

**COTON IN THE ELM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> May 2023**  
**Held in Coton in the Elms Community Centre**

**Present:** Cllr K Bradford (Chairman), Cllr C Bradford, Cllr Heaven, Cllr Lang, Cllr Wolfe, Cllr Leech  
Clerk Sue Hughes  
Public attendees - 5

**The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting**

**1. Apologies** – Cllr Swann and Cllr Wheelton

**2. Minutes** of the previous meeting held on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2022 were circulated before the meeting, taken as read and signed as a true copy. A copy will be shared for advertising and will be posted on the website

**3. No matters arising**

**4. Chairman Report**

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2022**

The past 12 months have seen many changes. We have celebrated a remarkable Jubilee and mourned the passing of our late Queen Elizabeth II. Despite the weather, we came together to celebrate the Jubilee weekend organized by Village in Bloom who had worked tirelessly to decorate the village in red white and blue flowers.

At Christmas they arranged a visit by none other than Santa himself to light the tree. Thank you to VIB and everyone involved. Netherseal Young Farmers again visited for their annual Charity Christmas Tractor Run which I think was even better this year.

We have again faced some planning concerns. An appeal has been held regarding the proposed solar farm at Lullington and consultations for the reduced, but still extensive proposed Oaklands Solar Farm. Once again we have worked with neighbouring villages on our response to these applications.

Works have now been completed to the Pessal Brook by Trent Rivers Trust. Children from Coton Primary have been involved in planting and we are looking forward to seeing how the planting evolves.

Speedwatch continues, now aided by the addition of speed indication signs, thanks to funding from Derbyshire CC/PCC. With the help of residents we continue to monitor the number of HGVs passing through the village. Thanks to all members of the speedwatch group This year we have made donations to varied charities and organisations including CVS Foodbank, NYF, Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and VIB for village events.

I was able to attend CPR/Defibrillator training arranged by Clifton PC – I know the Clerk!

Our meetings are regularly attended by both County and District Councillors and we thank them for supporting us with our projects this year.

Finally thanks to fellow Parish Councillors for all their hard work, and to our Clerk Sue for her perseverance with the many challenges we ask her to deal with.

## **5. District Councillor Report**

It continues to my privilege and honour to serve as District Councillor for Seales Ward, I continue to put residents first and work cross party with all parties. I have and will continue to attend everything I can locally and endeavour to keep you updated. As you are aware from my updates I have and am currently personally involved in many issues from planning, infrastructure and traffic, catching fly tipping individuals, the environment, increasing biodiversity and climate change. I also plan to continue to raise awareness of Seales and the wider area, with the Police, DCC and getting better healthcare provision locally. We have big issues facing us and I could not do this without your help, and I thank all parish councillors but particularly the chair and clerk, information is a two way flow and I thank you for this, teamwork brings huge benefits, thank you.

## **6. County Councillor Report**

Report to Coton in the Elms' Annual Meeting  
from County Councillor Stuart Swann

Throughout the year, I have liaised regularly with the Chair and Parish Clerk to immediately address any local issues. Also, I have provided updates on local and County Council matters to the Parish Council while attending its meetings on a regular basis.

I commend Coton in the Elms Parish Council on the way it works proactively and effectively on behalf of local residents. The wonderful celebrations in Coton for the Platinum Jubilee of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, working in conjunction with the Village in Bloom Committee, were a fantastic manifestation of the way the Parish Council supports the community it serves. I'm confident that the (at the time of writing) planned events to mark the Coronation of King Charles III will be equally successful.

Among many issues pursued for the benefit of local residents during the past year, I've worked with the Police Safer Neighbour Team on HGVs contravening the Weight Restricted area that covers most of the Linton Division. I am pleased to say that following my initiative at the Area Forum meeting held in Coton, the police have become much more proactive in dealing this moving traffic offence, which along with improved signage at Chapel Street has been beneficial. Among many other local issues, I've also ensured that Parish Councillors have been kept fully informed of matters such as the proposed new bridge at Walton on Trent, the problems with the Chetwynd Bridge in Staffordshire, and the ongoing safety works at Drakelow crossroads, all of which have potential impacts upon residents of Coton in the Elms. As we move into the new Council year, I will continue to offer Coton in the Elms Parish Council, and local residents, all possible support.

## 7. Any other reports

a. **The Coton in the elms Village in Bloom** committee is members being volunteers who all live locally. We are a core group of approximately 10 residents who are passionate about keeping our village beautiful, supporting the environment, and fostering community spirit, all of which, we believe, helps to make Coton a great place to live, grow up and visit.

Funds - All funds to support our activities are received from donations and grants. Over the past year we have received:

Lengthmans scheme (litter picking) £700

Envelope collection £900

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations (Grants) £1,560

King Charles III Coronation (Grants) £650

Community Café £390 (Held separately to support new initiative)

We have spent all grant funds received on the two royal celebratory occasions. This included a platinum jubilee planting scheme and new rose garden last summer plus a well-attended right royal village celebration which we hosted on the village green on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

We have recently spent the grant monies received for the King Charles III Coronation event on Mercers Falconry, Straw bales and festival props and prizes. We hosted this event together with St Mary's Church on Johnny Shaw's field on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

The summer planting scheme planned for this year is estimated to cost £1200. (Hanging baskets and border planting) Forecast balance £1300 (plus Community Café funds)

### Highlights

Our Annual Christmas event was delivered in partnership with St Mary's church on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2022. A Nativity pageant commenced from the church, led by Revd Bruce Johnson and Sarah Johnson. Carole Browns ponies carried Mary and Joseph around the village, visiting the Black Horse & The Bubble inn and finally reached the stable (Bus stop) where Mary had her baby, and the Christmas tree was lit up... eventually! Catton hall donated the tree and the Bubble Inn donated funds for mulled wine and treats. BNatural Choir sang carols led by Richard Jeffries. £150 was donated to SDCVS.

The Platinum Jubilee planting scheme last year was fantastic with 33 hanging baskets full of red, white and blue surfinias funded by a grant from Coton parish council. We were very disappointed when 4 beautiful baskets in full bloom were stolen in late August. We hope this won't happen again and request that residents keep a close eye and keep video footage from ring doorbells and security cameras. Borders and planters were filled with red and white geraniums and blue lobelia. A new rose garden was established on the lower green using a grant from South Derbyshire CVS. The platinum Jubilee Street party supported by a grant from Derbyshire County Council leadership fund, was a huge success in spite of the weather and the wheelie bin race and tug of war between our two pubs will go down in history!

During this year we have been delighted to support the Parish Council & Amy Wheelton with the regeneration of the Pessall Brook, a project which aims to support future flood defence and the local ecology. This has meant that borders and shrubs which had previously been created and tended by Village in bloom, were removed to make way for wildflowers and broader brook banks.

We very much look forward to seeing this exciting initiative bloom over the next few years and know it will provide great pleasure for generations to come. In February 2023, Village in Bloom was approached by Revd Bruce Johnson for support establishing a local community café with start-up funds provided by the local council. The Village in Bloom bank account now hosts the start-up fund of £390 and "Bloomers" Jim & Suman Antcliffe have been instrumental in helping to instate the community café in the village community centre. The café runs once a fortnight on a Tuesday afternoon and offers company, cake and conversation. So far there has been between 10 to 20 people in attendance enjoying the social interaction. There are plans to bring in speakers and provide activities such as bowling, and it is hoped that the word will spread, and more people of all ages will benefit from this local initiative. The Coronation of King Charles III provided another opportunity to bring our community together and we were once again delighted to host an event with St Marys Church. Due to the brook regeneration and seedling plants growing, it was not possible to hold this event on the village green. Local Farmer Johnny Shaw of Manor Farm kindly offered his field which provided a huge opportunity for a major village event. Amazingly, the sun shone and residents, their families, friends and dogs came out in full force to pitch up picnic areas and dress them fit for a king. A full programme included Amy Wheelton; our newly re-elected Independent Seales councillor as MC, Revd Bruce Johnson leading us in a prayer for the King and Richard Jeffries trumpeting "God Save the King", a cake competition judged by local businesses Diana's Bakes and Heart's desire cupcakes, doggy talent & dog race plus family fun races judged by Revd Bruce & Sarah Johnson, a tug of war rematch with referee Bloomer Danny Brown, Carole Browns pony rides, and Mercer Falconry display. Donations collected were in the region of £100 and will be donated to SDCVS once formally counted and banked. We are planning this summer's bedding plants and will be building hanging baskets and planting borders on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June & Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June between 10am and 12MD. It is hoped residents will help to water and feed the baskets and borders over the summer months. Last year, we planted £1000 worth of bulbs around the village and in entrance planters. We have had several thefts of bedding plants from the entrance planters in the past and had hoped that all year-round bulbs might provide an alternative floral display. We think something else needs to be done and welcome ideas.

We are always looking for new volunteers and hope to continue to grow our ranks so that we can spread the load and do even more for our village. Even an hour now and again makes a big difference, and we pride ourselves on being a fun and kind "bunch" to be around, enjoying our time together and we always welcome new bloomers (with or without horticultural experience!)

Thanks to Coton Parish Council for their continued support.

**b. Please find a brief report for Coton in the Elms Community Centre**

In general the Community Centre has had a fairly quiet year up to this point.

Use of hall - Regular users have reduced since the pandemic. Although pre school is now located in the school grounds a catastrophic water leak in December has meant they are back using the hall again as a temporary home until the leak and repairs completed. Completion date is May 24th. Their regular usage since late January has been a welcome addition to our income.

We have 3 regular users and have been used as a community cafe/warm hub for the past few months. The cafe will stop during the summer months and restart hopefully in late September subject to funding.

Private parties are still mainly childrens parties. The hall is always popular and the feedback is always fantastic.

PreSchool are vacating the building in the next few weeks and we will then begin to advertise on social media for new regular users. We are confident that we will increase our current users but haven't acted sooner as we are a small team and have been rather stretched due to illness of one of our valued trustees.

We have a vacancy for a trustee and are looking for someone who is willing to work with our other volunteers in our our small team and be prepared to take on an active role to help run the hall.

Tariff

We have had no increase in the last 8 years but from April 2023 our new rates are

£16 per hour

£13 per hour residents

£20 weekend supplement

Summary

Although we have had a slightly quieter year than normal, we have had a positive year and, as always, great feedback from all our users.

**c. Please find report from Headteacher of Coton In The Elms School**

As part of our Kindness at Coton drive, some pupil representatives worked with the Rivers Trust to plant wild flowers by Pessell Brook.

Opening of our Early Years outdoor area oin the autumn term. Visited by Heather Wheeler MP for S. Derbys. and Stewart Swan

More involvement with the Church:

Harvest service – Y1

Christmas Caron concert (year 6 and parents)

Mothers' Day service – Y3

Lent service – Y4

Easter service -Y2

Whole school carol singing at Christmas.

Christmas cards made and sent to Greenacre Park residents.

Rev Arnold led Collective Worship in School along with a workshop on writing prayers and a staff meeting linked to our vision and values.

**Meeting closed at 18:26**

**Next Annual Parish Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024**