Dancing Tuition, Carpet Bowls and the Art Club) have all returned and a fledgling Pilates group has started. Other groups use it regularly as suits their membership. The Ladies Group normally meets here on a monthly basis and other occasional hiring also take place.

The 100 Club is a useful source of funds and we will be circulating soon to gather subscriptions for this year's draws. A grant from the Parish Council is extremely helpful, covering some of the overheads – many thanks to the PC for that. Babergh District Council have also provided very welcome Covid-related grants. The members of the committee are looking forward to offering the Village Hall again for gatherings, whether groups, formal organised or business meetings or indeed private celebrations. The enhanced support facilities will greatly improve this amenity and confirm the Village Hall as the social community hub of our village. If you feel that you would like to be part of this by joining the committee at these exciting times, please let one of the Trustees know.

Keith Davis, Treasurer. 01787 247112

Friends of the Church

Our main fund-raising events in the last 12 months have been as follows:

- * A concert in the church in September, arranged by Glynnis Huggett and well-attended.
- * A grand raffle, drawn just before Christmas, with some wonderful prizes which was well-supported.
- * A series of 8 Village Get Togethers between October 2021 and now, held on Saturday mornings, first in the Church and then in the Village Hall when it re-opened. There were just 2 or 3 stalls, selling cakes and biscuits, bric-a-brac and plants, and we offered complimentary tea and coffee. These attracted a small but steady flow of visitors, raised modest but useful sums of money, and gave an opportunity for people to meet at a time when social gatherings were only slowly resuming.
- * In time for Christmas we published a 2022 calendar designed by Roger Huggett with historic black and white photos of the village.

Looking ahead our enthusiasm for holding another Christkindlmarkt has been revived, after a few years' break. We are planning to hold it on 19 November, again at Preston Manor thanks to the generous invitation of its new owners. We are also running a photo competition for a 2023 calendar, with a prize for the best photo on the theme 'What Preston means to me'.


We haven't been asked for any grants to the Church in the last 12 months. However we know that the quinquennial inspection of the building has recently been carried out, so we stand ready to consider any requests from the PCC.

We have about 60 subscribers of whom 23 are life members.

Our last accounts to 5 April 2021 showed income of £1632 and nil expenses. The 2022 accounts have not yet been prepared, but are expected to show a balance of income over expenditure of £3700.

We have an active committee of 11 who are all involved in one way or another.

Robert Jennings



On behalf of the Friends of Preston St Mary Church

27 May 2022

Preston St Mary Table Tennis Club activities Report 2021/22

Following the 20/21 winter Covid shutdown the Club resumed playing at PSM VH in May 2021 until closure for building works obliged the club to go "on tour" starting with a short session at Brent Eleigh VH.

This venue didn't prove to be large enough for us but one of our members, Julian Delaforterie, was kindly able to arrange temporary membership for us with Lawshall VH TT Club, itself having to seek alternative accommodation for a month early in 2022 at Stanningfield VH, due to Lawshall undergoing some maintenance work, and our nomadic PSM team duly tagged along.

A move back to Lawshall carried on until PSM TT Club was able to return "home" last month, our travels over!

Membership levels are healthy, increased by some friends from Lawshall where PSM members are still welcome to attend on Wednesdays.

The Club held its annual Christmas Dinner this year in March (in true Club tradition), at the Horseshoes in Cockfield, again organised by the ever resourceful Julian.

The event was well attended by members and their partners along with our Lawshall comrades and everyone had a very enjoyable evening.

Geoff Poole

Tree Warden Report for 2021/22

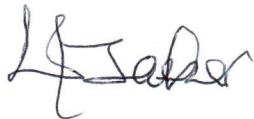
Since the last Annual Assembly I'm pleased to report that a hedge, on Gary Elsdon's land, has been extended and gaps filled. There were also trees planted at intervals. A group of volunteers from the village did a brilliant job in rather cold and muddy conditions! This appears to be doing well and will be visible from the road in a few years.

All the trees planted on the green in the last few years are thriving and growing well. The blossom on the Quince was particularly lovely and the Bramley Apple and the Mulberry looked good too.

There have been no particular problems with trees on the Green but in the next year the Ashes in the churchyard and around the village need to be monitored for increasing levels of Ash Dieback. As the disease progresses branches become more brittle and can pose a risk.

I have decided to retire from the role of Tree Warden due to other commitments. I do hope someone will come forward to fulfil this post. There is a really good network of wardens in Suffolk and many courses, talks and guided walks around nature reserves and National Trust areas.

Kate Hanlon



The meeting ended at 8.20.

The next Parish Council meeting is to be held at the Village Hall on July 19th at 7.30pm.