

Earsham Parish Council

Minutes

Of the Annual Parish Meeting held online on
Wednesday 28th April 2021

Present: Cllrs. Stephen Wood, Karl Gunton, Jim Bennett, Keith Reeve, Tony Leech, Nick Meade and Richard Randlesome

Also present: District Councillor Brendan Bernard, Rev. Chris Hutton, Peter Goodfellow and Lynda Ling (Parish Clerk)

1. Welcome by the Chairman - The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr. Stephen Wood welcomed all to the meeting and commented that due to COVID19, there was no parish meeting during 2020.

2. Confirmation of the Minutes of 2019 - (appendix 1) - The Chairman signed the minutes of the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting as a true and correct record. Agreement was proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Gunton.

3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council – (appendix 2) – Cllr. Wood read out his report which spanned two years in the life of the Parish Council and the events that had taken place in the village during that time. Some of the points covered included:-

2019 –

- The Old Earsham Mill was sold and purchased by Mr. Iain Gwynn of Draganfly Motorcycles,
- the Church announced that they would not be in a position to extend the graveyard,
- new litter picking equipment was given out by South Norfolk Council and is available for groups to use, thanks were extended to Bryan, Phil and John for going out to keep the village free from litter
- Thanks were given to Rachael Gunton for her continuing work with the Parish Magazine
- A decision to replace the old streetlighting with LED lanterns was made and the replacement programme started. This was funded by CIL monies.

2020 –

- A decision was made to restore the old sign post on the junction of Milestone Lane and was moved to The Street. Thanks to Nick Meade and Scott Bone for their help with this project. The parish council are currently looking for a similar post to replace the old one on the School Road junction with The Street.
- In the first quarter of the year, COVID19 hit us all and the Parish Council had to adapt and start using online platforms for holding its' meetings.
- Thanks were given to Lynda Hamps and the volunteers who helped residents during the first lockdown by shopping and assisting where needed.

- The Football Club successfully applied for funding for a new borehole and sprinkler systems for the football pitch which will also give a stand pipe facility for the Bowls Club which will help to cut down on water costs which have risen substantially over the last few years. Thanks were extended to Peter Goodfellow for all he has done for the club and wish the Football Club ongoing success.
- In September, County Councillor Margaret Stone announced that she had received confirmation that the damaged bridge on the Angles Way on Marston Moor was going to be replaced and work would be starting very soon. Thanks were extended to Margaret for all her help in achieving this and the parish council will miss her input as she has decided not to continue with County Council work.
- The Parish Council said goodbye to Scott Bone due to certain circumstances and thank him and wish him well for all his help and input over the years.
- In November work started on the new bridges. Mr. and Mrs. Lowe have been looking after the area near the village hall and thanks were extended to them for their help. It has been agreed to look at the Village Hall to see what repairs need to be made as it is looking particularly tired.
- Christmas was a very difficult time for some due to terrible flooding which hit the Waveney Valley and affected some residents in the village. It is hoped that things are gradually returning to normal for those residents.
- A new councillor joined the Parish Council in March, Richard Randlesome, and the members look forward to working with Richard in the future.
- Finally thanks were given to all councillors for their help over the last couple of years, with thanks also being extended to the Clerk.

4. End of year report by the Clerk/RFO – (appendix 3) - The Clerk submitted a report to councillor's ahead of the meeting, the main points covered included –

- The Parish Council kept the precept the same to the resident for the 3rd year running and will receive a total of £15,590 from South Norfolk Council to help with the running of the parish.
- The LED streetlighting is what is really going to produce some savings this year and although will take a few months to estimate the savings, as a rough guide, as previously reported, should produce an overall saving on electricity and maintenance cost of around £1354 annually. The total cost of the replacement LED lanterns was £7682.36 and was funded entirely from CIL monies
- Although the accounts have not been finalised yet, it is looking as though the budget has held up very well over the last 12 months with an estimated overspend over budget of £83.00 up to 31st March 2021. Approximate total income for the year was £21,588 with an approximate spend of £21671.00
- CIL Monies currently being held amount to £6714.09 with a further amount of £2087.13 being held as ringfenced money for play equipment.
- The total balance in the accounts as of today, 28th April 2021 is £48,227.11

5. Report from the County Councillor - (Appendix 4) – Cllr. Stone's annual report had been presented at the last Parish Council meeting

6. Report from District Councillors – Cllr. Bernard reported the following:-

- That throughout the COVID situation, South Norfolk Council made great effort in supporting as many residents and businesses as they could
- A report is due out soon with regard to the recent flooding in South Norfolk and the district council are working with various organisations to try to ensure this does not happen again
- As COVID restrictions start being lifted, SNC are supporting people and businesses, together with those that are coming out of furlough. It is hoped to maintain control of the infection rates in this area in the months to come.

7. Report from Community Groups –

Rev. Chris Hutton – (Appendix 5) - read out his report which included the following points:-

- Due to Covid19, we were legally required to lock the churches and not hold services. This meant that for the first time since 1213 we legally could not hold an Easter service in Earsham Church. Since the summer, services have been taking place under COVID safety measures within a Benefice rotation and the church is open for private prayer every day from dawn to dusk.
- Since March we have also been holding an online Benefice service at 9:30am every Sunday morning on YouTube which has been a blessing and an encouragement for the 60-100 devices that tune in every week. The major Christian celebrations throughout the year including Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Easter, Harvest, All Souls, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas have also taken place online.
- The church also continues to be used at significant life points by the community. During 2020 we celebrated in the church building: 0 wedding (average 3), 0 baptisms (average 7) and 6 funerals with a further 7 funerals at the crematorium (average 10 in total).
- We have excellent links with the Earsham CE VA Primary School. Members of the church ministry team have led a weekly online assembly, as well as special assemblies at major points of the Christian calendar where parents are invited. Several church members enjoy being active school governors. We also led an online summer holiday club in place of our usual summer holiday club this year.
- Local Churches receive no central financial funding from the Church of England or the Taxpayer and have to raise all costs locally. For 2020 our expenditure was just over £35,000. Earsham church however is blessed by having a trust fund which brings in £20,000 a year while the final £15,000 we raise from sources such as fundraising, collections, standing orders, gift aid and fees. A huge thank you to all those who financially donated to Earsham Church last year.
- Our main expenditures in 2020 include donations to charities of £800, our parish share which this year increased to £17,339, heating, lighting, grounds and building maintenance, insurance of £2,545, churchyard upkeep of £1,800, a contribution to the Benefice administrator's salary and other running expenses. The audited accounts will be on display in the church porch after the church APCM. We continue to raise funds to fix the spire where the local

woodpeckers have taken a fancy to the wooden tiles (expected cost £30,000!!). We expect it will take several years to require the funds for this work.

- The Rector is always available to be contacted and the church is here meet the spiritual needs and to serve the whole community of Earsham.

Peter Goodfellow – Chairman of Earsham Football Club – (Appendix 6)

submitted his report prior to the meeting, and commented that the Club is financially very sound and everyone is looking forward to getting started again with matches, which has been intermittent due to the pandemic.

4. Parishioner's Forum – No members of the public were present at the meeting, however, the following comments were put forward by councillors.

Cllr. Leech reported that the Village Hall will be reopening on June 21st and thanked District Councillor Bernard for his assistance in the Village Hall getting a £10,000 grant during the pandemic.

Cllr. Gunton reported on behalf of the Parish Magazine that the funds are looking healthy, some advertisers have been lost but others gained and extended thanks to the Church and the Parish Council for the grants the magazine had received.

Cllr. Gunton also reported that vandalism had again occurred at the play area on the playing field, however, someone had posted £50 in an envelope through his door as a donation to get the repairs done.

Cllr. Bennett reported that he had received an anonymous complaint about the noise at the Queen's Head when it first opened at the beginning of the restrictions being lifted.

Cllr. Meade reported that the memorial stone for Violet Clarke should be ready in a couple of weeks' time.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20.15pm

**** All reports are available for viewing by request to the clerk**

Signed

Date

Earsham Parish Council

Minutes

Of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Earsham Village Hall on
Wednesday 25th April 2019

1. The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr. Keith Reeve was present and welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was attended by twelve members of the public including councillors.
2. The Chairman signed the minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting as a true and correct record. Agreement was proposed by Councillor Reeve and seconded by Councillor Bennett.
3. Annual reports and accounts from Parish Council and Community Groups:-
 - a) **Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council** – A brief overview was given by Cllr. Wood of the unaudited parish accounts which saw the balances as at 31st March 2019 stand at – Parish Council £31,920.23, Playing Field £6,259.33 and the Allotments £1,373.65 (report 3a)
 - b) **Report from County Councillor Margaret Stone** – Cllr. Stone read out her report (report 3b)
 - c) **Report from District Councillor Murray Gray** – Cllr. Gray read out his report (report 3c)
 - d) **Report from the Police** – There was no representative from the police nor a report
 - e) **Report from Earsham Football Club** – A report had been received from the chairman, Peter Goodfellow, who was unable to attend this evening. Peter brought to the attention of the council the large potholes on the roadway leading down to the Clubhouse (report 3e)
 - f) **Report from Earsham Bowls Club** – There was no representative from the Bowls Club however the chairman read out their report (report 3f)
 - g) **Report from Beccles & Bungay Harries Athletics** – The Chairman read out the report on behalf of the club (report 3g)
 - h) **Report from Earsham Trust** – There was no representative from the Trust and the chairman read out the report (report 3h)
 - i) **Report from the Village Hall Management Committee** – Cllr. Anthony Leech read out a report from the VHMC (report 3i)

j) Report from 1st Earsham Scout Group – No members were able to be present so the Chairman read out the report on behalf of the Scout Group (report 3j)

k) Report from Earsham Village Magazine – There was no representative from the Parish Magazine however the report was read out by the Chairman (report 3k)

l) Report from the Parochial Church Council – There was no representative from the Church Council however the Vice-Chairman read out a report (report 3l)

m) Report from Earsham Primary School – Apologies have been received from the Primary School for no representative, however, the chairman read out their report (report 3m)

n) Report from Earsham Festival Committee – There was no representative nor a report

o) Report from Earsham Playground Committee – Cllr. Karl Gunton updated the meeting and reported that the Playground Committee would be looking to wind down and hand over the responsibilities to the Parish Council for the maintenance of the play equipment. Any remaining funds from monies raised over the years would be used to maintain the playground equipment.

4. Parishioner's Forum – No questions forthcoming

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.50pm

**** All reports are available for viewing by request to the clerk**

Meeting ended at 20.53pm

Signed *S. Wood*

Date *28th April 2021*

Chairmans Report 2019 / 2021

Wednesday 28th April 2021**2019**

Having taken over the role as chairman from Mr Keith Reeve in May 2019 there have been a few chair

May

The Old Earsham Mill site was sold and purchased by Mr Iain Gwynn of Draganfly Motorcycles.

Mr Gwynn kindly attended the May meeting stating that various units would be built and ready to let as soon as possible, with the intention to move his main business to the Mill in time.

July

The church announced that unfortunately for the time being they would not be in a position to extend graveyard due to an Archaeological survey being required costing approximately £ 40 – £50 thousand pounds.

Parishioner Magazine

The Parish magazine is still going strong with thanks to all those involved especially our editor Rachael Gunton , please contact her with any new ideas you may have.

Speeding

We are currently awaiting the arrival of a new SAM2 machine which we hope will help slow the traffic down especially on Church and School Road.

September

Litter picking equipment was agreed to be arranged and is now held in the village hall and I would like to thank all those who have been involved in helping to keep Earsham tidy especially to Bryan Phil and others who are spending their Wednesdays keeping on top of it for us all.

November

The Airfields Conservation Trust has kindly donated funds to purchase a WW1 commemorative plaque and this will be sited somewhere near the junction of the Old Harleston Road and the By-pass.

This is currently ongoing as is the Millennium film which Mr Nick Meade is helping us with.

New LED street lighting was decided to be installed replacing all of the existing street lights saving the parish some money. This was mainly paid for by the CIL monies received by various building projects.

2020**January**

The old sign post on the junction of Milestone Lane has been restored and was moved to the street opposite the village hall with thanks to Nick Meade and Scott Bone for the painting.

We are still currently looking for a similar post to replace the old one on the School Road junction on The Street.

May**COVID !!**

It's all changed our first video meeting .

Lynda Hamps from the Queens Head set up a WhatsApp group for residents who were unable to get out and safely go about their shopping I would like to thank them and all the volunteers who gave up time

help.

Mr Peter Goodfellow from Earsham football club successfully applied for a new bore hole and sprinkle system for the Football pitch.

This will also give a stand pipe facility for the Bowls club which will be a great addition especially considering the rising water costs over the last few years.

It was also agreed to allow dug outs to be erected.

We would like to thank peter for his work and wish the club ongoing success.

The allotments have now all been taken and we are currently in the process of amending the Rules.

July

A quiet period

September

County Councillor Margaret Stone announced that she had received conformation that the Bridges on Angles Way on Marston Moor were going to be replaced with work starting soon.

We would like to thank Margaret for her help achieving this and will miss her input as she has now left her role as our County councillor.

Unfortunately due to the circumstances we said goodbye to Scott Bone from the Parishcouncil and wish him well and thank him for his help and input over the years.

November

Work has started on the new bridges.

Residents Mr & Mrs Lowe have been busy gardening near the village hall and we would like to thank for their hard work .

The village hall is looking tired and its been agreed to look into what repairs may be required.

2021

January

As we are all aware christmas was an unfortunate time for many parishioners due to the awful flooding that occurred. We hope you are all gradually getting back to some sort of normality and pray we never again have as much rainfall in such a short space of time.

March

The Vacancy for a new councillor was advertised and we like to welcome Mr Richard Randlesome onto the Parish council.

I would like to thank everyone for their help over the year / years and especially to Lyn for all of her hard work and I hope she enjoys her new lease of life after retiring from the Clerk's role at Harleston Town Council.

Stephen Wood

Chairman.

May 2021

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING REPORT

The last year has seen many negatives for parish councils, having to find new ways of holding meetings and paying the invoices, but for Earsham, there have also been some positives too, namely:-

- The Parish Council agreed to keep the precept the same at £53.21 per annum to the taxpayer in January, which gives a total precept income of £15,590, slightly more than first thought due to a slight increase in the Band D figures which were originally sent out.
- The LED streetlighting is what is really going to produce some savings this year and although will take a few months to estimate the savings, as a rough guide, I previously reported that there would be an overall saving on electricity and maintenance cost of around £1354 annually.
- Although the accounts have not been finalised yet, it is looking as though the budget has held up very well over the last 12 months with an estimated overspend over budget of £83.00 up to 31st March 2021. Approximate total income for the year was £21,588 with an approximate spend of £21671.00
- CIL Monies currently being held amount to £6714.09 with a further amount of £2087.13 being held as ringfenced money for play equipment. These amounts are included in the final balances below.

CIL monies currently spent and balances

Payments upto October 2019	£ 15,446.10	
Minus - New LED lanterns for Elms Close and The Street (Nov 19)	£ 2,990.00	
		£ 12,456.10
Minus - Heating in Village Hall (January 2020)		£ 1,049.65
Balance as at 13th May 2020		£ 11,406.45
Minus - Remaining LED lanterns from replacement programme		£ 4,692.36
Balance of CIL monies		£ 6,714.09

Ringfenced money - Playing Field Savings Account

Money paid over from Playground Committee for repair/replace of equip.	£ 2,140.29
Minus - repair of pavilion on play area (August 2020)	£ 53.16
Balance as at 16th August 2020	£ 2,087.13

The balances on the accounts as at today (28th April 2021) are:-

Parish Council current account	£ 971.74		
Parish Council savings account	£ 40,000.00		
Playing Field current account		£ 1,146.44	
Playing Field savings account		£ 6,000.15	
Allotment current account			£ 18.78
Allotment savings account			£ 90.00
	£ 40,971.74	£ 7,146.59	£ 108.78

Giving a total of £48,227.11 being held by the Parish Council (including CIL and Ringfenced monies for play equipment), in addition, the first half of the precept is expected at any time which will be for £7795.00. The only additional spend above normal for the current financial year is the extra SAM2 machine which will be £1650.

Lynda Ling
28th April 2021

Norfolk County Council highlights for 2020/21

Norfolk Statistics

- 6,200 miles of highway, 3,000 miles of footway, 5,000 bridges and structures and 53,000 streetlights across Norfolk (40% of which are environmentally friendly LED)
- 98.0% of highway inspections completed within timescale
- 99.9% of highway inspections completed within timescale
- 227,000 tonnes of rubbish dealt with
- 52,000 Adult Social Care Assessments for 20,000 people
- Under 1,000 Looked After Children (LAC) (0-17yrs population)
- 95% of Norfolk homes have superfast broadband coverage

The 2021/21 Budget

A **£439 million** net revenue budget, a **£102 million** boost for roads and infrastructure and a 3.99 per cent Council Tax rise has been agreed to support communities, the economy and the environment across the County.

Further, there will be an investment of **£45.7m** to meet cost and other pressures in services, including **£28.2m** in adult social care, **£7m** in children's services and **£10.5m** in community and environmental services.

Within the investment of **£102m** in the capital programme, taking the total infrastructure programme to **£537.66m**, these include **£11.5m** for supported housing for young adults, **£4m** for children's residential homes and investment in the Long Stratton bypass and new libraries.

Additionally there will be an investment of **£2m** to respond to flooding, including an additional **£350k** in revenue budget provision, **£235k** in highways spending to reduce road flooding risks and **£1.5m** for the creation of a new flood reserve to fund urgent works and repairs.

New service from Norfolk Libraries helped families learn from home

Families that were struggling with home learning have a new place to turn to for advice and support. Norfolk Libraries has set up a phone line which serves as a first stop for parents and carers in the county using new devices to teach their children.

The phone line aims to provide a friendly voice to families that aren't familiar with home learning technology, including those that have received a new laptop or tablet as a result of Norfolk County Council's 'Every Child Online' campaign.

Norfolk libraries has scrapped late fees for children as part of post-pandemic reading push

Norfolk County Council has agreed have agreed ambitious plans for the Norfolk Libraries and Information service to improve children and young people's reading skills which have been diminished nationally as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This includes the removal of overdue charges for everyone under the age of 16, universal membership of the county's e-library through Norfolk's schools and the introduction of a new '1000 books before school' reading challenge.

Norfolk participating in new contact tracing scheme

Norfolk County Council is to oversee all Covid contact tracing in the county, building on the county's successful work to identify close contacts of those who have tested positive for the virus.

The "Local-0" scheme will see cases passed without delay to local tracers at the same time as an individual who tested positive for coronavirus is invited to complete the online contact information. The current approach passes cases from the national NHS Test & Trace taskforce onto local tracers only after the national team has been unable to make contact over a period of 24 hours.

In the seven days between 9th and 16th January there were 4,029 confirmed cases, but between 7th and 13th March this had reduced to 351, which is below the UK average.

Every Child Online campaign launched

A new campaign which aims to ensure every school age child has a digital device and internet connection to learn remotely at home was launched.

Norfolk County Council has been working with Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) on the campaign backed by the EDP newspaper to make sure no child is left behind in their learning because of digital disadvantage.

The county council has already co-ordinated the sourcing, prioritisation, and distribution of over 5,000 laptops and tablets, either directly to youngsters or to their schools.

Major highway improvement schemes started in 2021

A multi-million pound programme of road maintenance continued into 2021 with major schemes getting underway in Great Yarmouth, Downham Market and Stalham.

The improvements have been made possible thanks to the £22m highway funding for Norfolk that the Department for Transport announced in May 2020, to fund schemes in the 2020-21 financial year.

Norfolk received more than any other local authority in the East of England for maintenance and repairs to the county's roads, bridges, pavements and cycle paths.

At £1.2m the mechanical and electrical upgrades for the 90-year-old Haven Bridge in Great Yarmouth is the largest scheme to be funded as part of the £22m programme. Some upgrade works were completed in the autumn, but other work, which will resolve many of the issues caused by the lifting bridge's ageing equipment, started in February and is expected to take 13 weeks to complete. The £22m funding award is in addition to Norfolk County Council's existing highways capital maintenance budget of £38.6m for the year 2020-2021.

Surge of Beryl Bike rides in 2020 as Norwich pedals to greener future

With over 11,000 riders, close to 70,000 trips and 266,303 kilometres ridden on Beryl Bikes this year, Norwich can boast to being a greener place for residents and visitors throughout 2020.

Beryl, the local bikeshare provider, has played a large role in the area's transport habits last year, helping NHS and key workers take essential trips during the first national lockdown, easing pressure on public transport and providing the wider public with an affordable and convenient way to get from A to B. The 68,900 trips taken by Beryl Bike are equivalent to 43.92 tonnes of CO2 saved.

Also in 2020, in partnership with Norfolk County Council, Beryl became the world's first provider of a city-wide multimodal smart fleet including pedal bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters. This choice of vehicles provided residents of Norwich with a chance to take a variety of journeys in a safe, sustainable and convenient way.

Norfolk hits top spot for second year running in road and transport survey

For the second year running Norfolk has come first among its peers in a national highways and transport survey.

Over the summer 3,300 people in Norfolk were asked for their views on topics such as road safety, highway maintenance, congestion and public transport as part of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey 2020.

The results are ranked against other participating councils from across the country to give a nationwide picture of how Norfolk is performing.

Out of the 29 county councils and larger unitary authorities in the peer group, Norfolk secured the top spot for overall satisfaction and saw the highest above average scores in both satisfaction with 'traffic levels and congestion' and 'condition of highways'.

Norfolk Flooding Alliance created

In response to winter flooding seen across the County, the Norfolk Flooding Alliance has been created. Led by Lord Dannatt and including bodies such as District Councils, Anglian Water, the Environmental Agency, internal drainage boards, along with Norfolk County Council, the challenges posed across the County can be addressed and tackled.

Housing boost for people with disabilities

One hundred and eighty-one supported housing units are set to be developed in Norfolk, to help people with disabilities live more independent lives.

The County Council will seek to invest £9m-£18m of capital to develop supported, adapted and specialist housing over the next 10 years, to improve people's lives, reduce hospital admissions and reduce care costs by £1.9m per year.

Grant scheme launched to provide free expert advice and cash to help businesses 'Go Digital'

A new grant scheme launched last December will enabled micro, small and medium-sized businesses to make better use of digital technology through funding and one to one support.

Go Digital was launched by Norfolk County Council to help businesses based in the county identify digital opportunities. It will provide expert one-to-one consultancy and the ability to apply for grants of up to £500.

Digital opportunities included how to sell products and services online, reach new customers using social media, build customer databases, develop new or existing websites and attract new visitors, or how to work out the best homeworking options for teams.

More vulnerable children in Norfolk supported to remain with their families

A £12-£15 million five-year programme to transform support for children and young people enabled more youngsters to remain with their families.

National statistics reveal the number of children looked after by Norfolk County Council's Children's Social Care was lower, per 10,000 children than that of England (64 vs 67).

Norfolk Library Service awarding funding to help with Census

Norfolk Library Service has been awarded £53k to deliver support for people in Norfolk needing to access the first ever online Census, amounting to one of the largest single contracts from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Children in care gets below the 1000 barrier

The current numbers of children in care are down to 994, this is from a high of 1200 just over 12 months ago.

This has been achieved by working better and closer with families, to keep children in their family unit and is part of our transformation programme. This is a far better outcome for the children and with Average costs for a child in care at £50,000/annum savings are made. The full savings (200 x 50) haven't been fully realised because the unit costs of our children remaining are on the higher side but this does indicate the impact children in care have on the budget.

We have also increased our in house fostering meaning we use less agency places where again significant savings are with the difference being around £1000/month.

First look at new Norwich recycling centre as it takes shape

Construction of one of two new recycling centres for the Greater Norwich area is well underway as pictures taken in early March show.

A 300 tonne crane is currently on site at the new £2.75m Norwich North recycling centre as sections of what will be a 500,000 litre tank, an integral part of the comprehensive water management system on site, are manoeuvred into place. This tank is the largest of its kind at any of Norfolk's recycling centres and will ensure any surface water runoff stays within the site.

Work on the major project started late last year, and includes a new access road to the recycling centre, which is located on land off the A140/A1270 junction near the airport.



All Saints Church, Earsham

Report for the Year 2020



2020 has been a strange year for the community at Earsham Church.

The Grade 1 listed church of All Saint's plays an important role in the local community and is used by many within the local community. It is the oldest building in the village and it needs the concern and generosity of everyone to maintain it for future generations.

The church building is well-kept and the fully equipped kitchen, meeting rooms and toilet are used by various village groups for meetings, the local school, a fortnightly craft group, children's birthday parties, wakes as well as local church and Benefice events such as the weekly prayer meeting. However from March 2020 little of this was able to happen.

Due to Covid19, we were legally required to lock the churches and not hold services. This meant that for the first time since 1213 we legally could not hold an Easter service in Earsham Church. Since the summer, services have been taking place under COVID safety measures within a Benefice rotation and the church is open for private prayer every day from dawn to dusk.

Since March we have also been holding an online Benefice service at 9:30am every Sunday morning on YouTube which has been a blessing and an encouragement for the 60-100 devices that tune in every week. The major Christian celebrations throughout the year including Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Easter, Harvest, All Souls, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas have also taken place online.

The church also continues to be used at significant life points by the community. During 2020 we celebrated in the church building: 0 wedding (average 3), 0 baptisms (average 7) and 6 funerals with a further 7 funerals at the crematorium (average 10 in total).

The parish graveyard is looked after by a paid gardener, though graves remain the responsibility of the family. What can be placed on graves is governed not the local church but by the National Churchyard Regulations and which bans fake flowers, railings or trinkets being left on the graves. For further information please see the regulations inside the church porch.

We have excellent links with the Earsham CE VA Primary School. Members of the church ministry team have led a weekly online assembly, as well as special assemblies at major points of the Christian calendar where parents are invited. Several church members enjoy being active school governors. We also led an online summer holiday club in place of our usual summer holiday club this year.

Local Churches receive no central financial funding from the Church of England or the Taxpayer and have to raise all costs locally. For 2020 our expenditure was just over £35,000. Earsham church however is blessed by having a trust fund which brings in £20,000 a year while the final £15,000 we raise from sources such as fundraising, collections, standing orders, gift aid and fees. Without services and fundraising happening, our income was looking down, but several large donations have meant that this year we have broken even. A huge thank you to all those who financially donated to Earsham Church last year.

Our main expenditures in 2020 include donations to charities of £800, our parish share which this year increased to £17,339, heating, lighting, grounds and building maintenance, insurance of £2,545, churchyard upkeep of £1,800, a contribution to the Benefice administrator's salary and other running expenses. The audited accounts will be on display in the church porch after the church APCM. We continue to raise funds to fix the spire where the local woodpeckers have taken a fancy to the wooden tiles (expected cost £30,000!!). We expect it will take several years to require the funds for this work.

The Rector is always available to be contacted and the church is here meet the spiritual needs and to serve the whole community of Earsham.

Revd Chris Hutton – Rector

Revd Barry and Revd Sue Cramp – Assistant Priests

Brenda Rush – Churchwarden

Earsham FC 2020-21 Annual Report

Football, like everything else in the last 12 months has been very stop-start, due to the lockdowns. All three leagues that our teams played in, have been made null and void for this season 2020-21 because of the few matches that were played. Hopefully, we will get back to some sense of normality next season. I believe we are well prepared to restart safely in September and hopefully all our players will have been vaccinated by then.

As a club we continue to evolve, with a lot of younger new players joining us and several older players leaving or retiring, which has definitely brought the overall, average age of our players down.

On a personal note I would like to put on record our very grateful thanks to Stephen Wade, who lives in the village, for all the help he has given the Club in the last 12 months or so. Stephen has now taken on full responsibility for marking out the pitch for us, after Pip Penn retired. However, Stephen does so much more, with strimming around the edge of the whole playing field, cutting the grass around the children's play equipment and also weekly clearing up rubbish, deposited by members of the public, which all added together helps keeping the playing field looking very neat and tidy. For anyone who has not been to the playing field lately, you will see it looks amazing.

We have also been very fortunate this season in securing grants, primarily from the Football Foundation which have enabled us to have an underground sprinkler system installed to water the pitch from a borehole that will be sunk hopefully in June, at a total cost of over £46,000. Although like every project I have been involved in at the Club, there have been setbacks and frustrations, I know it will all be worth it in the end. Currently 6 sprinklers are installed in the pitch itself and we are waiting for a further 16 sprinklers to be installed around the edge of the pitch, which will give us 100% coverage. This sprinkler system technology will mean that we can water the pitch overnight from an app on a phone and keep the grass looking lush and green, which has been a major problem for many years, with the long dry summers, which have literally caused our pitch to die off. A big thank you to the Parish Council for their support in achieving this important project. To my knowledge there are no other local sports clubs with such a sophisticated pitch watering system. It is our hope, that once we start to see the results of being able to water the pitch and to produce a good playing surface, it will help encourage even more players to want to play for us.

Peter Goodfellow

Chairman