

# Waltham Parish Council

EST. 1894

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## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022

**Present:** Cllr John Barry (Chairman), Cllrs Jane Robinson Sue Browne and Ben Grillet, Kent County Councillor Mike Sole, Les Leslie, Sue Leslie, Chris Cox, Pamela Cox, Mike Thompson, Carolyn Lawrence, Dean Lawrence, Lynn Saxby, Penny Best, Heather Robinson, Mike Browne, Sarah Crofton.

Tony McCord, parish clerk, in attendance.

The meeting commenced at 6.15pm in Waltham Village Hall.

### **APM 22.01 Chairman's opening remarks:**

Cllr John Barry gave a warm welcome to those attending the meeting under the current Covid 19 restrictions.

**APM 22.02 Apologies for absence:** Ward Councillor Robert Thomas, Cllr Chris Crowley

### **APM 22.03 Minutes of the last meeting held on the 25th of May 2021:**

Chairman read out the minutes which were then deemed to be a correct record.

### **APM 22.04 Matters Arising from the minutes:**

There were no matters arising.

### **APM 22.05 Report by the Parish Council Chairman:**

WPC has 5 Councillors, 4 elected 3 years ago and one co-opted last month. Councillors' existing terms will end in May next year. Thanks to outgoing Councillor Carolyn Lawrence. The Council employs Tony McCord as clerk – to whom many thanks are due.

The Council meets in public 10 times a year at 19.30 hrs. in the village hall on the first Tuesday of the month. There are no meetings scheduled in January & August. All documents for the meetings are published on the Council's web site prior to the meetings. Minutes are placed on the notice board, published on the village face book page and in PAW news.

Meetings routinely cover: Council Finances and grants, reports from City and County Councillors, planning matters, highway & road safety issues, the PC's property, and communications with parishioners.

All business is conducted in accordance with the Government's transparency code and the Council always endeavours to reach appropriate standards of governance. This year we should be able to achieve the Government's Foundation Award.

The council's work over the past year has included several items mentioned at last year's meeting:

- a) The notice Boards have been replaced.
- b) In conjunction with KCC the Highways Improvement plan has been progressed, some new signs have been installed and traffic surveys have been completed within the 30mph areas in Kake St & Richdore Rd.
- c) An Adverse Weather policy has been agreed together with an identified budget.
- d) There has been work with other PC's & CCC on a Parish Charter.
- e) When the hall was painted the bus shelter was also repainted.

f) There has been work to ensure all Council policies are up to date and fit for purpose.

Looking to the future: There is an action plan published on the web site which outlines the Council's priorities for the forthcoming year. In particular we hope to see:

- i) Completion of repair and refurbishment of the Village Sign.
- ii) To start developing the foundations for a 'Parish Plan' including initial funding.
- iii) Continued collaboration with KCC on highways improvements.
- iv) The Council will also offer support to villagers planning for the Queen's Jubilee.

Despite retaining the precept at £7161 the Council's finances remain in good order with a balance of £10,923 carried over to the current financial year. We have been fortunate our clerk worked so hard to secure grants towards the cost of the notice boards and the village sign. In order to help us work within our budget the PC will continue to seek any grants available to support capital expenditure.

As in past the PC made grants to the village hall (significantly increased), St. Bartholomew's, & the playing field. We also made a £500 donation to the DEC (Ukraine). It is hoped to be able to continue grants to local organisations this year - although who knows what might be around the corner!

Finally. - For many the last year will not have been easy, and it has been gratifying that so much good work has been quietly undertaken by so many members of the community - to whom the Council extends its sincere thanks.

**John Barry 25/04/22**

#### **APM 22.06 KCC Cllr Mike Sole's Report**

It is now approaching a year since I was elected as the county councillor for Canterbury South, so I would like to present this report to you.

Firstly, some thanks. My predecessor, Michael Northey was extremely gracious when I replaced him and provided me with some helpful handover information and advice. I would also like to thank Kent County Councillor and City Councillor Rob Thomas. We may represent different political parties, but I know that we share a similar desire to get things done for the adjoining areas that we represent, and his assistance, advice and friendship are much appreciated.

I would also like to thank the parish councillors and clerks of all 16 parishes in my county division for their warm welcomes. Shortly after being elected, I took tours around all of the 11 parishes that were new to me (I already covered 5 as Canterbury City Councillor for Nailbourne ward) and I am grateful for the time taken to introduce me to the areas.

Canterbury South is a large county division, stretching from Waltham in the west to Grove Ferry in the east. It also includes a large part of urban Wincheap that is not parished. I enjoy walking and cycling around all the area. I try to be pro-active and get things done. You will often see me reporting potholes, worn white lines, fly-tipping, overgrown footpaths, and many other things. I want us to live in an area that we are proud of, is well maintained, kept clean and safe.

As one of six Liberal Democrat councillors as KCC, out of a total of 81 councillors, I know that I may have little impact of on the direction of KCC, but that does not stop me trying by raising items at committees and council. Where I believe that I am achieving things is by working with councillor officers, cabinet chairs and other councillors of all parties to make the improvements that we need locally.

In particular I have done a lot of work with the local highway's officers. By working with them and parish councils, often assisted with grant money from my KCC members fund, we have seen a reduction in the speed limit at Bramling, with another reduction coming at Stone Street, Petham as well as improvements to road surfaces and road and drainage maintenance.

We are making headway with a 30mph limit in Woolage Village and have had meetings about a potential 20mph limit in Bridge and an additional crossing in Thanington, although budgetary issues are an issue there.

On school issues I have helped families with the recent chaotic Special Education Needs home to school transport changes and helped where possible with schools' places appeals.

I have particularly enjoyed getting to know so many of the local community groups and through those I have been able to support grants through my Covid Recovery Grant, which has now unfortunately finished, and Combined Members Grant which is also used on highway projects.

In addition to Highways grants, I have been able to support the following organisations:

Love Hambrook Marshes – benches

Little Stour & Nailbourne River Group – publicity and education project

Fifth Trust – redevelopment of skills centre

Barham Football Club – defibrillator

Petham Primary School PFTA – bounce back to school project

Adisham Village Hall – dishwasher

Ashford Road Community Centre – outdoor furniture

Bridge Village Playgroup – literacy and outdoor equipment

Littlebourne Youth Cricket – indoor training

Hilltop Community Association – defibrillator

If there are any local organisations in the area that would benefit from some grant assistance, please ask them to get in touch.

At KCC I sit on the Growth & Economic Development committee and the Flood Risk Management Committee. I also represent Canterbury City Council on the River Stour Internal Drainage Board.

At Canterbury City Council I sit on the Community Committee and Regeneration Committee, although as we move away from a committee system to a leader and cabinet role I do not yet know what role I may have in the future.

I try to attend as many parish council meetings as possible and usually manage about 4 or 5 a month. I am also happy to meet up with residents and parish councillors outside of the formal parish meeting to discuss issues.

As I am also the Canterbury City Councillor for Nailbourne ward I have also dealt with many issues for residents including bin collections, litter, council housing and fly-tipping. I take the lead for the Lib Dem group on Climate Change and Finance at the City Council.

We have a lot going on in the next year at Canterbury City Council. There is the controversial move away from the committee system of governance to a cabinet system and of course the continued development of the local plan that could see up to 17,000 additional homes in the district on top of those already in the current plan but not yet built, like the 4,000 at Mountfield Park between the city and Bridge.

We have a difficult time ahead of us with rising costs which will put huge pressures on council services and families' income and wellbeing. I know that many local families are looking to host Ukrainian refugees in their homes. There will be huge demands for support services and I will do all I can to assist and share relevant information.

I have very much enjoyed my first year as a Kent County Councillor and my continuing term as a Canterbury City Councillor, the highlight so far was being invited to be Father Christmas in Adisham, visiting children with gifts on Christmas morning in a sleigh pulled by a vintage tractor.

Please do continue to get in touch if I can help with anything.

Mike Sole

Kent County Councillor – Canterbury South

Canterbury City Councillor – Nailbourne

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**APM 21.07 Report from City Councillor Robert Thomas:** Below is a summary of activity from Canterbury City Council in the past year or two and my own roles serving the community.

I hope you find this of interest and if you have any follow up questions do feel free to get in touch.

Best wishes, Robert Thomas 07740347419 [Robert.thomas@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:Robert.thomas@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk)

**Covid 19:** Needless to say, the past two years have been hugely challenging. I am sure you, like me, will have your own personal story to tell. Looking back to March 2020 the role of public sector in the emergency response has been remarkable. Much of this work locally has been done through the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) which includes many partner organisations. The LRF is the body for emergencies in Kent. Historically they may have been dealing with issues such as flooding but in the past five years or so it's included Brexit Preparedness, COVID-19, refugees, and the ongoing challenges our county has seen in these areas such as operation Brock. Working from home became the norm, however, as you will know government did not extend regulations for decision making committees and so the city council are now back up and running with all meetings in person. During the COVID emergency the council was required to issue several grants to businesses to the tune of tens of millions of pounds. As an authority that is used to collecting money from businesses and residents it was an interesting challenge to ensure that monies were distributed on a timely basis. This extends to the upcoming £150 rebate on council tax for those in A-D council tax bands, and the discretionary fund for those outside of these bands, which will be paid to households on the week commencing 25th April. On the subject of finances, the city council's strategy of increasing property and parking income over time has allowed for greater provision of services. However, with the impact COVID-19 is has had the unfortunate effect of meaning greater savings to be found as these have, at least in the short term, reduced. The council is currently marketing four of its city centre car parks.

**Homelessness** At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the government required that all homeless people be taken off the streets and placed in accommodation. Canterbury City Council used a city centre hotel to house the homeless. It was a great opportunity for the housing team to provide a huge number of services and wrap around care during this time. There were some success stories of individuals being placed into housing and assisted with job opportunities. Needless to say, the issues faced by homeless people is far more complex than simply requiring a house or a job. Unfortunately, a few people left this accommodation for a variety of reasons. However, recent statistics highlight the improving trend in the overall number of homeless in the district. With the latest challenge of cost of living it may throw up new challenges.

**Refugees** The city council has been providing support to a handful of Syrian refugees for many years. However, in the past year the city council, along with others such as Kent County Council, has been providing support for Afghan refugees since last summer and in more recent weeks and months the Homes for Ukraine Scheme in Kent. The latter is a "live" situation it is throwing up some interesting challenges. It will be interesting to see what cumulative learning there is, both locally and nationally, when Kent provides this type of support in future.

**Local Plan** Canterbury City Council adopted its Local Plan in July 2017. The Government require the city council to have a five-year review of this plan. While it will not be ready by July 2022 work is well underway for the next iteration of the plan (for development through to at least 2040). In the past couple of years, the council has considered "the issues" of development such as the environment, transport and so on. It then issues an Options consultation to see how development should progress for example should the previous priority of extending urban areas rather than increasing rural communities continue? Should there be new settlements? The preferred option should be put out for consultation in the summer. Challenges include open spaces, transport, and other infrastructure etc. The government require the city council to provide at least 9k homes. The city council is considering almost double this number. This will be on top of previous allocations such as the Mountfield Park (4k homes). Additionally, the "Stodmarsh issue" with regards to wastewater which is affecting around 30,000 homes across East Kent. Means that permissions are currently limited to self-mitigating schemes or a small area of the district, essentially in the Whitstable area, where there is no impact on the Stodmarsh nature reserve. This has been ongoing for around 18 months. It perhaps comes as no surprise that the council's Housing Delivery Test came back unfavourably, with approximately only 75% of the houses required to be built across the whole district. As such when considering new planning applications local planning policies are now essentially set aside in favour

of “sustainable development” notwithstanding the “Stodmarsh issue”. We have already seen additional housing in Whitstable approved outside of Local Plan allocations.

**Transport** While Transport is a county council function the city council provides several transport related services. This includes on-street and off-street parking and associated permits and enforcement activities. No profit can be made from on-street parking, but monies reinvested in transport activities. You will have seen the e-scooter trial in Canterbury, which has been extended to November 2022, has been supported by both city and county councils. The city council will also be coordinating the revised Transport Strategy to support the Local Plan. An interesting recent development is that the city council will cease operations at the Sturry Road Park and Ride with the site mothballed for two years.

**Bin collection and grounds maintenance** In February 2021 the city council took back the bin collection service in all but name as its wholly owned company Canterbury Environmental Company (known as Canenco) took over the service from Serco. A number of teething problems have occurred, and it has taken a while to get to a relatively stable service. In addition, the grounds maintenance contract, which was also previously overseen by Serco, was brought back in to Canenco early. If you have any problems with the service reporting online is helpful or contacting Councillor Andrew Cook who as Lead Member, and possibly Cabinet member, for waste.

**Housing** About a decade or so ago the council decided to put its social housing into an arms-length management organisation (ALMO), known as East Kent Housing. However, after years of management issues matters came to a head when a number of legal requirements were not being met. As such the council took the decision to break up the ALMO and bring housing back in house. For the past 18 months the council has been working to ensure the service has the right level of staffing, technological solutions, and management to not just survive but hopefully thrive.

**Office Move** Prior to the pandemic the city council had announced it was moving offices to Wincheap Industrial Estate. However, with the shift of working from home sped up as well as financial challenges the council has rescinded its previous decision. It is now progressing a move to various vacant spaces within Whitefriars.

**Management Changes** The new Leader, Cllr Fitter-Harding and his administration, decided to restructure the management team at the city council in conjunction with a number of other changes including the Chief Executive’s resignation. We now have three new statutory offices at the council. They are Tricia Marshall (Head of Paid Service), Jan Guylar (Monitoring Officer) and Nikki Mills (S151 Officer) in addition to newly appointed directors for People and Place.

**Governance Changes** The new Leader and his administration decided that after 7 years of making council decisions through the committee system, where all councillors and parties are involved in taking major decisions through the service committees, that “accountability should be improved” by moving to a cabinet system. Six councillors will be given areas of responsibility and collectively they will take the major decisions for the council.

**Parish Matters** The review of the concurrent functions funding has been back and forth over the years. This is the funding to reimburse parish councils for the expenditure on activities such as grass cutting that the city council spends in urban areas. A short-term two-year deal has been struck with a review pending and councillors on a working group will examine future proposals.

**The Parish Charter**, an agreement between the city council and parishes with regards to rights and responsibilities, has been delayed for a significant period of time. The exact date for the revised charter to be agreed is still yet to be agreed.

**Local Improvements** While much of the above has taken up the much energy of the council there have been some additional items to note. These include new Changing Places toilets coming to Reculver and within the city centre with three additions recently announced.

**Personal Role** As you may be aware after the local elections in May 2019, I became Leader of the council. That was relatively short-lived and I was replaced in September 2020. The pandemic was also a particularly difficult time personally due to family tragedies. Upon some soul searching I have reached the conclusion that I must step down from the council in May 2023. With that said I have

been throwing myself into many initiatives not just as a city councillor but also at Kent County Council following a by-election after John Simmonds sad passing. Duties have included:

- Chairing a Select Committee on Affordable Housing
- Appointed Chair of Policy and Resources Committee
- Appointed Chair of Kent Pension Board
- The city council's representative on East Kent Spatial Development Company, a local authority regeneration company providing offices and industrial units.
- A member of the cross-party Kent Plan Bee Members Group
- And working with colleagues to support the Wilder Blean project
- A trustee of Active Life, which oversees the council's leisure provision in Canterbury
- A trustee at Canterbury Relief in Need, a charity that provides financial assistance.

Moving forward I shall be doing my best to fulfil my duties to the best of my abilities. I am also grateful for the way that your new Kent County Councillor, Mike Sole, has thrown himself into the role. While no stranger to local government I know his division covers 16 parish councils and so it must take a lot of dedication and organisation to ensure all the communities are well served. I was delighted to hear that Mike has managed to work with Kent Highways to potentially find a way to reduce the speed limit on a section of Stone Street.

Finally, a well done to all the community groups, the parish councillors and of course the clerk on all the achievements in the past year or so and I wish you all success in the year to come.

Useful links Kent Local Resilience Forum [www.kentprepared.org.uk](http://www.kentprepared.org.uk)

Local Plan [www.canterbury.gov.uk/planning-and-building/new-local-plan-2040](http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/planning-and-building/new-local-plan-2040)

#### **APM 21/08 Reports from Parish Organisations:**

##### **a) St Bartholomew's Church Waltham Report to Waltham Parish Council for 2021**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May the worst restrictions of Covid lockdown were relaxed and twelve regular services took place after that date.

Prior to that one funeral and two weddings were held under lockdown regulations, meaning that only 15 and 30 people could be present for the weddings, which had already been postponed from 2020.

Later in the year there was a further funeral, one baptism and a memorial service. We are very grateful to Dr Leonie Saint, who stood in as organist whilst Ruth Goodsell was still shielding.

The church fabric has been monitored by our architect, George Denny, whose Quinquennial Report we are now addressing. The electrics also need updating.

The churchyard has continued to benefit from the attention of the small working party, led by Les Leslie. The unsightly vegetation covering the west wall of the churchyard was removed, exposing the poor state of the brickwork. This was subsequently repaired and rebuilt by Julian Linch of Conservation Construction, in time for his wedding in May. The state of the churchyard has attracted favourable comments and even a cheque in recognition from a family with a grave below the church. Thanks are due to Chris Tanton for his regular mowing and to Waltham Parish Council for their generous contribution to our costs.

An ongoing problem is the proliferation of inappropriate monuments and tokens on graves. These do not comply with the Diocesan Churchyard Regulations 2015 and are more suitable for a municipal cemetery than a country churchyard.

I must also thank the Ladies Guild for their devotion to decorating the church with flowers and those ladies on the cleaning rota, who keep it so tidy, even when services are few. Comments in the visitors' book show that their efforts are noticed and appreciated by others too.

**Chris Cox Churchwarden April 2022**

##### **b) Report on the Social Afternoons 2021/2022**

The Social Afternoons continue as part of our Church outreach, and amazingly are now in their 22nd

year! During this time, numbers have fluctuated from 12 when we began, to 35 in the noughties. Before Covid, we averaged about 15/16 each month, and since re-opening following lockdown, our numbers are gradually creeping up again as folk feel comfortable to come out and socialise once more.

Our team of 3 pairs who take it in turn to host the gathering each month, were saddened last year by the sudden passing of Janet Moor, who had very reliably been part of our team since 2006. We miss her. However, we are delighted to welcome Carolyn Lawrence who offered to become the sixth hostess and complete our team again. To all the ladies who bake each month, I am very grateful. Grateful for their time and talent, and their wish to see the Social Afternoons continue for as long as there is a need.

**Thank you.**

**Pamela Cox**

**c) Report on Scrabble Meetings**

The Scrabble mornings continue on the second Wednesday morning of each month from 10.00 - 12 noon. in the Village Hall. These run from September to May inclusive, with a break in the summer when we are all too busy in the garden!

Though small in number, rather like the Social Afternoons, inevitably, since we began, we have lost several players either through their passing, or they have moved away. However, we have sufficient to make it viable, and a sociable time is had by all. I should add that we have been delighted to welcome players from outside Waltham who have become regular attenders.

**Pamela Cox**

**d) Village Hall Management Committee:**

The first meeting of the Management Committee following lockdown took place on 29 June 2021 attended by all bar one of our 10 Trustees.

This was the first meeting since 21 January 2020, a welcome return to some form of normality.

It was confirmed that The Purchase of the Freehold had been formally concluded with the issue of the Register of Title on 10 March 2020.

The Hall had reopened following lockdown on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 under strictly controlled conditions.

During 2020/2021 much financial assistance has been provided by Canterbury City Council and an increased Grant from Waltham Parish Council which has helped us counter the absence of hire income and the provision of special facilities for opening following lockdown.

The entrance canopy has been reroofed and timers fitted to the night storage heaters to ensure they operate only at off peak rates.

The exit double doors have been replaced and the kitchen exit door lock replaced

The whole exterior has been cleared of ivy.

The whole external boarding has been prepared and repainted and fascia boards and doors repainted.

The Bus Shelter has been repainted inside and out. The old notice boards have been removed to allow repainting and new boards have been fitted

The Map case and chair at the entrance has been revarnished.

Disabled toilet facilities are planned with the conversion of the existing Male Toilet into a unisex toilet with disabled facilities.

Jay's window cleaning services engaged following lockdown to conduct a deep clean, continue to conduct a fortnightly clean.

The Annual Christmas Mulled Wine and Mince Pies was held on 12 December 2021 prior to the Carol Service at St. Bartholomews.

Bookings for regular events are continuing to improve and Waltham Village Hall continues to be a vital community focus and asset in our Village community.

Significant impact is anticipated on costs with the current major increase in electricity rates and usage will be closely monitored.

Les Leslie, Chairman, Waltham Village Hall Charity

### **e) Waltham Gardening Society Report**

It was not until June 2021 that we emerged from Lockdown with a visit to Sue Scrivens Garden on 5th June. Nine members made the trip to Pedlinge Court at Saltwood near Hythe on a beautiful day.

Sue and her husband John entertained us with a tour of the Garden and afternoon tea and much chatting about her wonderful Garden and life in general.

A Great Return to near normality. An initial informal meeting was held on the evening of 13th July with members gathering for a discussion on future events and exchanging information on current gardening problems and swapping advice.

It was decided to hold our Annual Show on Saturday 7th August with a reduction in the number of classes to allow more circulation space in the Hall so sadly there were no classes for Floral Art, Cookery or Crafts. Nevertheless, there were 117 exhibits.

There were some new exhibitors to the Show, three of whom won Firsts, Roy Coles for his French Beans, Andy and Janet Beal for their Carrots and Julia Stanton for her artistic display of foliage.

On 14th September we welcomed Alison Marsden for her talk on Wildlife Friendly Gardening Great For People Too. Alison's talk was an intriguing combination on gardening as a social and therapeutic aid and encouraging wildlife in your garden. Alison's message was that we as gardeners are part of a network, deriving pleasure from the natural habitat and encouraging wildlife to prosper.

Our concluding talk of the year was by Laura Brady from Horton Farm entitled The Wonky Parsnip.

Laura has developed 4 acres at Horton Farm near Chilham, growing over 140 varieties of vegetables creating a thriving market garden. Laura has explored the use of many of the vegetables she grows through her love of cooking and her travels worldwide sampling markets and cuisines. Laura's bubbly character made her presentation a great evening.

The Society's A.G.M. and Social took place on Tuesday 9th November with 13 stalwart members attending.

With the absence of an A.G.M. in 2020 due to Covid 19 it is two years since our last A.G.M. and the intervening period had been a period of great uncertainty, but fortunately we have come through it with a thriving membership and continuing enthusiasm

Waltham Gardeners Society Annual Dinner normally held in December was deferred to Spring 2022 and was finally held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022. We had hoped to hold the somewhat delayed Annual Dinner at The Compasses Inn, Sole Street, Crundale, but they had suspended dining due to staff shortages. However, The Granville at Lower Hardres were pleased to welcome us.

The Waltham Gardeners Society's 2022 year started with a well-attended open Evening with a Question-and-Answer Session on Tuesday 8 February.

A wide range of discussions took place with members providing advice and guidance on numerous subjects from the merits of various manures and composts to when to start chitting potatoes and pruning various wayward plants. Accompanied by tea, coffee, and biscuits the evening proved a useful start to the Gardeners Society year.

Our next speaker evening was on Tuesday 12 April when Harry James talked to us on No-Dig Gardening.

Harry has been the market garden manager at Rosewood Acres Farm near Canterbury since January 2021. He looks after a small plot (500m<sup>2</sup>) using no-dig principles that provides fresh organic produce to the nearby local community, mostly in the form of weekly veg boxes. Prior to joining Rosewood Acres, Harry had 3 years' experience with no-dig growing on a small allotment in Germany. He is interested in how to produce the most nutrient-dense food possible, and in teaching others how to get started with no-dig approaches.

On Saturday 30 April our Annual Plant Sale will take place at 10.00 a.m. at Waltham Village Hall.

Les Leslie

Chairman Waltham Gardeners Society.

**f) Waltham Sports and Recreation Association.**

**Penny Best** reported that work of the Charity was being constrained by difficulties with finances, with expenditure £94 more than income. and dwindling numbers of Committee volunteers. Problems were being experienced in maintaining the bonfire in good order and there had been a 'run' on the use of dog poo bags.

**g) Report by Mike Thompson, Editor, Petham and Waltham News.**

Pawnews is published eleven times a year, no January issue. The deadline for copy is 14<sup>th</sup> of the month, a few days after this the copy is provided as a PDF to the printers, Mickleprint. Normally they turn it around in a couple of days, so it is available to distribute a week before the end of the month. They download the PDF from our website whose address is <https://pawnews.org>. We have found them a particularly good firm to work with, friendly and helpful.

We print 390 copies of which approximately 2/3 are distributed in Petham, one-third in Waltham. The size of the publication is currently forty-two pages of A5, the back ten pages contain the business adverts.

The team consists of myself as editor, Janice Wickenden who prepares the document in Adobe Indesign, Elisabeth Edwards as treasurer who lives in Petham, Claire Harland is lead distributor for Waltham who lives in Anvil Green, Gill Bryant is lead distributor for Petham who lives in Petham. Also, we have David Green as legal adviser. David has remained a valued associate after being an editor when he lived in Petham before Fiona Beer who was the previous editor before me.

There is also a team of volunteer distributors who deliver the magazine through thick and thin then to their local streets. During the pandemic we managed to produce a PDF of the magazine every month, though in the height of the pandemic for a couple of months we provided only as a download so that distributors could comply with Covid rules.

During this time, the previous lead distributor for Petham, Agnes Way retired. She delivered personally around seventy copies each month for many years, and we would like specially to thank Agnes for her service to Pawnews over those many years.

I have been editor for I believe about 17 years. I keep one copy of the printed magazine for archive at some point for historical reference to anyone who might be interested in the future. Also, we have been saving PDFs since we started creating them.

The cost of the magazine to the subscriber is £5 a year. The cost of producing the magazine is approximately £4,000 a year, of which half is paid for by subscriptions and half by advertising. We maintain between 40 and 50 advertisers. The magazine breaks even but it is important that we collect all the subscriptions and advertising revenue to do this.

We welcome any articles of interest to help maintain an eclectic mix, so we do not have to rely on just the usual suspects.

During the pandemic it was evident that the magazine could be provided very cheaply and in colour with no restriction on size as a download. With the latest broadband speed, it will download onto a tablet in seconds. This is something we need to consider in the future, possibly just printing a limited run for those who want it to continue as a paper copy. However, this would significantly increase the cost of each paper copy.

I hope that the magazine continues to be a useful local resource but it will be only as good as the content that is sent to it so I would say use it or lose it.

Thank you.

**h) St Bartholomew's Church Report of Petham and Waltham Bell Ringers**

Bell ringing was not possible for most of the year due to covid restrictions. The number of bell ringers has been depleted by the covid circumstances and the ill health of Tower Captain Brian Law. We are pleased that practise nights resumed once restrictions were lifted. In January we welcomed a visit by Kent Young Ringers. New learners are welcome to join us from 7:30pm on alternate Tuesday

evenings. Two new Waltham residents have recently joined us and are making good progress. With the help of Canterbury District ringers and the Kent County Association of Change Ringers we aim to keep the bells in a good state of repair.

We continue to be available to ring for weddings at St Bartholomew's Church and arrangements can be made by contacting Rev Lorraine Lawrence or Chris Cox Church Warden.

John Miller

Tower Secretary on behalf of Waltham Bell Ringers

**i) Table Tennis at Waltham:**

John Barry presented the reports on behalf of Heather Robinson

Waltham Table Tennis Club

Waltham Table Tennis Club has been running for around 25 years. We play on a Thursday evening from 7.30 – 10.00, but sometimes take a break in August. We welcome all new players, any standard from complete novices to local league players, and last year for the first time we entered a team into the Canterbury League, playing for Choughs Table Tennis Club.

Choughs Table Tennis Club

I have been playing for Choughs for over 30 years now, and in Sept 2018 we moved to Waltham Village Hall. Home games are played on a Wednesday evening, and as this is local league it is restricted to league registered players. This year we finished first in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, and our new team from the Waltham players finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 4<sup>th</sup> Division, a really good result!

**J) Yoga Classes at Waltham Village Hall:**

This year the Yoga classes have managed to run from May until now, with just a slightly longer than usual break at Christmas, despite the ongoing high numbers of Covid cases across the country and within our community.

We have maintained a cautious approach, many of our students have care responsibilities for someone vulnerable and some are high risk themselves. The consensus of the group was that we wanted to enable even the most cautious student to feel as safe as possible when they come to a class, to encourage people who had been socially isolated for so long to start mixing again. We have restricted numbers to allow social distancing and have maintained other 'Covid safe' precautions.

The Monday evening classes will be 20 years old in September, and are quite well attended, one or two new people have been welcomed over the past year, with the majority coming along for several years.

We temporarily transferred the Wednesday Petham class to Waltham last May, while the hall there was closed to allow the nursery to run through these difficult times. Plans are to return the class to Petham next month.

I think I can safely say that all the students welcome the opportunity to meet up with locals from Waltham and the surrounding villages and appreciate the numerous health benefits that yoga brings, including healthy backs, relaxation, and stress management.

On behalf of the classes I would like to say thank you to all involved for their continued efforts to keep the hall clean and operational during these difficult times. I hope to continue to run the classes at least for a few more years.

In drawing the formal business of the meeting to a close at 8.00pm the Chairman invited Cllr Jane Robinson to give a summary of plans for the **Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations** in early June, which will include a bring your own lunch in the marquee and music over the seven decades with about 20 songs. A group discussion followed while refreshments were served, those present contributing more ideas for a further hour.