

# GUITING POWER PARISH

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of Guiting Power held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 7.30pm, in Guiting Power Village Hall.

**Chairman: Dawn Rimmer**

**27 Parishioners present**

- 1. Call to order.** The Chair called the meeting to order at 7.30pm.
- 2. Apologies.** Apologies were received from County Councillor Nigel Moor and Maureen Griffiths, the local Village Agent.
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 27th May 2015 at 7.30pm in Guiting Power Village Hall.** These were confirmed as a true record and signed and approved.
- 4. Brief reports:**

### **Council Reports**

- **County Councillor - Nigel Moor (Read by Dawn Rimmer)**

At the Council meeting on the 17th February 2016 Gloucestershire County Council agreed their budget for 2016/17. Just before the budget was finalized the government announced an additional £2.4m for Gloucestershire, and this has allowed an extra £2.075m to be spent on roads including increasing Highways Local to £30k per member and £7,500 per member for additional road maintenance in their areas. In addition, £100k is set aside to pay for designated Traffic Regulation Orders such as that which is to be introduced through Little Rissington and Blockley and where communities wish to introduce traffic calming.

Part of the funding will be used to roll out the lengthsman programme across the county. Lengthsmen are highways maintenance teams dedicated to a particular area of the road network, who work to repair minor defects before they can deteriorate. The schedule has been the subject of a successful year long trial in the Forest of Dean and will now be continued and extended county -wide. This is to be introduced in May this year and each county will have three weeks of a team.

All these measures will help members such as myself respond to requests by parish councils such as yours to deal with local highway issues.

The amendment came as part of a budget for Gloucestershire which saw an additional £2.7m to look after vulnerable older people, an extra £156,000 for children and young people and will now see the roads budget protected too.

Council Leader Mark Hawthorne has appointed me to replace Cllr Will Windsor-Clive - who steps down to focus on his campaign to be Police and Crime Commissioner - as Cabinet Portfolio holder for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure. In the press release published I said "I am really proud to be asked to serve as a Cabinet member. I have extensive experience of the planning side of the portfolio and I'm looking forward to getting to grips with the issues in Fire and Infrastructure."

You will have read of the campaign to form a new unitary council combining West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold District Council. The Cotswold District Council has for many years been a successful part of the two-tier system of local government in Gloucestershire and the integration of health and social care services, children's safeguarding, investing in our roads and promoting economic growth. I believe the possible loss of Cotswold District would be a step in the opposite direction. The announcement by Cotswold District which was completely unexpected by Gloucestershire as Cotswold had been included in the devolution deal to central government has already frustrated the big additional £1m investment in broadband for the Cotswolds. This does not affect the current gigaclear contract and I believe will be resolved by the summer.

- **Cotswold District Council – Cllr Richard Keeling**

Cllr Keeling informed the meeting that Cotswold District Council would be freezing its part of the council tax for the following year. Even with the freeze the District Council still had set aside £500,000 for the faster broadband project.

The District Council and West Oxfordshire have worked closely together over the past seven years and share a number of costs including senior officers, communications teams and back office costs. They also formed the successful waste disposal company Ubico together. With these close working relationships and a similar rural Cotswold make-up, research into a unitary authority seemed a sensible option to explore.

The research is in its early stages and once this is completed a full consultation would be undertaken with the public. Presently this is likely to be later this year towards the Summer/Autumn.

*A parishioner asked how much was the cost of establishing a new unitary authority? There were no exact figures at present but Cllr Keeling said that the research that was being undertaken would show whether this was a viable option financially or not.*

*Another parishioner asked how much all this research was costing? Cllr Keeling said he was not aware of the exact figure.*

*A further question was raised regarding the snow plough budget. As there had been no severe weather the budget had been untouched, therefore the question was asked as to whether this spare money could be spent on verge and hedge cutting? Cllr Keeling did not know but said he would enquire.*

## **Local Group Updates**

- **Mo Griffiths – Village Agent (Read by Dawn Rimmer)**

Now in its tenth year, the Village and Community Agent scheme managed by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) and funded by the CCG and Gloucestershire County Council continues, through its village agents in their local communities, to provide a signposting service for the over-50s to information, support and opportunities.

I have been Village Agent for Guiting Power and twenty other villages in the area, from Aldsworth to the Barringtons on the Oxfordshire border since 2009 and continue to enjoy meeting other older people in their home or at social groups and coffee mornings and if I can, help them to access what they need as they get older - be it help or aids for wellbeing in the home, a benefits check to increase income where possible, a visit from the fire officer to check or install smoke alarms, information about local lunch clubs or social groups, or transport and befriending.

Social isolation is one of the worse things to affect an older person, who may have lived in a village or retired there many years before, and now finds that following bereavement of spouse and friends, that they have become a stranger in their own community. Village Agents can help them overcome the isolation through directing them to friendship groups or bringing services to them to enable them to maintain continued and positive independent living. We are sometimes able to identify needs that that the person is not aware of and gently guide them towards solutions. We have the great privilege of being able to take time to get to know our clients and this helps in achieving successful outcomes.

In the last few years, our role has evolved and we now help with more complex needs and the time benefit really matters. As we only work 10-15 hours a week it sometimes means that we are not able to spend as much informal time out in the community so it really helps if villagers and local businesses remember the Village Agent is available if they notice an older person might be struggling. We cannot cold call and rely on referrals from the person or their friends and neighbours to get in touch. We are trained as Community Dementia Support workers and some of us, myself included, are trained as Specialist Agents working with people with a cancer diagnosis or living with cancer and that service is available from the age of 18. In that role we are able to fast track applications for benefits and other help through our dedicated and confidential gateway system to the many professional agencies with which we work in partnership.

Everything we discuss with our clients is completely confidential and only shared with their consent with the relevant agencies through the secure gateway system in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

There is no charge to the service user for our assistance. Whilst I can't share personal information with you about work in progress or completed, I'm pleased to report that in the last year I have had very little work to do in Guiting Power due to its supportive community and vibrant hubs in the shop, bakery and pubs. However, I have been helping people in nearby villages to get Attendance Allowance, befriending services, advice about hospital transport and home from hospital support.

I do see people from Guiting at the monthly lunch club I run in Lower Swell Village hall though. It's usually on the third Friday each month and all are welcome. More information is put on the Swell Village Hall facebook page, and soon on the village website.

Thank you all for your time.

- **Police**  
No report presented.
- **Cheery Club - Anne Miles (Read by Dawn Rimmer)**  
Guiting Cheery Club would like to thank the parish council for their generous donation towards our Christmas party.

The Cheery Club is still going strong as the oldest Club in the village must be some sort of achievement. We have got 27 members this year hope we have got an interesting and varied program for 2016.

- **Upper Windrush Local History Society - Mike Edwards**

The History Society is now 7 years old, who would have thought that the Society would have grown into the thriving organisation that it is today, monthly meetings averaging between 45 and 65 every month whatever the weather! There are not many similar History Societies that maintain this level of support, over the 12-month cycle.

The continued support of our Membership is greatly appreciated, and our hard working Officers and Committee Members ensure that high standards of Speakers and activities, will continue.

2015 saw a wide range of Speakers, with the standard being set at a very high level with Tim Porter delivering an excellent talk on the "Magna Carta" followed by monthly talks on Fred Archer Champion Jockey, St Kenelm, Steaming Through Gloucestershire, Vikings, History of Pub Signs, The Levellers, Putting Windrush on the map, Drovers Roads, Cotswold River Valleys and Members Talks plus a newsreel film show.

One of the summer highlights was the guided walk and talk around Farmcote! A lovely summers night, breathtaking views over the Severn Valley and fascinating insight into the history of what is now a small hamlet, with it's very special Church and Manor House, there was history peeping out of every lump and bump in the surrounding lands! A special thanks to the Eayers Family, Peter Loveday, Tim Hands and Peter Udale for entertaining us all in the Manor House at the end of a lovely evening.

As a continuation of our WW1 commemoration, local Members at Guiting Power, remember the Village men that were killed in action, on the centenary of their death, with a small exhibition of the person ie photographs, family connections, house, school etc. in St Michael & All Angels Church, before services and for 1 week with the exhibition, this will continue until 2018.

We have an excellent line up of Speakers for 2016, January saw us kicking off the year again, with a talk by Tim Porter on Simon de Montfort and The Battle of Evesham Thanks also to Graham Powell who continues to be our representative on the GLHA. Thank you all for the continued support of our Committee Members!!!

The History Society has put together a formidable amount of local history information, a list of archive contents, is available by application to Peter Weale. I gather that we have in excess of 1100 items in the Archive at present.

The GMAT have allowed the History Society to display our collection of Local History Books in The Cochrane, Library in Guiting Power. Thanks

must be given to David Hicks who has presented the Society with 75 historical and topical books to the Societies library collection. Members can gain access to the Library for Reading and Research purposes by booking time at the GMAT Office. There are many books of interest in the Library, other than the Societies Collection.

2015 was our most successful year to date, let's hope that we can build upon it's great success and continue to provide a high standard of subjects and local visits, please tell your friends about the Society.

- **Guiting Amenity Trust – Mary Greenhill**

The renovation and extension of Civic Trust House is now complete and we are awaiting the arrival of new tenants. Contractors have also now started work at the Old Manor which is being refurbished with new bathroom suites and a new fitted kitchen, tenants will be moving in later this summer once the contractors have finished. We have also recently refurbished a number of other properties with new kitchens and bathrooms where required. The Flats in Latimer Court are currently having central heating installed which will be a welcome improvement for the tenants. The contractors have also started work on the replacement garages and stores in Well Lane with completion expected at the end of April.

Western Power will be starting on Phase three of the removal of overhead power lines in the village during the next couple of months and we should see more poles removed as the work progresses.

The Library at the Trust is open for people to visit/use. It is kept locked as some of the books are quite valuable, however an appointment can be made with the office to use it any time.

- **Guiting Village Hall - Neil Rimmer**

After many years of service, largely working on his own, Mike Edwards stood down as chairman of the Village Hall in May last year. As has been reported previously his sterling work in the most difficult of circumstances and largely alone managed to keep the Village hall afloat, Mike we thank you.

Neil Rimmer took over as Chairman in May 2015 and brought with him an entire new team (still with Mike though!) now known as Team Village Hall (TVH). TVH is a 12 strong group of villagers who bring multiple skills enthusiasm and energy to the task of maintaining and filling this Hall.

The building is not without its challenges, there were serious flooring issues during the year and the TVH team did the repairs themselves saving many hundreds of pounds. We have other equipment failures

but these are just the challenges of working with the building that as had the very minimum of maintenance over the last 50 years.

It should be remembered that there is no government subsidy or any other help for the running of this hall. In order to put the facility onto a better financial footing a whole range of changes have been made.

The hall had made a loss for four of the previous five years, I am pleased to report that after a full review of finances and a thorough re-budget that this year the hall is back on a sustainable footing.

We have also re-instated the charitable status of the building and all the annual returns are up to date.

We have renegotiated rental terms, instituted proper contracts between each and every user and even acquired our own alcohol license.

For all this there is still much to do, and the hall still relies heavily upon the various donations it receives in addition to its regular income, a new three-year deal with the Guiting Music Festival has also been instrumental in the turnaround.

I have recently been in touch with Gigaclear, who will be providing us with fantastic internet services later this year and agreed that they can put the electronics cabinet on Village Hall land, it will be located around the back of the old cricket shed completely out of site. In return they are giving both the village hall and the pre-school free installation and 2 free years of 50Mb internet services. This should encourage many new users to use the hall, particularly for parties and weddings which a question often asked is "is there wifi?"

I would like to take the chance to thank all of our users for their patronage over the year, with the continued effort and the absolutely awesome support of TVH we will continue the improvements and secure the long term future of this most valuable village facility.

- **Playgroup – Becky Roseblade**

A year of change here at the school after 3 years at the helm Monica Farthing has stepped down Chair, a great big thank you to her. I am delighted to announce that Neil Rimmer has taken over the reins as Chair.

I am pleased to report that the school is a maximum capacity this year, and the projected outlook for next year is most promising.

There have been a number of improvements done to the fabric of the school over the last year by the Trust, the most significant being the

addition of double-glazing throughout, which both conserves energy and makes the children cosier.

We have also been busy investing on the training front and I am happy to report that I am almost through with my level 5 in Management and leadership in the early years, and that Jenny Inness is almost there with her level 3 in child care and education. Our first aid and child protection training are also all current.

Our longest serving employee, Michele Boote, has been with the playgroup now for over 20 years and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her service.

The den project: Last year in the gales our outdoor shelter for our children blew away in the autumn gales and was found destroyed in a nearby garden. This leaves us with a real problem, as we must provide shelter from the sun in summer and there is none. An application for planning was submitted last year for a 6m x 8m oak framed shelter to be erected in the playground and the application was successful. Fund raising is underway, but we are still a fair distance from our target of £25,000, we are starting fund raising in earnest right now! In the meantime if anyone knows of any old gazebos or similar that could be donated to keep us going just let either Neil or I know.

- **St Michael & All Angels Church – Rev Katrina Scott**

January 2015 saw the arrival of our new Rector, Rev Canon Katrina Scott, into this Benefice. She was welcomed at a service in Naunton on the 25th January and then within the next fortnight was able to lead worship at each of the churches in the area. Katrina and her family, Nick, Ruth and Freddie have very much enjoyed getting to know the villages, communities and churches and greatly appreciate the warmth of the welcome they have each received.

During this year, the church community here has continued to strive towards the things we are called to do - worship God, serve our neighbours in the community, develop our building for future generations and pray for those in need. In particular this year, we would like to highlight:

- The variety of our worship. St Michaels, enjoys a great diversity in the type of worship that we hold, week by week, from our monthly, interactive family service to our more traditional communions. We also celebrate some of the extra occasions in the church year, with special services - for example the dawn communion service in the churchyard on Easter Sunday, the regular services with the Guiting Power playgroup, the St

George's day service and our Michaelmas celebration in September.

- Weekly prayers for our parish. On Tuesday mornings, there is now a short prayer service in the church - 15-20 minutes, praying for the specific needs of local residents and communities.
- 'Messy Club'. We are adding to our connections at Temple Guiting Church of England Primary School, by offering a weekly after school club for children to enjoy. We do lots of messy craft activities, linking in with Bible stories.
- Repairing the roof. In early 2015, some major work was completed on the church roof, repairing damage to the wood.
- Funerals, weddings and baptisms. These are a key part of our church family life and this year we have been honoured to be involved in these occasions.

As we look forward, we are keen to develop these links and relationships and especially to serve our parish community. We are planning some social events and special services as well as exploring installing a 'village toilet' within the churchyard.

The toilet block planning application is due to be submitted shortly. Due to the running costs of a traditional toilet being too high a non-water, degradable toilet system is being submitted. Various environmental grants are being looked at. The toilet will be open during the day, every day and is available to everyone including walkers on the public footpaths.

- **Neighbourhood Watch Programme – Cllr Dawn Rimmer**

Neighbourhood Watch is not in the Parish Council's remit but, following the resignation of Mike Scott as co-ordinator, we felt we could start the ball rolling as a point of contact. Our thanks go to Mike Scott for his hard work whilst in the post.

There were a couple of burglaries in the village recently which has sparked people's interest in kick-starting the Neighbourhood Watch but we need someone to step up to the plate & act as co-ordinator of the project. There is plenty of assistance available from the Police & online in how to do this so, if you feel able to or know anyone who might be interested, please let us know.

There is a sign-up sheet available here tonight to add you contact details.

- **Constable's Piece Trust – Cllr Dawn Rimmer**

The Constable's Piece Trust is a fund established many years ago to distribute its income for any charitable purpose for the inhabitants of the area of the ancient Parish of Guiting Power.

The Parish Council, as the Trustee of the Trust, welcomes any application for funding from eligible individuals or organisations.

The eligibility criteria & application form are available on the [guitingevents website](#) under the Parish Council page. There are copies available here today.

- **Guiting Power Social Group - Neil Rimmer**

The Social Group has moved from strength to strength and grows in both village support and members.

In no particular order a brief report on the last 12 months

- We kicked off the past year with the completion of the fantastic children's play area, completed after £25,000 of fund raising over the previous 3 years with amazing help from the trust, the farm and this awesome social group. It was truly a community effort leading to the delivery of this most beautiful and now well used area.
- The fete last June was the official opening where over 800 visitors watched County Councillor Nigel Moore cut the ribbon and then raffle winner, young Isaac, had the first go on the zip wire.
- The fete was another great success, despite the minor monsoon that occurred later in the day. More of this year's fete later.

Highlights of the rest of the year's activities are....

- Bonfire night, this was rebooted this year, the farm helped a great deal by allowing us to use part of the field for the fire, and Roland Greenhill secured an excellent deal on the amazing fireworks. Over 200 attended despite dodgy weather, this is almost certainly on the calendar again this year.
- We then ran a very well attended bingo night, hosted in the pink by Wayne and Paddy a great bar and over 60 competitors, so successful in fact that another bingo night was held earlier this year.
- The run up to Christmas showed the social group at its thespian best, with a large cast, including brand new actors stepping up to the embarrassment. The pre-Christmas Children's Panto of "Snow White, several dwarfs and a dalek" was a great success, so much so that the hall was at capacity for the party with children and parents enjoying the dodgy acting, games, food and of course Santa.

- The cast spent Christmas practicing the lines for the full Panto, which had unbelievably sold out within a week of tickets being released, we actually sold over 45 tickets to the dress rehearsal. The Panto was the usual mix of madness, miscued lines and slapstick. It is an enormous amount of work to put this on, rehearsals twice a week from September, props to be made (thanks uncle Pete (Weale) - best rat ever this year!) and the countries best village hall bar to be organised (thanks Lisa), there are just too many more to thank individually, but this village thanks you all.

The summary is that over 300 people came to see it, reviews were universally generous and a few of us were just a little too comfortable in our frocks.

So what of this year, we have a live music event organised on the 6th May with the absolutely amazing singer Abbey Inez, the Queens 90th birthday is being celebrated around the country in a national street party on June 12th, Guiting Power will be no exception, look out for details.

The major summer event is the Fete, this year on June 18th. This is the 5th fete in its recent social group organised incarnation and promises to be the most spectacular. As many of you know we have secured a fly past of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight who will be providing the highlight of the afternoon with a Spitfire, Hurricane and Lancaster flying by. Of course there will also be a fine range of traditional games, stalls, an awesome bar and pig roast amongst many other attractions.

For information on these events and many more the Social Group organise check out the website [www.guitingevents.co.uk](http://www.guitingevents.co.uk) or the ever popular Guiting Power Village Hall Facebook site.

I would like to take this chance to thank the absolutely amazing and delightful group of friends that make up the Guiting Power Social Group and of course to the village for supporting these events.

## **5. Annual Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council – Cllr Dawn Rimmer**

We have again had a busy year in the Parish.

We recently produced our budget for the financial year 2016/17. After discussion, we decided that this Parish has no need to raise the precept as the funds currently received cover all our budgeted requirements. Consequently, it was agreed to leave the precept at 2015/16 rates.

We continue to work closely with the Highways department to ensure roads & footpaths are maintained to the highest level. Please feel free to report any items you would like investigated to one of the councillors.

Concerns have been raised about dog fouling on the playing fields & around the village. We have obtained funding from the District Council for an additional dog waste bin which has been installed on Tally Ho Lane together with updated signage which is in the pipeline. I would ask all villagers to be vigilant when out & about by cleaning up after their own dogs & also requesting that others do also.

Cllr Ogden has produced a comprehensive WELCOME PACK for newcomers to the village which is now available online at [www.guitingevents.co.uk](http://www.guitingevents.co.uk). Please contact Else with any updates required.

We obtained an additional salt-bin this year which has been positioned near Castlett Farm. Also, we have been part of a tree planting initiative where the parish has been given 500 young trees to plant throughout the parish landscape. Thanks to Guiting Manor Farms for their assistance on both of these projects.

At last year's assembly, we were in the process of campaigning to be included in the roll out of superfast broadband. As many of you know, the campaign was a great success & has resulted in Guiting Power & Temple Guiting Parishes being included in the roll out programme this year. In July, installation of ULTRAFast broadband will commence by GIGACLEAR. There are some brochures available for those of you who are not yet fully aware of the project. My thanks go to all those of you who supported the campaign & can now look forward to internet speeds of up to 1gb by the end of the year! It is a great example of what can be achieved when we all work together.

Thanks must go to our Footpath Warden, Mr Geoff Cuthbert, for his continued advice and guidance to help maintain access to our beautiful Cotswold environment. We hope that he might be prepared to continue to carry out this role in the coming year. He has also been working hard with the emergency services to ensure that, when needed, they can quickly find property in the village following some inaccuracies in the mapping being used. Geoff has updated the necessary documentation & registered it with the necessary authorities.

Congratulations to the social group on all their hard work in providing entertainment in the village! The pantomime, as previously mentioned, was an outstanding success again. The social group & parish council worked closely together on the bonfire party which was well supported despite the weather! Over £320 was raised in donations to RABI. This year's event will be held on Friday 4th Nov to avoid clashing with Naunton's event. Another event that the two committees will be working together on is the Street Party for the Queens

90th birthday. To be held on Sunday 12th June for Guiting Power Parishioners, watch the website - [www.guitingevents.co.uk](http://www.guitingevents.co.uk), newsletter & notice board for further details.

I would like to thank our Clerk for all the help and guidance she has given us as we continue to adapt to new legal requirements.

Finally, thank you to my fellow councillors for their support and hard work currently have one space available on the Council so, if anyone would like to be involved with their local community, please contact us.

## **6. Open Forum**

No questions were raised.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.40pm. The Annual Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.