

CHACOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on **Monday 13th May 2024** at **6:30pm** in Chacombe Village Hall

Present: The Chairman of the Parish Council, 6 members of the public. Simon Davies from EKFB/HS2.

1. Welcome and apologies – Cllr Taylor welcomed Simon Davies from HS2/EKFB. Simon provided a report about current progress on HS2 which included the following information.
 - They are currently building up to track height.
 - The overall landscaping plan means the majority of the route, particularly in this area won't be seen by the local residents as the line will be within grassy banks and false cuttings.
 - Currently in the peak season of earthworks and the bulk of the earthworks will be completed by the end of summer 2025.
 - There are a number of road closures coming up but temporary roads have been constructed to provide a diversion route that is shorter than it would be on existing roads.

Simon Davies left the meeting at 7pm.

2. Report from Parish Council Chairman

This year has been another year of change for Chacombe Parish Council with our Vice-Chairmen Ralph Wilkin, and then Neil Castle, stepping down from the council. As Chairman, this summary report of the year gives me the chance to give formal thanks to both Ralph and Neil for all of their contributions to the council over the past few years. Ralph brought his keen eye for detail into play giving Financial governance to our banking and accounts as well as updating our website, implementing Parish Online mapping and generally overseeing IT during his time in office. Neil championed the Village's quest for speed reduction measures worked tirelessly chasing both WNC and Highways to get us accepted into the Northants 20mph pilot scheme which will hopefully be implemented sometime soon, once WNC's Cllr Phil Larratt has paid us a site visit. We have also welcomed Chris Williams, from Silver Street, onto the Council this year and he has embraced the challenge with gusto. Chris has seamlessly picked up the website and IT champion role and is already a valued member of the Parish Council team. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our team, Brendan, Chris, Faye, Robert, and our dedicated clerk, Kirsty, for their efforts in supporting me and the Village over the year. We have lots of things going on in Chacombe and it is great to see particular individuals taking a lead where their knowledge and experience can be of help.

Again this year, we have been indebted to Councillor Faye Wright and her expertise in Planning to lead our responses to the various planning applications that have come up during the year. Of particular note has been detailed objections in response to the various appeals by Greystoke for their proposed large warehouse development at Huscote Farm. This has finally quashed but there will inevitably be more in the future where her experience will be invaluable.

The ongoing battle with Highways about the speed of traffic entering and leaving the village continued throughout the year and, in his time on the Council, Neil Castle worked tirelessly to get even the simplest changes implemented. Having successfully qualified for the 20mph advisory speed limit scheme, we are still awaiting a visit from WNC Councillor Phill Larratt to give the official 'green light' from WNC. All villagers can help by driving at 20mph, in order to protect our friends and families walking to the pub, allotments, school and other village amenities. We can all do our bit.

On the health and safety theme, this year has now seen the installation of a new defibrillator located in the centre of the Village on 'The Ring', next to the Parish Council Noticeboard. Thanks to Councillor Brendan Jenkins for his electrical & installation expertise and our clerk Kirsty, for getting this project completed. In the meantime, the existing defibrillator unit, located at the front of Chacombe School, has had a new secure cabinet fitted and will still be operational for some while yet.

All of our Assets, such as lampposts, benches, bins etc. are inspected quarterly to help us keep track of their condition and during recent inspections it was recognised that some of the wooden benches were due to be cleaned and refreshed. This work has now been done with great thanks to our local village handyman, John Baldry, for the good work he has put in giving them a new lease of life.

I would also like to give a big 'Thank You' to all others who give their time to help the village and whose work isn't always recognised. John Roulstone has been our Footpath Warden, Geoff Annells our Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and Police Liaison contact and Ian Eames has again taken on the unenviable task of emptying the bins around the village. Our heartfelt thanks to them all.

As a Parish Council we are always looking to support villagers' activities and provide services and benefits to the village, and it was great to be able to lend a guiding hand to Chacombe Village's celebrations of the coronation of King Charles III back in May 2023.

It was amazing to see lots of Villagers celebrating with family and friends in style at our 'Picnic Party in the Park' in Berry Close on Sunday May 7th. It was great to showcase local groups & organisations at the various stalls in the morning, to formally acknowledge the reign of our late Queen Elizabeth II and herald the coronation of King Charles III with our tree-planting ceremony and then to eat, drink and be merry long into the night with the Coronation Concert on the 'Big Screen'. Many thanks to all those who contributed to making it such a fantastic day.

It's heartening to see that new blood has been injected into the Chacombe Sports & Social Committee this year and that the CS&SC have again delighted us all with the Bonfire and fireworks display and the Christmas Float which are the envy of many other local villages. Long may they continue. The CS&SC have also taken the chance to organise our next summer party gathering in June. If any other villagers have any event ideas, proposed village improvements and/or want to raise any issues or concerns where you may need our support, please do use Public Time at the Parish Council meeting, held on the first Monday in the month, unless a Bank Holiday, to speak to us directly. The agenda is posted on the village notice board and in the Chacombe Chimes as well as the Parish Council website. If you would also like to get more involved and are considering becoming a councillor, please do get in touch. Your contribution would always be valued.

Finally, a big thank you from The Parish Council to all the other groups that are active in the Village, many of whose Annual Reports are available now too. It's great to see that the 'Chacombe Spirit' is

very much alive post-covid and it's lovely to live in such a close and friendly community, something that we should all cherish and protect.

3. Reports from other village organisations

Chacombe Village Hall

It's been a busy year as ever. We received some funding from HS2 to put in the new reception area and toilets. There is further funding required for the installation of accessible toilets and a number of other improvements so the village hall committee will continue to seek funding towards this. New carpet has been fitted in the committee room. There has been lots of work taking place around the grounds of the village hall to tidy it up and there have been very kind donations of plants from parishioners and Barn Farm Plants. The Village Hall Committee have supported the Sports & Social Club by allowing the installation of a storage container in the car park to store the santa sleigh etc. The village hall would like to replace their garage with a similar storage container.

Hirings and bookings are very strong at the moment with art classes, dog clubs, yoga, school basketball, bellringers, lots of parties, and the church of the Pentecost who use the hall on a Sunday, and a number of activities have been held including games' nights, with more still to come.

Chacombe Sports & Social Committee Annual Report to Parish Council:

2023/24 has been a year of change in many ways for CS&SC.

We have had new offers of leadership and help, meaning that the current members feel able to support the transition to a new, younger committee.

We took part in the Coronations celebrations, which felt like a big success for the Village lead by the Parish Council, with our extra funding and practical help.

Bonfire was another great event, numbers returning to pre-pandemic levels and of course the weather was kind this year (except in the flooded parking field). We welcomed new volunteers to work alongside us and see what these events entail.

Father Christmas returned, new drivers, new Santa's, helpers and organisers. With the current committee guiding from the rear! We raised funds for Diabetes UK on the first 4 nights then two village causes on Christmas Eve, The School Library project and the local Volunteer Drivers Scheme.

We are looking forward to organising a low-key Family Fun Day in Berry Close, providing games, stalls and sporting activities for all the villagers, bring your own chairs, refreshments etc.

We will be finding dates for training for new Firework Technicians for the next bonfire night.

We also now have a secure storage container, thanks to the Village Hall Committee and Parish Council in helping to facilitate the acquisition.

CHACOMBE WI

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The WI programme offering has been set to include a number of sessions open to villagers and local WIs with topics such as the fascinating history of the Gypsy community, photographer Paul Howard with an insight into the story behind those wow photos, poetry to make you laugh read by their author professional poet Dennis East and in February the Chapel was alight with music as our audience took part in a lively African Marimba session. These open sessions create opportunities for us to share our speakers with a wider audience and we hope to encourage more villagers to come along. Our members have also enjoyed an art class, Christmas craft session and the chance to share meals together.

Next month we have a Ventriloquist and Magician who is a member of the Magic Circle coming to entertain us and villagers are welcome to join us.

With many different interests among members we aim to provide a wide variety of activities; skittles evenings, a theatre trip to the Derngate, a treasure hunt, garden party with live music in the summer and visits to other WI's to share talks of interest, the latest being one on the Royal Diamonds by the current Surveyor of all The King's Works of Art. Members are also volunteer gardeners at The Elms Mental Health Hospital, knit blankets for the Linus Trust and make up Shoeboxes full of goodies for the children's Christmas Appeal.

For a small WI, Chacombe continue to pack a lot into a year, and we look forward to welcoming others either as a new member or a guest for a talk.

Hilary Maggs

Chacombe WI

Berry Close Charitable Trust

Report for Annual Parish Meeting 13th May 2024

This year has been a transitional one for BCCT as both our long-standing Chairman, Stephen Large, and Secretary, Alex Fisher, have stepped down from their roles. Alex has moved away to London, but Stephen is still in the village and remains a Trustee and available to lend a guiding hand if and when necessary. Many thanks to them both for their hard efforts in keeping Berry Close in great condition throughout their times in office.

It has also been great to welcome Dominic Gold onto the Committee, as he enthusiastically picks up the Secretarial reins from Alex. However, there is still a vacancy in the Chair and we would be delighted if any existing Trustee, Member or any other Villager would be interested in the role either now or in the short-term future. In the meantime, the Parish Council have kindly stepped into the breach with both Neil Castle, and latterly Andy Taylor, taking the role of 'Acting Chairman' temporarily.

Berry Close has been at the heart of Chacombe's community re-invigoration post-covid, as it provided the venue for the fun-filled Coronation Celebrations back in May 23 and for the fantastic Bonfire and Fireworks display organised by the CS&SC in November. We are delighted that the CS&SC will be using Berry Close for

their next Summer Party event in June (22nd) and that the George & Dragon, in conjunction with Aspalls Cider, are planning an open-air cinema weekend in September (6th – 8th).

Aside from these feature events, it has been lovely to see so many villagers, and visitors, using Berry Close day-to-day. With the field, the wood, the Leat and meadow areas, Berry Close provides such a lovely variety of spaces for whatever you fancy doing, be it walking dogs or just stretching your legs, having some family fun or finding quiet contemplation. Please do use it as often as you can, but in doing so please respect the area, and other users, by picking up any litter or dog mess and putting it in the bins provided and generally leaving the area as you found it for others to enjoy too.

Finally, votes of thanks go all members and trustees for their continued support of BCCT. Particular thanks to Geoff Jones for his regular surveying of condition of the trees and for advising of any potential safety issues. Then thanks also to all those who help at the subsequent working parties organised periodically in order to maintain the area in a condition that is safe for all to use and enjoy.

Andy Taylor

BCCT Acting Chairman – May 2024

CHACOMBE CHIMES

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Thank you to everyone who writes articles for the Chacombe Chimes and our delivery team and to the Sports and Social Club who made a significant donation towards printing costs this year.

Anyone can contribute to the Chimes, it is your village newsletter, so if you are taking part in a challenge we would be pleased to put your adventure in print, or if you have taken photos of a village event to share please do send them in. We are here to inform villagers about village organisations and the events they put on and to celebrate the achievements of our community.

We are always looking for new advertising which helps fund the newsletter so do think of the Chimes if you have a business.

Hilary Maggs

Chacombe Chimes

4. Any other issues parishioners wish to discuss – A parishioner asked if this meeting could be advertised on the village voice to try to encourage higher attendance. The Chairman agreed that this could be considered for next time.

Meeting closed @ 7:28pm