

FRITHELSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Frithelstock Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 20th 19th April 2023 at 7.00pm in The Village Hall, Frithelstock.

Present: Cllrs T Warrington (Chairman of the Frithelstock Parish Council as Chair of the meeting) and 15 members of the public.
Also in attendance: Mrs K Graddock - Parish Clerk as minute taker.

- 01 Welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council.**
- 02 Matters arising from minutes of 11th April 2022**
None. Minutes signed.
- 03 Chairman's Report**
Cllr Terry Warrington gave a report on the parish council activities for the year, which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 1.
- 04 Report by Devon County Councillor Andrew Saywell**
- Pot Holes – Bad year. 16,500 safety defects were filled in between 1st Jan – 31st March.
- 05 Report by Torridge District Councillor, Phil Pennington**
- There is a new waste and recycling lorry with a competition for it to be named – more details on the website.
 - Rural Prosperity fund available – more details on the website.
 - New Chief Executive.
 - Made headway with some safety matters within the area.
- 06 Report from the Frithelstock Parish Church**
None received.
- 07 Report from Village Hall Management Committee**
Mr Adrian Green gave a verbal report, which is attached as Appendix 2.
- 08 Playing Fields Annual Report**
The Chairman, Cllr Elizabeth Hunkin gave a verbal report, which is attached as Appendix 3.
- Big Breakfast on 11th June 2023.
 - Closing balance on 31/3/23 - £4,353.00
- 09 Poorlands Charity Annual Report**
Mrs Maureen Poole mentioned that they have received donations throughout the year and they gave £10.00 to 23 households within the parish. £894.00 in account remains.
- 10 50 Club Annual Report**
Mr Michael Short reported that there was 87 members but is finding it more difficult to collect money due to technology e.g.: people not using cheques/cash. This year there was a £1048.00 profit which will be distributed to the Village Hall.
- 11 Comments and Questions by members of the public**
- Bench in Hele Lane – more than 12 months outstanding.
 - Notice Board needs cleaning – becoming difficult to see notices etc.
 - No dates in the meeting board – Cllr Warrington mentioned that he had put these back in now.

- Bus Stop is becoming dirty and worse because of flooding. Cllr A Saywell mentioned that there has been a flooding scheme accepted.
- Simple income and expenditure report.
- Poorlands Charity – Old documents found on the existence of the Poorlands Charity and would like to pass onto a safe place.
- WI has folded up. There is a cup for flowers – perhaps parishioners have a think about anything that the cup could be used for.

12

Date of next meeting

10th April 2024.

Reminder to everyone to report potholes, dirty street signs etc.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/>

Appendix 1: Chairman's Report

Chairman's Report 2022/23

I would like to start by thanking my fellow parish councillors for their support over the last year, and also congratulate all councillors who have signed up for another 4 years.

I would also like to thank Adrian Green for keeping the village Hall running smoothly, also thank you for the input in the Parish council meetings and other events.

Thank you to Michael Short for running the 50 Club.

Thanks to Mary Goaman, Maureen Poole and Mackie Poole for running The Poorlands Trust

Also, all the helpers on all the different events that help make Frithelstock a nice place to live with a strong Community spirit

The Jubilee was a great success and the feedback from parishioners was really nice.

Several projects have or are being carried out Including, Litter Picking around the parish with a good turnout and several Binbags of Rubbish picked up, the Xmas Tree Looked nice with new lights added, several events were also well attended these will be mentioned by Adrian Green, also The Planting of the Chestnut tree this is growing Nicely.

We continue to work closely with our colleagues from Torridge District & Devon County Councils;

Thanks to Andrew Saywell for his work with Devon County Council and Highways, we have recently had good news on maintenance works & we have been advised that they are in next year's budget.

Thanks to Phil Pennington for his help and advice with all Torridge DC matters, including the recent funding greatly received.

The Police have been very active helping with speeding issues in the Parish; I have noticed a big difference in the speed of drivers going through the Village.

Thanks to Lizzy, Adrian and the team of Helpers for keeping the Playing field the envy of many, also to Mike Baker for keeping the grass looking nice throughout the year.

We help three charities including; Families in grief, along with Citizen's advice and the Records Office. We are all happy to help these groups.

Thanks to Kim for the Prior newsletters and to Adrian Hardwick (Webbers) for the free printing, thanks also to everybody who helps deliver the Newsletters, Maureen and Arthur Poole, Mary Goaman, Judith, Lizzy and Steve Hunkin, Margaret Hutchings, Eileen Brown, Chris Ward.

I am again really impressed by the genuine goodwill in the parish and look forward to next year.

The nice thing for myself is the fact all councillors are passionate about our Parish and keen to help, also our Clerk Kate Graddock who has helped keep us on course and done a great job.

Finally, I have enjoyed my time as Chairman and look forward to good times ahead with the Coronation Celebrations, Quiz nights, Scrumpy strolls, and more.

Appendix 2 - Report from the Chairperson of the Village Hall Management Committee

For the Annual Parish Meeting of 19th April 2023

Once again we will be having the brief formal statutory AGM of the Village Hall at the end of this meeting so this report concerns what has been happening at the Hall over the year to 31st March. Copies of the financial statements for the Hall for the year just ended are available and on which I will briefly comment.

It has been a relatively quiet year at the Hall with many things taking time to get back to normal after two years of significant disruption due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Rental income has continued to recover, up about 40% on last year, but still 28% below pre-pandemic averages. This was partly expected as we took the decision to grant a rent-free grace period to local users such as the WI, the Skittles teams and the rowing club to assist them in trying to rebuild support. Unfortunately, as many of you will know, this was not entirely successful as, for example, the WI disbanded.

We did hold a successful Scrumpy Stroll last May, we assisted the Parish Council with the Jubilee celebrations on the Playing Field and also held a Xmas Fun Night. The Bar was also open for most of the Six Nations rugby matches, during home skittles games and at some charity fund raising events. We also implemented a modest rise in bar prices in the autumn. However, events and bar income are still well down on a normal year.

Some of the other figures are affected solely by timing factors. For example, we received two years' worth of donations from the 50 Club in the previous financial year but this year's contribution was not transferred before the year end. Michael Short will let you know how much the donation will be but I take the opportunity to thank Michael for all his efforts in running the Club which makes a significant contribution to the Village Hall.

On the expenditure side, again there are some anomalies caused by timing differences. The elephant in the room is clearly our electricity costs. Last year's figure is exceptionally low because we received a large refund of a credit built up over a period whereas that hasn't happened this year. Additionally, being classed as a business, our tariff is not capped and the rate per Kwh has gone up very significantly. We are monitoring this closely but the expectation is that with wholesale gas prices having fallen the cost of electricity should reduce. If this does not happen before we get back into our peak usage in the winter months we will have to revise Hall rental rates.

We have kept general maintenance and capital expenditure to a relatively modest level with no major items. With regard to future expenditure, we have agreed the quote to replace the old heaters in the skittle alley at a cost of approximately £850. We may also need to re-render the external wall of the Skittle Alley and Kitchen to solve a penetrating damp problem.

The consequence of the absence of any Covid grants in the period and the high energy costs is that we had a deficit in the year of just over £3,000 compared to a surplus in the prior year of £6,500. However, adjusting for items such as the 50 Club income, the credit on the electricity account and unbanked bar receipts, our deficit for the year just ended would actually have been under £900. This is a satisfactory result in that we are using the Covid grants for their purpose in tiding the Hall over the period of disruption and getting back to normality. At the year-end we had a healthy bank balance of £44,249.

We have so far planned only one social event – a Scrumpy Stroll on Sunday 28th May. We will also be assisting the Parish Council in the Coronation Celebrations at the Hall next month.

On other matters, the Hall may be affected by a proposed building development just up the road. As part of an application for outline planning permission for two houses at Huskhill it has been suggested that the roadside walls of the Hall car parks could be realigned to create an enhanced visibility splay on the main road which will benefit the new houses and those exiting the Village Hall car park.

We have dealt with this matter in conjunction with the Parish Council, who are the legal owners of the Hall building and land and they have raised no objection in principle, subject to more detailed discussions about any construction and reinstatement. Any works will be at no cost to the Village Hall. The planning permission has now been granted but as all matters were reserved we now have to await all the precise details.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the Management Committee and the officers for their help over the last year. In particular I should mention Jean Short, who has continued in her role as Bookings Secretary despite not being in the best of health; Ruth Blake who was the WI representative on the Committee and resigned after the WI disbanded; and Sue Rudman who was Secretary of the Entertainments sub-Committee but has been unwell for a long period and has now relinquished that post.

If all those who wish to take over as Secretary of the Entertainment Committee could please form an orderly queue, otherwise I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Adrian Green

Chairperson

Appendix 3 – Playing Field Report 2023

I would like to start by thanking all volunteers for their continued support and goodwill in maintaining the Playing Field; in particular Di Williams for locking up every night, TK Play for maintenance work and Clements Hill Farm for maintaining the hedges but I am no less grateful to all those other individuals, not named, who maybe help with the all important tasks of fundraising, painting and generally helping to keep the area looking good.

Following the annual inspection this summer, some of the equipment was condemned and for safety reasons, the Playing Field was closed while it was removed and the area made safe. Some items are beginning to reach end of life now and we hope to replace them with equally good quality, long lasting equipment. In October 2022, The Friends of the Playing Field held a very successful Bingo Night fundraiser which made a profit of £620.00. I would like to thank everyone involved for their enthusiasm and time - your support makes all the difference.

Our next fundraising event, a Big Breakfast, will be held on 11th June and I hope as many of you as possible will turn out to support us. Over the last 12 months, we were fortunate to take receipt of several generous grants: £1500.00 from the Balsdon Trust, £750.00 from Torridge District Council and £400.00 from Frithelstock Book Club. Although not yet purchased, this money will go towards much needed new equipment for the Playing Field.

As of 31st March 2023, The Parish Playing Field Association was disbanded and become a committee of the Parish Council. The reasons for this are that the Playing Field is already owned and insured by the PC and some of the benefits are that as a committee of the PC, the Playing Field will avoid bank charges, be able to recover VAT and will hopefully have access to greater funding.

There will be no visible change, as the Friends of Frithelstock Playing Field will still continue to exist and continue to raise funds as before and volunteers will still be needed to help maintain the equipment. The main difference is, there won't be a need for a Chair, Treasurer or Secretary. On that note, I would like to thank Adrian, Mike and Sarah for all their time and support as committee members.

Playing Field Finances: Opening balance was £3052.40 Receipts: £2544.89 Expenses: £1243.48 (these include bank charges, paint, grass cutting and inspection fees) Closing balance: 4353.81