

Appendix A

Reports – Annual Parish Meeting – 10 May 2023

Report from Redlingfield and Occold WI

Redlingfield and Occold WI continue to meet on the first Wednesday of the month in Occold Village Hall at 7.30pm. We currently have 22 members.

This is the 100 th year for our WI so we had an Afternoon Tea in September to celebrate. We have been doing lots of 100s, walk 100 miles, cycle 100 miles, grow 100 plants, bake 100 cakes to name a few. Throughout the year we have had a varied programme of speakers including talks about art, hedgehog rescue, a singalong and crafts. Some of our own members gave a talk about Walking Suffolk Churches.

In December we had a delicious Christmas meal at Christine Howards. Last year we visited Sutton Hoo for our yearly outing and this year we are going to Peter Beales Rose Gardens.

Four members attended the National AGM last year in Liverpool and three members are going to this years National AGM in Cardiff.

Report from Occold Primary School

- We currently have 54 children on roll. We will be welcoming 7 new children in Reception in September 2023 which means our projected school population will be 48.
- Since February 2022 the school have been using the old pre-school room at the village hall. We have established a successful Early Years/ Year 1 classroom which has benefitted the whole school community as it has provided more space in the main school building. The children are also able to have a spacious outdoor area to enhance their learning as part of their new classroom.
- In January we had an Ofsted inspection and we were very pleased with the result – Good. The inspectors wrote a glowing report of the school (this can be found on our website).
- We are considering updating our fence and access systems to the main school building so that it is fully compliant with health and safety. We have noticed that the old school fence (the low metal one) around the playground is in a very poor state. Does the parish council know if we are allowed to remove this fence? The Estates Manager for All Saints Trust would like us to check with the council in case the fence is protected in some way.
- We continue to be concerned about traffic in the village, especially as we cross the road multiple times throughout the school day. The issue has been raised before and we would still be keen to have a path and/or crossing leading across to the village field so children are as safe as possible during playtimes.
- We are currently working with ORAC to make the field a safer place for children during and outside of school time. We feel that it would be beneficial to have a fence to divide the carpark from the field so that boundaries are clear for the children (e.g they can easily chase a ball onto the carpark without stopping to notice moving cars).
- We have had minor concerns about vandalism, including having our forest school/allotment area vandalised by local youths. We have also noticed that some people may be using the village hall entrance area to smoke weed as occasionally it smells very strongly in the foyer when we have opened up the hall in the morning.

Thank you very much for considering our report and do let us know if we can work with you in any way regarding the issues raised.

Miss E Rowe, Head of School

Report from ORAC

Last August a new committee and officers were elected to ORAC. We have had a busy time getting to grips with the operation and running of the village hall. We have put into place a number of essential policies and have had various Risk Assessments undertaken that we are gradually working our way through. As a result we have had the playground bark re-chipped, the smoke and heat detectors replaced, we are due to have the 2 sets of double fire doors in the hall replaced in the summer and are awaiting a date to have the car park resurfaced.

We started our tenure with funds of around £12,000 and still have a similar amount in the account having managed the high cost of energy during the winter and the various other ongoing expenses and repairs we have undertaken.

The School remains our main source of hire income but we have increased our other regular bookings and now have 2 yoga groups using the hall, a Foster Care Support Group, a band/orchestra that practices monthly and the monthly soup lunches run for the 3 girls charity. Table Tennis, the WI, Bellicise, the Baptist Church and Rocking Foxes dance group continue to use the hall regularly and other private bookings from individuals, the football club etc for parties or fundraising events continue to come in from time to time.

We have had the badminton court marked out and this is used weekly, we have established a very popular Coffee Morning that villagers enjoy and more recently have started a monthly Craft Club. Our latest venture is a monthly Games Night that we hope will develop further.

Other fundraising events have included a Quiz Night, a Bingo night and the ever popular ORAC Christmas Meal. We are grateful to all of the groups and individuals that support us and pleased to have members of the Parish Council attending our meetings.

Ted Hampson
Vice Chairman

Report from District Councillor - Councillor Lucy Elkin, Eye Ward

Budget Proposals for 2023/4

The district council's finances are split into two parts: The general fund, which is in very good shape, and the ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – which is not. The council debated the 2023/24 budgets for both parts on the 23 rd Feb. A council tax freeze for residents was agreed. There was also a reduction of up to 100% for residents with the lowest income and a simplification of the existing Council Tax reduction scheme for residents on Universal Credit. There has been an overspend of £893k on last year's budget but around £3m was able to be put into reserves.

Despite the difficulties of the most vulnerable, there was a proposed increase in council house rents by 7% to meet the rising costs of the Housing Revenue Account. This is less than the rate of inflation.

The Council also agreed to set aside £2000,000.00 from reserves to help residents with insulation for homes.

Housing issues

MSDC referred themselves to the Regulator of Social Housing because they were found to be some issues relating to health and safety compliance. The RSH reported their findings

and will continue to monitor the Council's housing until the issues are resolved. An action plan has been agreed to ensure that our housing becomes compliant in a timely manner.

Gateway 14

Construction of a state-of-the-art distribution unit for retailer The Range is officially underway at Gateway 14, after a ground-breaking ceremony at the end of January. Gateway 14 Ltd will provide a new base for manufacturing, logistics and R&D businesses with a particular focus on innovation and sustainability, as well as providing space for smaller and start-up businesses. There is a lot of interest as the site is part of Freeport East, as businesses located there do not pay Vat, National Insurance or Business Rates.

Houses for Homes

Babergh and Mid Suffolk are aiming to reduce the number of long-term empty properties, and bring them back into use. There are currently an estimated 600 empty homes across the two districts. Houses for Homes is a re-branding of the service in the hope that people will engage better with the Councils to bring these homes into use. If you know of any empty properties please let me know and the team will investigate.

SHELF project

MSDC Cabinet approved the next phase of the business case for the Stowmarket wellbeing and leisure hub. Since the initial plans were drafted last year the project now intends to include a new sports pavilion, a multi-use games area, four indoor sports courts and a multi-agency wellbeing hub.

Solar Carport scheme

Mid Suffolk opened a solar carport, battery storage and EV charging facility, at the Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre, the project cost £760,000.00 and will help cut the energy bills for the centre, as well as provide much needed charging infrastructure.

Electric Bus Scheme

Mid Suffolk agreed in the previous years budget to pilot a demand responsive electric bus scheme similar to the "katch" scheme in East Suffolk, the scheme has been put on hold by the administration.

Planning This year has seen the Joint Local Plan take another step forward, but we are still have a long way to go before a complete set of up to date policies are in place for Mid Suffolk.

Cllr Lucy Elkin
lucy.elkin@midsuffolk.gov.uk

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHARITIES OF WILLIAM LEE AND MARY ANN LAST

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1 JANUARY — 31 DECEMBER 2022

There were no changes to the trustees. Stephen Hubner remained the Clerk/Treasurer. Mrs Lynette Bulley continued as chairperson of the trustees.

As the Annual Return to the Charity Commission is now a matter of factual record, Stephen Hubner prepared the paperwork and submitted the return form on line.

The custom of distributing money or gifts of money's worth has been continued.

At the annual meeting, on 21 January 2023, it was reported that the income in the year 2022 totalled £457.49. When added to funds carried forward the total sum available was £1,049.07.

Gifts would be acquired for each of 14 beneficiaries.

Amazon vouchers to a value of £35.00 each would be given to 2 students

Amazon vouchers to a value of £15.00 would be acquired for 9 school children in recognition of their achievements in the year 2022.

A book token to a value of £10.00 would be acquired for the parents of one child born in 2022.

The Trustees resolved to allocate up to £566 to purchase items for use by children attending Occold school and the remaining balance would be carried forward so as to be able to distribute gifts or funds should this be required later in 2023.

Sam Davidson was elected as a new Trustee.

The accounts of the Charity for the year are also set out.

SJH

02 May 2023

Annual Accounts of the Charity of William Lees and Mary Ann Last for the year ending 31 December 2022

Income

Balance b/f 591.58

COIF dividend

February 113.97

May 113.97

August 113.97

November 115.58

Total 1,049.07

Distributions

2 beneficiaries (Amazon tokens to value of £35) 70.00

9 beneficiaries (Amazon tokens to value of £15) 135.00

1 beneficiaries (book token to a value of £10) 10.00
14 beneficiaries (gifts) 168.00
Donation to school for apparatus 565.33

Total 948.33

Carry forward 100.74

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHARITY OF JOHN HENMAN

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1 JANUARY 2022 — 31 DECEMBER 2022

There were no changes to the trustees. Stephen Hubner remained the Clerk/Treasurer. Mrs Lynette Bulley continued as chairperson of the trustees.

As the Annual Return to the Charity Commission is now a matter of factual record, Stephen Hubner prepared the paperwork and submitted the return form on line.

The Trust purposes require division of the income to award one quarter to each of the Church and the Parish Council and it was confirmed the individual distributions be made by way of payments to defray electricity or other fuel costs.

At the annual meeting, on 21 January 2023, and after calculating the annual income, it was noted that there would be distribution of one quarter of the income to Occold Parochial Church Council and one quarter to Occold Parish Council (£108.00 each). It was noted that beneficiaries must be resident in the parish. It was resolved that distribution be made to six beneficiaries at this time and funds held in reserve to be available to meet anticipated need later in 2023.

Each beneficiary would be given cash to help to defer heating costs.

Sam Davidson was elected as an additional trustee.

The accounts of the Charity for the year are set out.

SJH

02 May 2023

Annual Accounts of the Charity of John Henman for the year ending 31 December 2022

Income

Balance b/f 268.01

COIF dividend 2022

February 107.62

May 107.62

August 107.62

November 109.13

Total 700.00

Distributions

Occold PC 108.00
Occold PCC 108.00
6 beneficiaries 300.00
Total 516.00
Carry forward 184.00

Report of The Parish Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Occold

Annual Report given at the 2023 APCM)

Background

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. The PCC is responsible for co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Dr Guy Sumpter, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Occold the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical; it also has responsibility for the maintenance of the parish church, churchyard and churchyard extension.

Membership

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules of 2020. During the year the following served as members of the PCC.

Incumbent Dr Guy Sumpter Chairman

Churchwardens Mr Stephen Hubner Vice-Chairman and Hon. Treasurer and Mrs Gill Richardson [Both elected at the Meeting of Parishioners 2022]

Deanery Synod Representative and Deanery Organiser Mr Stephen Hubner

Additional PCC Members

Mr Nick Cox

Mrs Elly Rivett Minutes Secretary

Mrs Betsy Self

Mrs Daphne Cowan-White

Mrs Sara Hampson

The Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law, and it is the only one in regular existence. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. It consists of the incumbent and wardens.

The PCC has been able to meet regularly during the year and is grateful for the hospitality of Mrs Rivett, who has continued to host the meetings in her home, and always with coffee and cake too!

Church Attendance

We have been delighted to welcome new members during recent months and it has been possible in large part to adhere to the traditional liturgical cycle of times and seasons, the Eucharist being celebrated twice monthly. In 2022 we were able to hold the traditional service of Christmas Carols and Readings, for the first time since 2019, the pandemic having precluded the possibility of holding the service in 2020 and 2021. We are all most grateful that the organ has been played for Sunday services by Mr Nick Cox and Ms Judith Rivett.

The Parish Ministry Team

Clergy

Almost all services are led by the Rector, and we are grateful to Mr Hubner for leading services of Morning Prayer in the absence of the Rector.

General Comments

The parish is grateful to those who provide refreshments after services and thanks are due to all who work so hard to keep the churchyard and churchyard extension in good order, which is much appreciated by the local community and by visitors, as is the fact that the church is kept open. We are particularly grateful to Mr Cox for leading and directing a team of churchyard maintenance volunteers who have succeeded in creating a sanctuary for all sorts of flora and fauna and in making the churchyards pleasant places to be. We also thank those who help with the -usually twice-yearly- churchyard maintenance sessions and the Hull family for providing the means of disposal of unwanted plant material.

Saint Michael's Flower Guild

The guild continues to provide beautiful flowers throughout the year (Advent and Lent excepted); the efforts and contributions of the guild are much appreciated by parishioners and visitors alike and we extend grateful thanks to all members.

Fundraising

As maintenance costs and parish share / quota contributions continue to rise it has become apparent that more needs to be done to raise funds and in 2022 we held a successful flower festival which it is hoped will now become an annual event. We owe particular thanks to the Flower Guild for organising the festival and all those who supported it in any way and thanks to Mr and Mrs Cowan-White for hosting a delightful fundraising garden party as a part of their anniversary celebrations. A new PCC fundraising sub-committee has been formed and plans are underway for a flower festival and other fundraising activities in 2023.

Safeguarding

Thanks are due again this year to Mrs Christine Medd, who —as Safeguarding Officer- has for several years undertaken the task of co-ordinating the national training regulations for our benefice, ensuring that all are made aware of what is expected of them, helping them to engage with appropriate training alternatives and keeping accurate records. Mrs Medd is to remain in this post at Eye, but will now relinquish the role in the villages, which means that Occold and Bedingfield must now appoint their own officers to this role.

Concluding Remarks

We are all extremely grateful to those who work hard behind the scenes to help keep our church clean and running. Great challenges remain ahead, particularly financial ones if we are to manage necessary repairs to the fabric and pay our quota, but in spite of these difficulties we have much to celebrate and be thankful for, and we look forward to the year

On behalf of the PCC, The Reverend Doctor Guy Sumpter, Rector.

Appendix B

Chairman of Occold Parish Council Annual Report for year to end April 2023

To summarise 2022-23

Parish Councillors

We welcomed Cllr Heidi Stone to the Council at the start of the year following her co-option at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May 2022. We also welcomed Cllr Angela Hall in July 2022 following the resignation of Cllr Jill Crouch due to her moving away from the area.

We were sorry to receive the resignation of Cllr Griffiths from the Council in December due to work commitments. This position remained vacant for the rest of the year.

All Councillors were up for re-election in May 2023 and we were sorry Cllr Michelle Grange notified us of her resignation at this point due to personal circumstances. I'm pleased to report that the other 7 Councillors stood for nomination and were re-elected without an election. We therefore currently have 2 vacancies which we hope to fill by co-option in the coming months.

The Clerk

In October the Clerk, Mrs Joy Hart, gave us notice of her intention to resign with effect from 31 December. Following a period of advertising we recruited Mrs Libby Alexander as our new Clerk. We were fortunate that Joy and Libby were able to overlap with each other through December in order to make the handover as smooth as possible.

I would like to record my sincere thanks to Joy during her time as Clerk, for all her hard work and support to the Council.

Highways

June 2019 saw the Council's first enquiry with Suffolk County Council relating to a safer crossing area for the school. Progress has remained extremely slow but we anticipate some progress being made on the project in the near future with further details being presented by the County Councillor at the May Parish Council Meeting.

The Parish Council has resolved to contribute £2,000 of CIL funding towards this project and this amount remains earmarked.

Suffolk County Council agreed to replace the faded HGV restriction signs in the village. The Council has now joined the Lorry Watch scheme after reports were received of HGV's ignoring the weight restriction through the village and the signs were replaced. Cllrs Kevin Chittock and Tim Weller have undergone training and signed up as volunteers as part of the scheme.

The Clerk regularly reports issues with signage/street lights and public footpaths to Suffolk CC when she is made aware of them. Residents are encouraged to report issues themselves at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/report-a-highways-issue/>

Neighbourhood Plan

Following a leaflet drop, a number of residents came forward interested in pursuing the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The Council therefore decided to revisit the project. Led by Cllr Stone and Cllr Griffiths, the services and costs of involving an independent Consultant, who specialises in Neighbourhood Plans, to manage the project were investigated. This is the approach that has been taken and will support the Council in applying for relevant grants through the Government's Neighbourhood Plan Programme. Currently Cllr Stone is working on forming a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to start moving the project forward.

Speeding

Speeding continues to be an issue in the village. The Council invested in a second Speed Indicator Device (SID) in September 2022 which allows a device to be in place at either end of the village – one by the school and one by the Church. Cllr Andrew Duggett continues to lead this project. The data from both devices show that there is still a speeding problem in the 20mph area, however as we build data month by month there is a suggestion that the SID located by the Church is moderately reducing speeds.

Occold hosted the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera for a week in January and a week in March as part of the trial being rolled out by Suffolk County Council. This enables the SID to display the registration number of the offending speeding vehicle. We have just received data back from this and Cllr Duggett will report on its findings at the May Parish Council Meeting.

Circular Walk

Following requests from residents to reprint the Occold Circular Walk Brochure, Cllr Hall offered to take on the project of revisiting public footpaths in the village before reprinting took place. As part of this review and in discussion with Suffolk County Council there is an option currently being considered to include the Occold Circular Walk in the 'Discover Suffolk' guide which would attract part funding of new leaflets from Suffolk County Council.

Village Maintenance

No village maintenance was required.

Planning

The Council works closely with the District Councillor to oppose controversial and excessive applications which have an adverse effect on the Village. Unfortunately, the Planning Authority at Mid Suffolk ultimately make the decisions on whether planning applications are subsequently approved.

Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL)

We did not receive any CIL income in 2022-23. However, at the end of the last financial year we still had £11,501.59 CIL money available. This has enabled us to purchase the additional Speed Indicator Device at a cost of £3,345 (plus £22.89 for padlocks to secure the device) and donate £1,000 to ORAC for completion of driveway repairs.

With the £2,000 earmarked to the school safety project the Council currently has £5,133 for future projects.

Finances

Expenditure/Income for the year ended 31st March 2023 was as follows: -

Expenditure		Year End	
Democracy (in Training & Website)	50	Opening Balance	20642
Section 137 Donations	650	Plus Receipts	9637
Overheads	1118	Minus Expenditure	<u>14149</u>
Admin	4564		£16130
Village Maintenance	2612		
CIL	4368	Bank Balance c/f	£16130
VAT	787		
Total	<u>£14149</u>		
Income			
Precept	8800		
Other Income	837		
Total	<u>£9637</u>		

The Budget for 2022/23 was agreed at £9885. The precept was set at £8800, no change from the previous year.

Finally, I would like to thank all our Councillors – Kevin Chittock, Stephen Hubner, Andrew Duggett, Tim Weller, Heidi Stone and Angela Hall for your support of me and the giving up of your precious time for the residents of Occold

Also a big thank you to the volunteers of all the organisations in the Village that make this a great place to live.

I look forward to working with you in the coming year

Colin Cripps, May 2023

DRAFT