**Minutes of the WIGMORE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**held on Monday 11 May 2015**

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| **Attending**: Members of the public – 2 Councillors Harnett (VH), Gilbert (AG), Casbourne (BC) and Perkins (KP) Invited speaker: Mr Dean Curtis, Head Teacher of Wigmore School.  |
| **Chairman:** VH had chaired the previous meeting and Councillors present confirmed that they were content for him to continue this year.**Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed as correct, with the amendment that Councillor Major had not attended.**Proposed: KP Seconded: AG All agreed.** |
| **Charities**: Mrs J Johnson, as Clerk to the charities confirmed the following balances:Parochial Charity - £1401.29 including receipts of £63.30. Mrs Johnson will put a piece in the Mortimer News asking for suggestions on appropriate use of the money.Kevill Davies Charity: £203.94. No change. (The amount was incorrectly recorded last year as £103.94.) Mrs Johnson is still pursuing closure of this account; the money was to have been donated to the defibrillator fund. |
| **The Annual Report of the Council** was read out. A copy is attached to these minutes and will be included in the next issue of the Mortimer News.**Matters Arising :** **Traffic:** VH had attended the traffic calming meeting and spoken to the Leader of Hfds Council but little had been achieved.**Church:** With its small congregation, the church is insufficiently funded to remain open. A group within the parish is working on plans to adapt the church for other use. Discussions have been held with the Diocese, English Heritage and other interested parties, all of whom support other community use with the church continuing to use the space. A meeting is planned for 13 June in Wigmore Village Hall for public discussion and consultation. This is not a parish council project: a Community Interest Company is being set up to drive this long project forward and funding in the region of £750k is being sought. It is unlikely that any changes will begin until 2016.**Defibrillator:** now installed but some issues with the cabinet are being worked on.**Parking at the Village Hall:** parking issues which were affecting the mobile PO van’s access have been solved by relocating to the shop.**Millennium Green:** we are applying for a grant of £2k from Hfds Council to renovate the green (the land belongs to Hfds Council). The grant has been delayed but, in the meantime, the Parish Council will agree a schedule of work and arrange for tidying work to be done. |
| **The School – continued overleaf/...****The School. Mr Dean Curtis (DC) gave an outline of the School’s key aims over the next 5 years, which include:*** Retaining Outstanding (Ofsted) status for the senior school: pupils continue to achieve excellent results, although the school is continually challenged by changing regimes in Ofsted and examinations/curriculum.
* Moving the primary school from Good to Outstanding
* Innovating – new ways of teaching and learning
* Expanding – if relevant to pupils, parents and community. There are ambitions to extend the age range to 18. Previous consultations showed broad support for this in the community and DfE permission to extend. However, to date the School has been unsuccessful in securing the necessary funding from the Dept. for Education.
* The school is well known within the NCTL (National College for Teaching & Leadership) and has a presence on the national stage.
* Becoming a ‘stakeholder school’ **–** listening to, involving and being involved with the community. Building on existing links, the school could offer use of its resources to local individuals, organisations and businesses - including the hall, sports facilities, the kitchen, IT facilities including video-conferencing, community education classes. Ways of pupils being involved in the wider community are being explored. It is intended to set up a group comprising various interested parties to take these ideas forward. BC and AG offered to be involved. **DC to make contact re meeting(s) via the Clerk.**
* Developing existing strong links with Worcester University and building links with the new Hereford University.
* Focusing on being proactive rather than reactive in relation to community concerns.

Councillors expressed their full support for these ideas and thanked Mr Curtis for attending.**The meeting closed at 7.58pm** |

**WIGMORE GROUP ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2015**

**11th May 2015**

**PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

The Parish Council meets on the second Monday of every month except August.. Members of the public are very welcome to attend and are invited to have their say at the beginning of each meeting. The minutes of meetings are published on the website.

The major topics which the Parish Council has been working on over the year are:

**Neighbourhood Plan** – the Plan is at an advanced stage, representing a huge amount of work from those involved in putting it together. We are now waiting for the Herefordshire Core Strategy to be finally agreed, hopefully in the summer months.

**IT Skills for residents.** A series of lessons on using the internet and email, getting to grips with word processing, spreadsheets etc. was presented during the winter. We were grateful to CAMEO, who hosted these sessions.

Four issues of the **Mortimer News** have appeared during the year, thanks to the very hard work of Bryan Casbourne and of course the many contributors. These are packed with information and interest. We are always delighted to receive news, views, photographs, topics of local interest etc. There is also a **village website –** [**www.mortimervillages.co.uk**](http://www.mortimervillages.co.uk) – again content is always welcome.

**Traffic calming**: Wigmore has participated in a pilot of the Community Speed Watch project which under the auspices of West Mercia Police. A number of volunteers have had the necessary training to use speed monitoring equipment with the aim of deterring motorists from speeding through the village.

**Funded projects**:

Thanks to the efforts of Bryan Casbourne, our funding wizard, community grants totalling over £11,000 were secured from various bodies during the year, enabling us to put on another **summer event** last July – this time on a neighbourhood planning and local suppliers - including events in the church and village hall.

Copious quantities of materials collected by residents on the life and times of Wigmore in the last 1000 years were gathered for the above event and much of this has been collected into **the Wigmore Book** *(Wigmore Times, Then .... and Now*) – a copy of which was given to every household in the village. There is still plenty of material which has not been used and a second book is in the early stages of creation. The proposed new book will be about people and their memories of Wigmore and the area - all contributions welcome. Once again we will involve Michael Fieldsend, our resident photographer, to record people and places. We are particularly interested in re-creating the photo on the cover of the first book- with today’s young folk.

We now have a **defibrillator** installed outside the Castle Inn and 20 volunteers have been trained to use the equipment. We were very fortunate to have the support of a resident, Mr Chris Reeves to help source the equipment and provide excellent training. A rota is being established to ensure the equipment is properly maintained.

**The Community Field:** we have not so far been successful in securing the significant grant money that is required to improve the environment of our Community Field. We still have money ring-fenced for this purpose but it is not enough to make a sensible start. We will apply again for substantial funding during the year. We are working with the contractor who cuts the grass to establish a new schedule to include the whole field.

**Millennium Green:** We are also hoping to get financial help to improve the Millennium Green, which is currently looking rather sad. The grant has been delayed for a month or two but we will get things moving as soon as we possibly can.

**Lengthsman Scheme**. The Parish Council runs a Lengthsman scheme: this covers some parts of the mowing and strimming, hedgecutting on the community field, minor works along the C and U roads in the parish etc. The P3 scheme which is designed to ensure that public rights of way are monitored and maintained in good order is now part of the Lengthsman Scheme.

Our **Footpaths Officer**, David Gardiner, has been working to get the necessary permissions from English heritage to improve the footpath to the Castle which is notoriously muddy. Members of the Herefordshire Ramblers will be helping to carry out the work of clearing the footpath and improving its surface. Under the P3 scheme, we have funding from Hfds Council to monitor and maintain all other footpaths on our patch in good condition.

We are delighted to have our **Locality Steward**, Rachel Dixon, on board. She is making a huge difference in keeping us informed about matters concerning our physical environment, liaising with Balfour Beatty, Highways, contractors

Parish Council responsibilities include the everyday business of **maintenance** in the parish (streetlights, churchyard, playground equipment etc), liaising with Herefordshire Council, and scrutinising any planning applications either within or affecting the parish.

Whilst **The St. James’ Project** is not sponsored by the Parish Council, residents will be interested to know that an open meeting is planned for people to review the proposals, make comments, add ideas etc. Residents have set up a Community Interest Company to move this idea forward. Already the St James rector, the Hereford Diocese, English Heritage and other organisations have met and agreed that the idea is worth pursuing and has their support.

**And now ...

 .... WE NEED HELP FROM RESIDENTS:**

* Four new parish councillors to step forward (Wigmore (2), Elton (1), Leinthall Starkes (1)
* A Volunteer to organise village litter picks in Wigmore
* A Volunteer to update the website on a regular basis
* A Parish Council logo – volunteer (competition?) to design