

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Aston Clinton Parish Council held on 19th
May 2021 at 6.00pm
at Aston Clinton Red Kite Pavilion

PRESENT: Cllr L Tubb (Chairman), Cllr S Howard, Cllr J Hughes, Cllr C Judge, Cllr M Mason,
Cllr D McCall, Cllr L Ronson, Cllr R Read, Cllr A Watton & Cllr P Wyatt.
Clerks: L Driscoll (recording) and E Barry 0 Members of Public

I. Welcome:

Cllr Tubb introduced the meeting as an opportunity for the Parish Council to report on its activities and for village groups to talk about their achievements throughout the year.

II. Chairman's Report

It has been two years' since the last annual meeting due to the pandemic and from everyone here at the Parish Council, we send our condolences to anyone has lost a loved one due to Covid.

A support group was established prior to the first lockdown and 2000+ tasks were completed as a result. A huge thanks to all volunteers. A few of the remaining support groups are newspaper, shopping and prescription collections on a daily and weekly basis.

A few of the other events we were able to arrange, albeit not how we had planned, were VE Day – the village was beautifully decorated, the weather was wonderful and many of the residents enjoyed afternoon tea in their gardens. We managed to hold a very small VE day ceremony at the war memorial and did the same for VJ Day.

We had hoped we might be able to hold a larger event for Remembrance Sunday, but it wasn't to be. We did still hold a commemorative event. A big thank you of course, to Sally Bottomer who worked with us to make these events happen, to John Didsbury who ensured the war memorial looked its best on all three occasions and to the Royal British Legion, who supported each event. Thanks to Luke for his wonderful bugle playing.

Despite COVID and going into Tier 4, we took Santa's float out around the village – a much-needed dose of normality for us all. We didn't have our elves to help and we had to have limited numbers walking with the float, but it was a huge success, raising just over £1500 – our highest amount yet – partly because we used JustGiving for the first time. Thank you to Dayla for the loan of the float and driver, to Claire Simmons for the amazing lighting and to Ashley Judge for taking over as Father Christmas who was unable to attend due to a COVID travel ban.

Another lovely event we were able to achieve, was the bulb planting. Thank you to all that helped with this project.

Although as a council we had to adapt to online meetings, we have managed to achieve a great deal of other things. Our biggest achievement was completing this wonderful building. We had delays due to the pandemic, but it is built, is being managed by our tenants the Café in the Park and is open! The Café is responsible for hirings, but already there are exercise classes, salsa and more besides. A much-needed venue that will benefit the village for many years. Thank you to our two co-opted members to the Community Centre Committee – Keith Loxley and Giles Holder.

We have also upgraded the floodlights on the AWP and some of the play equipment in the playpark.

We worked closely with the tennis club, using as we have done with other projects, s106 monies, to provide funds to build them a much-needed club house and toilets. The new buildings look lovely and add to the facilities the club have on offer.

I think after such a difficult year, we are hoping for a quieter year this year – finishing off the snagging in this building, restoring the Audrey Molique fountain (and thank you to Trudi Wallis for looking after it) and resurfacing Park View.

Very importantly, thank you to our Clerk, Elaine, without whom none of these projects would be possible, our Assistant Clerk Lisa and our Administrator Angie. A big thank you also, to our park keepers, Tony and Ken, who covers when Tony is on leave and helps with other occasional tasks and

thank you to our minute taker Rachel. Finally, thank you to Richard Nicholls who keeps the school clock wound, to the Aston Clinton Guides and Aylesbury Wombles for litter picking, to the Horticultural Society for planting trees in the park and to Carole Paternoster who retired as one of our local councillors and has always supported the Parish Council and village. We wish her a happy retirement. Apologies if I have forgotten anyone.

III. The following groups gave presentations – reports appended:

- i Aston Clinton Scouts
- ii Aston Clinton, Buckland & Drayton Beauchamp Horticultural Society
- iii Women’s Institute, Buckland, Drayton Beauchamp & Aston Clinton
- iv Aston Clinton Tennis Club
- v Aston Clinton Branch British Legion
- vi Aston Clinton Youth Club
- vii Aston Clinton Colts
- viii Aston Clinton Bowls Club

The meeting closed at 6.40pm

APPENDIX – REPORTS FROM GROUPS

ASTON CLINTON SCOUTS

It has been a challenging year, particularly during lockdown as we're all used to being active and outside, rather than online.

We are now meeting F2F, but many groups have lost members due to lack of space to meet. AC park has saved the group. It is a fantastic village amenity and thanks to the PC for their support & permission to use so frequently, plus storage of container.

Santa float – thanks for our share of the fundraising, we were disappointed not to be able to take part, but hope to be back recycling trees in 2022.

Thanks for support re Ollie's Hall.

Being part of the wider village community is a huge element of being a member of our Scout group & we appreciate the support that the PC has given us over the year's but particularly this last 12 months.

Claire Walker

ASTON CLINTON, BUCKLAND & DRAYTON BEAUCHAMP HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Aston Clinton, Buckland & Drayton Beauchamp (ACB&DB) Horticultural Society serves these villages and surrounding area. Our aim is to encourage and promote horticultural and conservation awareness in our local community by communicating and inspiring everyone of all ages to understand the benefits and enjoyment of all aspects of gardening, allotment management and exhibiting plants, vegetables and crafts. We endeavour to promote and support local initiatives in all things horticultural within our local communities. This includes the planting of trees in our local green spaces such as Aston Clinton Park, and the village bulb planting project. We seek to inspire our children to develop a passion for gardening through our links to Aston Clinton school and encouraging children to enter our horticultural shows.

Since the lockdown in March 2020, the Society has not been able to carry on its usual activities. The monthly meetings, held in the Anthony Hall have been cancelled and we have not been able to hold the Summer & Spring Shows as usual.

However, over the last 14 months we have been able to hold some events & undertake some projects for members & the local community:

- June 2020, Plant Sale, Buckland Open Gardens, donation to All Saints Church, Buckland
- August 2020, "Lockdown" Photographic Showcase & Plant sale, St Michaels & All Angels Church,
- Community Village Bulb Planting project orchestrated by Joanna Brown
- Bulk Vegetable & Flower Seed order available to all members, 60% discount
- February 2021, resumed Monthly meetings, with Talks via Zoom
- Elm trees (disease resistant) planted in Aston Clinton Park
- Plant Sale in April 2021, at the Partridge Arms, Aston Clinton

We are hoping that we will be able to get back closer to "normal" from late June & are planning are usual events:

- June 2021, Plant Sale, Buckland Open Gardens
- July 2021, Plant Sale Drayton Beauchamp Open Gardens
- August 2021, Summer Exhibition, St Michael & All Angels Church, Aston Clinton
- September 2021, Monthly meetings resume in the Anthony Hall

During the last 15 months, we have offered free subscriptions & have successfully managed to increase our membership. We now have circa 150 members.

We are in the process of reviewing the events & activities we provide, as we need to ensure we are relevant to the changing population of the area. We are starting with a membership survey and then will open that up to get feedback from the community. We would love to hear from you!

And finally, thank you very much to Aston Clinton Parish Council for supporting the Society with the planting of the trees in the park & for letting us hold a Plant Sale in the park.

Diane Kolonko

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE, BUCKLAND, DRAYTON BEAUCHAMP & ASTON CLINTON

As with all local organisations, our WI has not met since early March 2020 due to the pandemic and lockdown. The Committee have tried hard to keep in touch with all our members over that time. Our monthly meetings have been via Zoom – although many of our members have found that difficult, the majority of our members have embraced the technology.

Last December we were due to celebrate our 90th birthday with a special lunch at Pendley Manor but of course, this didn't happen. Perhaps we will get to celebrate our 91st this year.

National WI gave all local WIs the option not to charge our members the full subscription in April this year, and although this will affect our financial reserves in the coming year, I am pleased to say that all our members renewed their membership for the year. Since the change in Government regulations, we have been able to arrange for small groups of members to meet for coffee in a garden and it's been surprising just how pent up the need for socialising has been among our members. We are also about to re-start our walking group with two local walks and the plan is to arrange some pub lunch dates now we can sit inside and not be reliant on the weather.

We also hope to start our monthly meetings in The Anthony Hall in September and hope to welcome new members who will also benefit from the reduced subscriptions too. We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.45pm.

Claire Castle

ASTON CLINTON TENNIS CLUB

Despite Covid 19, or in some respects, because of the pandemic, Aston Park has flourished during the past year.

The suspension of play during lockdown allowed the installation of our upgraded pavilion and toilet hut to be completed successfully and speedily. And although we have yet to enjoy the luxury of our modern kitchen and tearoom, we at long last have our own toilet. Funding of the upgraded facilities was made possible by an extremely generous grant of 106 money facilitated by Aston Clinton Parish Council.

After the first lockdown when restrictions were eased slightly to allow tennis to resume, our situation in the middle of a very busy public park, meant that people taking their daily allowance of outdoor exercise, saw lots of people playing tennis. Many of them obviously liked what they saw because the club doubled its membership over the spring and summer months.

Many of our new members were new to tennis and needed to be introduced to the game. Fortunately, David Rolls our new coach was on hand to supply the necessary instruction. David has succeeded way beyond his and our expectations. Many of our new to tennis adult players are confident enough to attend the limited club night sessions and mix happily (as far as guidelines allow) with our more experienced older members. Some even play in our teams. David has also launched a junior coaching programme and is planning to run a series of tennis and High Five camps during the summer holidays.

He was responsible for the very successful 2020 championships which culminated in an eerie finals' day on September 26. No spectators, no presentation, no refreshment. But the day produced a

clutch of new champions, most notably the unseating of the holder of the men's singles title for the past five years, Simon Sluszny, by newcomer Elliott Abdey, an extremely promising 20 -year-old asset to the club.

The completion of the Aylesbury and District League Winter19/20 allowed two of our eight teams competing in that league to grab some silverware. Men's 2 won the trophy in division 7 and women's 1 the trophy in division 4.

Unfortunately, the second lockdown on January 4th meant that all play was suspended and the Aylesbury and District League abandoned until the start of the summer season. We were back on court again on March 31st and have entered 13 teams in the Aylesbury and District League and Bucks County Shield.

The Club Championships started again yesterday, and this year David has introduced a new format which guarantees that every entrant will get to play at least 3 games.

Our membership secretary has introduced a new intra-club singles ladder and the Chairman has organised a couple of one day handicap tournaments. The second of these will take place on May 31st and has some unusual features. It is a 'millennial' tournament. Contestants are aged between 18 and 25 and as long as I can remember we have not had the good fortune to have sufficient members in this age bracket to be able to host a club tournament. At least one of them was coming to the club to learn the game when he was six.

Aston Park Tennis Club has always recognised that although run as a Private Members' club the club owes its very existence to the local community. A far-sighted group of residents raised the money to build the courts back in 1992.

In 2012 when the courts were unfit for use it was a lotteries grant and grants from Aylesbury Vale District Council and Aston Clinton Parish Council that supplemented our own funds to enable re-building and the installation of floodlights. So, it is in recognition of that generosity, that the club has always opened its courts to the local community; hosting cubs, brownies summer picnics; allowing U3A members to play as guests every Tuesday morning; allowing the youth club to play tennis on Friday evening during the summer months; marking out one court for netball, thus introducing a new sport to the village.

Now we are further extending our welcome to the community by launching a pay to play initiative. For a small fee, members of the public will be able to book a court to play for an hour without having to become a member of the club. In common with most other tennis facilities, we recognise that an extremely valuable resource is often under-or un-used during off peak periods and we hope that by offering this concession the imbalance between off peak and on peak usage will be redressed. We would like to thank the Café in the Park for running an advertisement for this on the big screen in their premises.

The Committee would also like to publicly thank the Parish Council for all the generous help and advice that was extended to them during the installation of our new buildings. And the Council must be mightily relieved that this year's report does not include mention of our lack of toilet facilities!

Barbara Wilkinson

ASTON CLINTON BRANCH ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The RBL thank the Parish council for the support they have given our organisation over the years. We are a very small branch of a very large organisation. The RBL support veterans and members of the Armed Forces. People traditionally think of WW2 but these veterans are now well into their 90's, but conflicts from Korea to Afghanistan, including the Falklands war leave a legacy of veterans that need our support.

This month HMS Queen Elizabeth has been deployed with a large support group to the far East in a major exercise. Over 1000 men and women will be away for over 7 months. The RBL will support personnel if they have any difficulties, especially towards the families left behind.

Closer to home, in the last 12 months, we have had VE and VJ days when remembrance services were held at the War memorial and £1000 was raised for the RBL.

Branch meetings have not taken place, but we hope to meet again later this year. It is 100 years since the RBL was founded. To celebrate this, our branch is holding a money raising event at the “acar2go” showroom on the 12th June. Donations towards our stalls – cakes, raffle, Tombola will be gratefully received.

Our Branch are planning for a traditional poppy Appeal this year though we will not be going from door-to-door.

Robert Letton

ASTON CLINTON YOUTH CLUB

The Youth Club celebrated its fourth birthday in January. Unfortunately, we were unable to open due to the third Lockdown. However, prior to March 2020 Junior Youth Club was thriving and occasionally we had to turn children away due to reaching full capacity. Members enjoyed the range of activities on offer such as table tennis, game consoles, arts and crafts and being able to use the park facilities. Tuck shop has always proved popular too!

Although unable to open last Summer we participated in the Community Bulb Planting in the Autumn. A small group of our members along with grandparents, parents and volunteers tirelessly dug holes along the entrance to the park and planted 300 bulbs. Thankfully our labours were rewarded and the majority seem to have grown and flourished. A big thank you must go to the organisers of this event.

Once we knew that youth groups were able to meet again the volunteers began to put plans into action following Covid guidelines. We reopened on 30th April with a new online booking system and welcomed three members back. The numbers are increasing weekly towards our temporary capacity of fifteen. It's been a pleasure to see our members returning (and new ones joining) and enjoying interacting socially with their friends within the youth club setting. We are looking forward to making use of our “newly” installed overhead projector for dance and karaoke sessions, plus movie nights later in the year. If the weather warms up, we hope to visit The Beach in the Park which has proved popular in the past.

However, all the activities we plan need more volunteers. We are always looking for people with new ideas and a sense of fun to join our small team. Please join us if you feel you would like a new challenge.

Finally, our thanks must go to our volunteers and the Parish Council for their continued support during these unusual times.

Teresa Smith

ASTON CLINTON COLTS

A challenging year for The Colts, lockdown last year and the lack of annual tournament left a circa £5k hole in our finances. Despite that, we have managed to remain financially stable with many thanks to our Treasurer Elton who has ensured that sensible financial decisions are made safeguarding the club for the future.

Football training and matches resumed in the spring with Covid precautions and government guidelines in place. Most age-groups expect to have finished their matches by the end of May with a couple of age-groups continuing into June. Most teams plan to train in June to make up a little of the time that was missed during the past year.

Younger age-groups are thriving with the Colts now able to accept players from 3 years old. Colts Kickers (football for pre-schoolers) was launched during 2020/21 by Coach Liam through his XFS Coaching business.

We were absolutely delighted to launch a Colts girls' team for the first time this month. It is currently for girls in years 3-5 (ages 7-10) and is run by our U7 Coach Chaz and his wife Toni our Club Welfare Officer. It seems to have been very well received so far and we are doing all we can as a club to encourage more girls to enjoy playing football.

Sadly, our U18 age-group lead by Coach Gordon decided not to complete the season. It is often difficult for U18 players to commit to training and playing regularly as many have jobs and additional study commitments.

The construction of the new 3G pitch facility at John Colet School Wendover is due to commence within the month. The Colts were invited along with Wendover Juniors to partner with the school as part of this project. We are very much looking forward to the completion of this fantastic facility which we plan to utilise in addition to our existing space at Aston Clinton.

Although as a club, we decided against having a large football tournament this year, we are very much looking forward to hosting teams in the younger age-groups for some smaller events in July. These will take place on consecutive Saturday mornings throughout the month and will be for ages U6/7, U8, U9 & U10. Each event will be run by the respective age-group coaching team supported by the Committee. In addition to offering some much-anticipated summer football for our own teams, it will also bring in some much-needed funding at the end of an unprecedented year for the club.

Jo Davis

ASTON CLINTON BOWLS CLUB

We had lost members since the lockdown because of our ages being nearly all over 70 years. We have had no income because of not being able to play and car share.

My husband Michael is the green manager, he has to cut the green at least 3 times a week and we have to take the cuttings to the council site in College Road. When our contractor scarifies the green, it produces at least 18 bags of cuttings which again Michael and myself have to remove from the green. Our contractor costs us £75,0000 a year and having had no income, it has been very hard.

One day there was only one space in both of the car parks, which was the disabled spot, so we parked there so we could clear all the waste away. When we got back to the car, someone had put a very nasty letter on the screen asking us not park there. What are we supposed to do, because it has to be cut in the mornings so it can be played on in the afternoon and evening and Nick seems allowed to park his ranger in a disabled spot every day. One rule for one and not others.

Again there is a conker tree growing behind the Tennis club toilet block, I have asked for it to be removed but no luck. If the roots spread to our banks on the green it will break them. We cause no one any harm but we are ignored again by the Tennis members.

Rosemary Stratful