



Under the Chairmanship of Councillor Rick Albrow  
Minutes of the  
**Annual Parish Meeting**  
held  
On Friday 06 May 2022  
at 8.00 pm at Hadstock Village Hall

**1. Welcome :** The Chair, Councillor Albrow, welcomed all to the Annual Parish Meeting of Hadstock, emphasising that this is a meeting for the Parishioners, encouraging villagers to take part to inform the Parish Council to aid their work. Cllr Albrow indicated the fire exits and informed those present that the meeting could be filmed or recorded.

Parish Councillors Albrow, Nuttall, Hannam and Smith were present together with the Parish Clerk 6 members of the public were in attendance

**2. Apologies for absence were received from :**

Mr & Mrs Jarrett  
Cllr S Porter

**3. Minutes of meeting:** The Chair presented the draft minutes of the Hadstock Annual Parish Meeting of 20 May 2021 which were reviewed. Cllr Foley asked for an amendment to delete 'Leader of the District Council'

Following the amendment of accuracy, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chair

County Councillor Martin Foley was welcomed to the meeting and his presence was appreciated

**4. Matters arising from the minutes of 20 May 2021**

HGV's ~ if a traffic survey is requested that could be carried out but any results would need to be of use. Concerns were raised about the number of HGV's that travel through the village and associated enforcement.

Speed bumps are not favoured by Essex Highways being expensive to maintain and noisy. The primary reason why Hadstock would not be suitable is the lack of street lighting

Road closures ~ would be further discussed in the Chairmans report

Highways issues ~ a site visit had been arranged earlier in the year which Cllr Foley attended. The issues have been progressed to the Essex Highways Panel.

Foot Path at Chalky Lane ~ this is footpath 7 which had a broken bridge. The County Council have replaced 4 sleeper bridges and provided new hand rails

Kings Head ~ the issues related to the Kings Head have now passed, nothing further to add

Recreation Ground ~ Revised cutting plan to allow for wild flowers

**5. Chairman of Hadstock Parish Council report May 2021- April 2022**

The following is a summary of Parish Council activity over this period.

**Recreation Ground:**

The Recreation Ground is the Council's principal asset and has been owned since 1908. The Parish Council has continued to invest in the play equipment with the installation of a new see-saw and also a new hardwood seat nearby. The Heritage Orchard now has 14 trees, a mix of apple, pear and gage, and all are doing well. We have changed the grass cutting policy to leave two boundaries uncut during the growing season to encourage the establishment of wildflowers.

The annual playground inspection again gave a favourable report with only minor remedial work required.

### **Len's Path**

With the permission of Sue Crawley, a bench seat has been installed at the Village end of Len's Path and the Rowlandson family have attached a brass plaque in memory of Len Rowlandson after whom the path is named. Last winter the Linton end of the path was virtually impassable due to poor drainage. We have had a contractor dig this out and fill with hardcore and surface with road scalplings.

Len's Path is leased by the Parish Council from the landowner until 2033.

### **Planning Applications**

The Parish Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications in the Parish. There have been 9, 7 for extensions or conversions (the Parish Council objected to one of these) and 2 under new legislation for permitted development.

New legislation came into force in August 2021 which allows certain commercial and business premises to be converted to residential without the need for planning permission. If the Planning Authority agrees that certain conditions are met then the development can legally go ahead. The grounds for refusal are very limited unlike a planning application where the decision can be more subjective. There were two notices under this legislation; The Mill, Yews Farm and the Old Operations Block, Bowers Lane (formerly Villiers Brothers). The Parish Council objected to both. The Mill has been approved and the Old Operations block rejected (twice).

Uttlesford District Council are still working on the Local Plan. The Parish Council submitted a factcheck on the two sites in Hadstock submitted in the Call for Sites last year but nothing has been heard since. It is still the out-of-date 2005 plan which is in force.

### **Highways and Traffic**

Road closures have been a concerning issue through the year. These have been caused by a combination of utility work (both planned and emergency) and new housing development in Walden. Whilst we appreciate repairs being done and understand the need for new housing it often seems that the utility or contractor takes the easy option of closing the road. Pressure from Little Walden residents did result in some improvements to the arrangements on Little Walden Road during closure in March. There is no coordination of these closures at a County level and we are in discussion with our County Councillor on this.

The Parish Council is working hard to monitor the road closures and to notify the Village when these are planned.

The verge damage on Bartlow Road caused during the diversion during a road closure at The Grip and the continuing problem of flooding by the Recreation Ground gate have been put to the County Council for funding. These, as discussed earlier, were the subject of the site visit with Cllr Foley and the Highways Liaison officer and are actively being looked at but will be dependent on funding.

The Speed watch band of volunteers continue their work and offenders are contacted by the police. Thanks to Cllr Nuttall.

### **Public Rights of Way.**

Rights of Way are the responsibility of the County Council but the Parish Council monitors their condition and liaises with the Rights of Way Officer. We have walked most of the paths during the year. Please report any closure of paths and required maintenance to the Parish Clerk. Minor work is often undertaken by volunteers but other work or when the landowner has to be contacted are reported to the County

The County has replaced a number of 'sleeper bridges' with a more robust construction incorporating handrails.

### **Village Website**

The website really needs a 'webmaster' to keep content up to date and looking fresh.

### **Telephone Box and Defibrillator**

There is a book and DVD exchange in the old telephone box as well as the defibrillator which has a support contract with Community Heartbeat Trust. A CPR training session could be arranged if there is sufficient demand.

The telephone box was purchased for £1 by the Parish Council from BT many years ago. The electricity is unmetered and provided at no cost by BT. It is a Grade II Listed Building.

Green Skip

The bi-weekly service is operated by Uttlesford District Council but paid for by the Parish Council.

This is continuing for 2022/23.

### **District and County Councils**

The Parish Council liaises with our District and County Councillors on any matter which is their responsibility.

### **Governance**

In recent years the burden on small parish councils to meet the requirements for good governance and transparency has greatly increased. The Parish Clerk is working hard on putting into place policies, documentation and website content.

### **Finance**

The year-end accounts will be available on the website during June but here is an unofficial, unaudited summary with approximate figures:

We received income of £13000, including £1500 in grants.

We spent:

Recreation Ground	£5600
Len's Path	£900
General Admin	£1400
Clerk salary, training, expenses	£6000
Grass cutting	£1500
Green skip	£1400

This leaves reserves at the end of the year of about £7500.

The Parish Council tax for 2022/23 has increased by £2.42 pa for a Band D property or 3.9%, the first increase in three years.

The Parish Clerk has been successful with grant applications over the last few years which have paid for much of the improvements on the Recreation Ground and Len's Path. We have also benefitted from an annual £500 from the District Councillor's Ward Fund.

### **Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

A Village Picnic on the Recreation Ground and an evening Barn Dance in the Village Hall, both on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, have been organised by a group of villagers with the help of the Parish Council. The Parish Council is providing 90 saplings as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative for residents to plant in their own gardens.

### **Other Matters**

Parking on Bilberry End has been a problem, caused mainly by contractors' vans but now seems to have improved.

A new salt bin has been purchased and is waiting for installation on Bilberry End.

Welcome Bags are given to all new residents. (The 'Love Hadstock' bags are still available for purchase.)

### **Councillors**

The councillors are Rick Albrow (chair), Keith Nuttall (vice-chair), Trevor Smith, Sara Porter and Jude Hannam. There is currently one casual vacancy. The next elections will be held in May 2023.

My thanks, on behalf of the Village, to all councillors for their work, much of it 'behind the scenes' and in particular to our very able and hard working Parish Clerk, Sara Beckett.

Rick Albrow  
Chair Hadstock Parish Council

## **6. The Chair invited members of the public to take the floor**

The Parish Clerk wished to thank Cllr Foley for his support and funding that has been really welcome and appreciated. The funding was towards the bench on Len's Path and further funding enabled the Parish Council to purchase a salt bin for Bilberry End.

A member of the public wished to thank Cllr Foley for attending and for his help with the road closures. He felt that the concerns over road closures were being addressed and that matters were improving, but it is up to the Village to keep the pressure on Highways and the utility companies.

Cllr Foley warned that drain covers are being stolen and any incidents should be reported to the Police in addition to Essex County Council,

A member of the public expressed concerns over potholes ~ Cllr Foley encouraged these to be reported via the online portal and the use of What3Words is encouraged to identify locations more precisely.

A member of the public pointed out that road closures need to be operated under a mechanism that allowed for recognition of local circumstances and gave an example of road closures during harvest and on election day. It was felt that a simple email to the Parish Clerk to notify of closures might be implemented by Highways. Cllr Foley pointed out that on being notified he passes that information on to Parish Councils.

A member of the public pointed out that Len's Path has a number of 'rocks' that need flattening out and some vegetation needs attention. It was noted that Len's Path is now included in the grass cutting programme

The fencing of the Play equipment has been very successful and much appreciated by the Village.

Concerns were expressed about the blockage of drains , the resident was encouraged to report this, but it was possible that its broken . Cllr Foley suggested that the resident might contact him with the detail so he might progress the matter.

Cllr Foley gave an update on the Local Plan although it is under the direction of the District Council. Since 2005, two local plans have failed at inspection so the administration have had to start the process again including a call for sites . A detailed time table is due to be published.

A member of the public questioned the design of affordable housing and the affordability. Cllr Foley gave a summary of housing need in the area and the difference between Housing association affordable housing and social housing.

The Chair thanked all for attending and for Councillor Foley who was able to assist with answering a number of concerns/questions.

Cllr Albrow advised that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be at the end of May and all are welcome to attend

The meeting closed at 21.00.