

# Belchford & Fulletby Parish Council

Draft Minutes from Belchford and Fulletby Annual meeting

10am Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024

Held at Belchford and Fulletby Village Hall

Present at the meeting: Peter Thompson, Chairman of the Parish Council and 10 members of the public (Jill Newby recorded minutes).

Meeting commenced at 10.15 after refreshments. No apologies were received.

1. Minutes of the last meeting (2023) were proposed as an accurate record by Jill Newby and seconded by Kris Skalka. A comment was made that last year's Chairman's report has not yet been received.
2. The Annual Report was read out by the Chairman and is attached to these minutes. It was noted that the bridle path cleared by the residents mentioned in the report still has not had official designation on the definitive map. In the future it could also be possible to get grant funding for its maintenance from The British Horse Society Bridleway Division. Discussion about rights of way and footpaths continued with various thoughts on how they should be accessed and maintained.
3. Lane Letting – Following discussion it was RESOLVED to postpone this to an alternative date and venue as last year, and make it a community event. A date of Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June at 4pm was decided, with it taking place in the Blue Bell Inn. It was proposed that funds raised from this event should be used to fund a tangible project in Fulletby.

#### 4. Annual reports from Local Groups:

- **Village Hall:** Chairman of the VH Dick Black reported that the hall accounts were healthy the floor, insulation, electrics and plumbing sound. The carpark now was not being used so frequently as a walker's parking space without prior permission. The Defibrillator will be remaining at the Blue Bell and not relocated to the VH. Bookings are healthy, and wi fi possibilities ongoing.
- **Mother & Toddlers:** Group leader Sue Murfin reported the group was thriving with an average of 8 toddlers attending weekly. There is however a slight concern about funding of nursery places to the under 2's affecting numbers in September. Sue's hard work was praised by the meeting for keeping the group going for so many years.
- **Belchford Church:** VCC member John Smith informed the meeting that the church was thriving under the care of Neil Marwood and George Jacklin with an active council supporting them, including a new secretary Martin Rayson, and Barry cutting the grass regularly. The church had an average of £35 a week coming in from refreshment donations. A brass band concert had been well received with talk of it becoming an annual event. A lottery to raise money has successfully begun with about 50 participants. The church roof is to be fixed as there are now enough funds to finance the repair.

- **Fitness Groups:** Katy Hockham and Jill Newby reported that 2 weekly Yoga sessions, a Circuit's night and a Weights Fitness group were operating in the village hall which were all great assets to the parish.
- **Village Green:** Katy Hockham explained that the committee had new members including a new treasurer. This year the main event will be a Rounder Bonanza on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September, possibly with a tug of war competition between the two villages in the parish for the Vere Cup. The new football nets are used frequently and the Village green is supported by children, adults and dog walkers. The committee secured £900 grant from the Co op which possibly will be used to fund a stone table tennis table. The play equipment grant funding is proving tricky to organise as most of the committee are busy in full time jobs, the thought is to perhaps secure equipment in 'small chunks' ...possibly a swing then slides etc.
- **Community Woodland:** John Smith expressed concern for an increase in deer on the site and an on-going ragwort issue, which needs keeping on top of because of neighbouring farmland. He explained about 20% of the trees had not survived, some because they had been planted late in the season and had been of poor quality. A suggestion of letting re-wilding take over the management of the woodland was considered not feasible as the trees were already planted and needed protecting. A small area on the west of the site (When looking down from the top of the site) is totally untouched which represents a re-wilding spot and has few trees growing under the brambles. He told the meeting that was used by dog walkers and it was nice to see it in use. A Wild Silent Dance Event was well attended and the great views appreciated by the participants. It was suggested that possibly a link path from the woodland to the Viking way would benefit the usability of the site.

#### 5. Questions from electors:

- Concern was expressed about what to do about the potholes.
- It was noted that the drain by Church View on Main Road Belchford had finally been cleared.
- Dam's lane possibly does not have a 'no through road' sign which is leading to vehicle's attempting to access it and having trouble turning round.
- A suggestion to remove the broken kissing gate on The Viking Way in Dams lane was considered not a good idea by an adjacent land owner.
- An elector voiced his proposal to submit a planning application for houses on the site of the old haulier's yard. This was met with suggestions to consult with ELDC planners for pre application advice, to look at the nearly finalised Parish NDP(although the policies do suggest that all new development ideally would be roadside) and to keep the PC informed so it is on the councillors radar if an application comes in.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 11.40am

The Parish Councillors and members of the public were thanked by the Chairman for their attendance.

## **BELCHFORD & FULLETTY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**10:00AM SATURDAY 1 JUNE 2024**

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

2023/24 has been my first year serving as Chairman of Belchford and Fulletby Parish Council and it's been a pleasure working with a hard-working group of councillors.

The last year has seen a great deal of work going on "behind the scenes" to improve the Parish Council's website, which is now a very well organised and comprehensive source of information about our villages that's freely available to everyone. Ian Goodall in particular has worked extremely hard to make sure the website is up to date and I would like to thank him for all that work.

Great progress has also been made with our Neighbourhood Development Plan. This project, which has involved a great deal of work by a dedicated team, is now coming toward its final stages. Assuming the residents of the villages decide to approve it in a referendum, which I hope will take place before the end of this year, we will have a powerful tool to regulate development in our villages. If the Neighbourhood Development Plan is adopted, we will be one of the smallest parishes in the country to have one. My thanks to all involved with this initiative.

The condition of our roads and drains continues to be a major problem. The Parish Council has persistently lobbied Lincolnshire County Council in the hope that they will do something to improve the condition of the worst of our roads. Despite a site meeting last September with a senior Highways Officer and his promise of a report and action plan within a few weeks, we're still waiting.

Similarly, we have been promised action to reduce speeding through the villages, but we have yet to see the police attend with their speed cameras.

Very heavy rainfall in October 2023 caused flooding in several parts of our villages. The root causes of the flooding has been investigated and some action has been taken recently by Lincolnshire Highways to clear a blocked dyke next to Ings lane in Belchford. There are concerns that this limited action will not resolve the problem, but time will tell.

One major improvement to our local rights of way has happened in the last year with the reopening of the Ings Lane bridleway, which links Belchford to the Bluestone Heath Road. A small group of village volunteers worked tirelessly for several days to remove years of growth of thorn bushes, brambles and nettles. My thanks in particular to Dawn Urry, Zach Henden and Dick Black for this work.

I must thank everyone who walks along our roads and picks up the litter left by people passing through. This makes a real difference to the appearance of our villages and to our wildlife.

Belchford & Fulletby's Community Woodland continues to develop. Volunteers worked very hard last summer to remove ragwort plants before they were able to set seed and made a big difference. My thanks to everyone who helped with this work. Unfortunately, pulling ragwort is likely to be an annual task for a few more years. It is very encouraging to see the woodland being colonised by rare wildflowers, including orchids and most of the trees that were planted a few years ago are thriving. A few more trees were planted in the woodland last year, filling most of the spaces that were left for tree planting. The Community Woodland is a wonderful place for relaxation, and it has also hosted a dance event as part of the Wolds Outdoor Festival, which proved to be very popular. Thanks to Katy Hockham for arranging that event.

Trees have also been planted on the Village Green and Fulletby's Glebe Field.

Last year's traditional Lane Letting event took place outside the Blue Bell Inn on a sunny afternoon. This was well attended and raised record funds, which were used to buy goalposts for the Village Green.

Parish Councillors have committed to attending training sessions to learn about how best they can serve their communities. This is an ongoing process, which will continue next year, and I thank them for giving up their time to do this and for the time they have given to all the other unpaid work they do for the villages.

I am looking forward to the next year. The Parish Council will continue to focus on doing things that make a real difference for people living in our villages and I encourage residents to attend the Public Forum at the start of each Parish Council meeting to have their say and an influence on the work of the council.