

## **BETCHWORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2019**

**MINUTES** of the **BETCHWORTH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held on **TUESDAY 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019**, in the Geoffrey Browne Room of the Betchworth Village War Memorial Hall at 8.00pm.

#### **1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

The Chairman (Julie Hardy) welcomed everyone to the Meeting and particularly the invited guests. The total attendance amounted to 34 people – a lower attendance than last year's record of 54 people.

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Sir Paul Beresford (Mole Valley District Councillor), Cllr Raj Haque (Chairman Mole Valley), Lady Corinna Hamilton, Alison Hedges (Betchworth & Buckland Childrens' Nursery), Linda Slater (BODS and St Michael's Church), David Eaton (Betchworth United Charities), Eiluned Slot (GG Tennis Tournament), Peter Crate (Frank's Quarry), Pam Patch (BODS), Martin Emery (Arts Society, Betchworth), Rev'd. Anna Moore, Jane Douglass (Head, North Downs Primary School).

#### **3. SURREY POLICE REPORT**

Sergeant Andy Adams gave a brief report outlining plans for a better police presence in rural areas, and announced that Surrey Police HQ will soon be moving to Leatherhead. He gave a brief report on crime figures in Betchworth and offered a question and answer session which drew attention to the ongoing problem of anti-social driving and speeding. Councillor Hardy thanked Sergeant Adams for attending. He then left the meeting (8.10pm).

#### **4. PRESENTATION BY NIGEL ARCH, DORKING MUSEUM**

Councillor Hardy introduced Nigel Arch, Chairman of the Dorking Museum, who gave a talk on the journey through his interest in history, to becoming involved with the Dorking Museum and its many interesting artefacts. Guest speaker left the meeting (8.32pm).

#### **5. MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2018**

Copies of the minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. They were proposed by Cllr Wilson and approved by Cllr Rogers before being signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

#### **6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

*Councillor Hardy gave the following report:*

As well as keeping all of you up to date with what is going on in Betchworth, this meeting gives me the chance to thank some of the people who work so hard for our lovely village.

Firstly I would like to thank publicly our clerk and responsible financial officer, Marion Hallett, who does all the day to day running of the council. This includes writing letters and emails, relaying information to us, dealing with the finances and keeping our excellent new parish website up to date. We

couldn't manage without you Marion, so thank you. Then I would like to thank the rest of the councillors. Vice chairman Ian Wilson has been on the council for ever and has a wealth of knowledge. He chairs the Finance Committee which reviews and sets the yearly budget. His special responsibilities on the council include the allotments and the burial ground, and he also keeps us up to date with the latest on Gatwick and Heathrow. Martin Higgins is a building historian who knows Betchworth very well. He is invaluable on the council for his opinions on planning matters.

Hilary Edwards has been helping Marion with setting up the new parish website. She is also responsible for the Goulburn Green and oversaw the resurfacing of the paths there which now look very neat and tidy. Colin Rogers is on the finance committee and is also responsible for our links with the police and emergency services. Ed Winter managed to steer us through the changes in law around data protection so that we were compliant. As an expert in aviation he also keeps us up to date with the latest on our local airports. Richard Savill has recently resigned from the council. As a structural engineer he was also very helpful in planning matters. I would like to extend my thanks to him and to all of the councillors who cheerfully give their time for the benefit of the village. Since Richard's resignation we have a vacancy on the Parish Council. As it is election year all the councillors have to step down and re-stand as councillors. If anyone would like to become a Parish Councillor, please get in touch with Marion for a nomination form.

We are extremely fortunate to have a designated burial ground caretaker, Bernard Hawkins and a footpath officer, John Foreman. They will both be reading their reports later, but we are very grateful to them for all their work. As you are no doubt aware, the agenda and minutes of all our meetings are posted on the three village notice boards and on our website. However, if you have not been able to keep up with what we have been doing, here is a brief outline;

### **Transport and highways**

The upkeep of our local roads is the responsibility of SCC. We continue to report road damage and problems to them. The surfaces of the roads are better than they have been but there are still problems with ditches and therefore flooding. After the damage done to three walls in the village over the winter we have asked for some speed surveys with a view to traffic calming measures. A parishioner has been doing some investigations into drop off spaces and / or parking at Betchworth station which is being followed up by Marion. SCC will now only cut the grass verges twice a year. Fortunately our local farmers have kept the sight lines free this year for which we are very grateful. Gatwick are proposing using their standby runway which could potentially double aircraft using the airport. We have responded to a consultation and Ian and Ed have been kept busy attending meetings with Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign and Plane Wrong.

### **Community**

We have had a number of discussions with parishioners about 'Future Mole Valley' where the District Council is looking for sites for housing and proposing small extensions of villages. There will be a full public consultation in the summer.

We have asked our local County Councillor, Helyn Clack, to look into the legality of the rather overwhelming advertising at the Betchworth roundabout. Ed has been trying to find out ways of increasing broadband speed for those who have painfully slow internet connections. BERT have cleared Weir Mead pond and fixed a broken pipe there, so it is back to how it used to be. The fences have been repaired and the trees pruned on the Goulburn Green, and the play equipment continues to be well used.

### **Planning**

We have looked at around 40 planning applications and commented where applicable. We have been in discussion with the Poland House charity who want to put a small development at the end of Wellhouse Lane, on land which is just in Betchworth. So that is a snapshot of the things that we deal with at each of our monthly meetings. Please remember that you are all most welcome at these meetings which are held in the Hamilton Room on the first Monday of every month.

## **7. ADDRESS BY SIMON BUDD, MOLE VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Simon Budd thanked the Parish Council for its collective work over the past year and especially acknowledged John Foreman, Footpaths Officer and thanked him for his hard work.

## **8. BETCHWORTH PARISH ACCOUNTS 2018/19**

*The draft accounts were displayed. Clerk Marion Hallett gave a brief report outlining income and expenditure over the past year:*

Hello, firstly please note that the accounts presented are draft accounts, yet to be audited. Final audited accounts will be posted onto website later in the year.

The Precept amount received from MVDC rose 3% in line with inflation, as did the Council Tax and Support Grant. This comfortably covers the increase in the Clerk's costs, and salary which also increased by 3%. A raise in the credit interest rate set by HSBC which was effective at the beginning of October 2018 reflects an increase in interest received compared with last year. You will see that income from the burial ground has also increased significantly; almost double that of last year. This is predominantly due to an increased number of plots acquired by non-Betchworth residents (or 'Aliens' as Bernard likes to refer to them!). 100% of the allotment income was received this year and rates will continue to remain the same for 2019/2020; £35 for a full plot and £17.50 for half (6 full plots in total).

Miscellaneous income was almost 50% lower than last year as no grants were applied for or received during 2018/19; however we did receive a fee from a film company who shot a commercial around Goulburn Green in the summer! Overall the total income received for 2018/19 has increased by 10% (£2500 excluding VAT) from last year.

Moving to expenditure, administration costs increased slightly, as expected.

Spending of S137 money was low, used to cover legal fees which have since been reimbursed. Despite income from the burial ground being higher this year, expenditure was 25% lower without any significant improvement works this year.

Our expenditure on Parks and Open Spaces was higher; mainly due to the delay in carrying out resurfacing of the path in Goulburn Green. We received the grant money last year, but the resurfacing itself didn't take place until May and then the

remainder in August 2018. Our other large expenditure this year has been for the creation of the new website, launched after much anticipation, in *September* 2018. The Parish Council budgeted to cover some of this capital expenditure from their reserves rather than grant money. However the unexpected income from the Burial Ground means that the cash reserves remain strong and our bank balances show an overall increase from last year.

Internal Auditors Mulberry and Co were scrupulously thorough when auditing our accounts last year, and as such the Finance Group have agreed to retain their services. We have been very grateful for their support.

Copies of these draft accounts are available as handouts and will be available on the website in due course. Thank you.

## **9. REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS**

Representatives of the following local organizations gave verbal reports as follows.

### **Footpaths Officer's Report**

*John Foreman gave the following report:*

Good evening, I am John Foreman, footpath Officer for Betchworth Parish Council and volunteer path warden for Surrey County Council. My duties are to maintain access to footpaths, clear overgrown vegetation and deal with the bane of my life LITTER AND FLY TIPPING. To help with this, I organise twice yearly litter picks around the village which are supported by residents, MVDC and volunteers from outside the village. These collections result in high volumes of rubbish which MVDC then collect and dispose of as appropriate. The next collection is on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April starting from Goulburn Green at 10.30, all are welcome to assist.

I also report fallen trees, fly tipping and highway problems. There is usually a swift acknowledgement of these reports but not necessarily a swift resolution. While writing this report, curiosity got the better of me and I looked back on my records, the first notable request goes back to September 2012 and was from Mr. Donald Patch, to see if anything could be done to improve a very slippery path beside his garden. Unfortunately, I could not think of a solution but agreed to pass the complaint to Mole Valley countryside access. One notable success was the alteration to the footbridge approach on the Betchworth to Brockham path which enabled motorised wheelchairs to use the whole length of this path.

This year has seen some improvements, some changes and some disappointments. Between May and September 2018, the parapet wall on the North side of Betchworth bridge has been damaged three times, the first two occasions were repaired in a reasonable time but I suspect we will wait a long time for the latest collision to be dealt with.

Life is full of surprises and on 26<sup>th</sup> July a herd of belted Galloway cows escaped from the field near my home and were helping themselves to the succulent vegetation along Wonham Lane, Martin Clipperton to the rescue, he herded them back to the field using his van to push them forward, I think he would be a star turn in a rodeo. Worse was yet to come, on 29<sup>th</sup> July (yes it was the day of the Prudential London cycle race) the same herd broke out of the field and were roaming at will in the garden of More Place and enjoying the exotic pasture. The owner of the cows was not allowed out of his farm in Westcott to recover them because of the cycle race, and the Alexanders, owners of More Place were away

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so Martin to the rescue again, this time in torrential rain, with his daughter and myself gradually encouraging them back to their field and keeping them there until Martin could get some fencing materials and raise the height of the fence. I have never seen such athletic cows jumping back over the fence with a little encouragement from us.

Who said the life of a footpath Officer is dull? I will be pleased to carry on with my duties and if you have any problems I will be happy to assist in their resolution.

Don't forget the litter pick on 13<sup>th</sup> April!

### **Betchworth & Buckland Children's Nursery**

*Julie Hardy delivered the following report from Alison Hedges (Chair of the Nursery Management Committee):*

In June 2018 we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a Garden Party on the school field attended by present and former members of staff, pupils and friends. It was great to see so many 'old faces' and we took a photo of children who had attended the Nursery over the years, including some of the first children in the nursery 25 years ago, some of whom now have children of their own! There was lots of reminiscing over old photo albums accompanied by tea, cake and Pimms and it was good to see the younger children playing on the bouncy castle and enjoying the entertainment which was laid on.

During the year the children have visited Broome Park on several occasions for music sessions and singing as well as an Easter Egg hunt (organized by Broome Park for the Nursery) and a visit at Christmas when the children took along star biscuits and a decoration for their tree.

Being a rural Nursery, we like to take advantage of our local environment and have watched the farmer ploughing the field and cutting the hedges. We have also seen the new born calves and cows in the field on our regular nature walks.

Our themes this year have included: Ourselves; Traditional stories and rhymes; Mick Inkpen Books and the books of Julia Donaldson.

We also had a 'Grandparents Week' and were delighted to welcome many grandparents into the Nursery to come and play.

We had our traditional visits to the Church at Easter and Christmas and are grateful to the church ladies who provided refreshments for the children and their parents on these occasions. We also collected provisions for Welcare at Harvest Festival and, in the absence of a Rector, Anne Forrest kindly read us a Harvest Story. We look forward to welcoming our new Rector in the Spring and wish her well in her new post in our beautiful village.

### **Family Activities for Betchworth & Buckland (FABB formerly Children's Holiday Activities)**

*Catriona Martin (Chairman) delivered the following report:*

#### **Circus Skills at the B&B Society Annual BBQ**

For the second year FABB families joined forces with the B&B Society to celebrate the summer by holding a Circus workshop before the annual BBQ ON Buckland Green. 25 children attended and every one stayed on to enjoy a much-needed hotdog or two. Our workshop leader delighted the children with demonstrations and encouraged everyone to try spinning diabolo sticks, balancing flower sticks, plate

spinning, juggling and stilt walking. The Dads had great fun, got very competitive and the children enjoyed it all too.

### **Summer Holiday Ball Skills Morning**

Sadly, the British monsoon season meant that our planned ball skills morning had to be cancelled, but we are hoping to reschedule this year.

### **Christmas Disco at The Reading Room**

In an attempt to cater for younger and older children, we moved away from an entertainer led show to a full on disco complete with neon accessories for all, snow and bubbles. Everyone enjoyed showing off their dance skills and there were plenty of team games, including dressing up two mummies with rolls of toilet roll! The afternoon finished off with a welcome pizza delivery and chocolate Santa's to take home. This year we had record numbers with 36 children and a waiting list.

### **Thanks**

Our ongoing thanks go to The Betchworth Parish Council for their kind donation towards funding these events and keeping costs accessible for even larger families. We also would like to thank the B&B society for their donation last year which means we have been able to meet the costs of liability insurance to host each event, which we now have to fund separately.

Finally, I would like to thank the growing number of mums on our committee and local helpers for their hard work in keeping FABB going for another year.

### **FABB Community Role**

Through these annual events FABB has become a useful hub for new families arriving in both Betchworth and Buckland. Over the last 3-4 years and we have noticed how quickly new families get in touch and join in or are pointed in our direction through word of mouth.

### **Betchworth & Buckland Society**

*Richard Worsley (Chairman) gave the following report:*

The Betchworth & Buckland Society had an eventful and successful 2018.

#### **Membership**

Total membership in the two villages is over 120 households. Jackie Ellison our Membership Secretary worked hard to ensure we were GDPR compliant by the late May deadline. She did a more thorough job than many commercial organisations with which we deal.

#### **Planning**

Over the past two years we have had to develop more in house knowledge about planning, especially with the Future Mole Valley plans proposed by MVDC. We have made much effort to understand the thinking behind this, as well as how it affects applications which may appear controversial. I am pleased that Mike Gibson joined the committee with a brief to look at planning and his enthusiasm has been very useful over the past year. Planning can be hard to follow, as there seems to be no hard and fast rules, just statements of intent. A further nuisance is that enforcement does not always seem thorough. We were successful in supporting a road warranty resurfacing campaign for the A25 through our councillor to SCC.

#### **Events**

We had an interesting speaker from Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance in May, raising over £300 for that cause. Our summer BBQ went well, with many young families and a face painter enjoying the sunshine. In the Autumn we had a talk by the

regional chairman of the CPRE, a larger national charity with similar aims to ourselves.

In November we hosted a talk by Karen Wilson on the Armistice which was well supported and raised £133 for the British Legion. Later in the month we had a fine dinner at Reigate Heath GC, which was followed by a Christmas drinks in December. Last month we had a hugely successful Quiz, with a record 107 people and thirteen tables showing off their knowledge. We now have a trophy worthy of the contestants' abilities.

### **Donations**

Last year we celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> year in giving to nominated good causes within the two villages. We propose to repeat this and currently are looking at a handful of worthy nominations which you have been contacted about. The general principles are that the causes are local, and we want to help those previously overlooked.

### **Summary**

The Society's purpose is to preserve the quality of life in Betchworth and Buckland. We have a very effective committee of six, Pat Frankland, Tamlynne Chapman, Claire Daniell, Jackie Ellison, Mike Gibson and myself. We could do with more do-ers to help us. If you have any neighbours who have joined the village, please ask them to consider joining us in whatever capacity which works.

Two members of public then left the meeting.

### **Betchworth Burial Ground**

*Bernard Hawkins, Burialground Caretaker read the following report:*

Our Burial Ground remains a well kept and peaceful place which I happily visit on many occasions throughout the year. It has always been difficult to predict the running costs of the Burial Ground and traditionally we have always carried a £2,000 contingency sum in the reserves to cover years of lower than expected income. This can be partly attributed to the varying "popularity" of the Burial Ground each year. For example, a severe cold spell such as the Beast from the East should increase the "popularity" and hence the income. BUT in a BREXIT year who knew what to expect! I can however tell you that this past year has been quite exceptional.

The 2018 Budget for the Burial Ground contained six elements of routine expenditure totalling £4,450. However, at the year end all six were underspent; mowing was £82 less, water rates were £100 less, we didn't do any pruning or weedkilling, we stopped the BIFFA rubbish collection and even the caretaker was paid less than last year. Overall at the end of the year we were £1000 to the good. Furthermore, there were no significant improvement works carried out in 2018 and the £600 capital budget wasn't called upon either.

Turning now to income. At the beginning of the year we modestly raised the Burial Ground charges for the first time for some 4 years in order to keep us roughly in line with current rates elsewhere. This was expected to bring in an increase of around 10% in the Burial Ground income, but two other factors also came into play. Firstly, the purchasers of Exclusive Rights of Burial shifted away from Betchworth parishioners towards folk living in Brockham and further afield; and of course, we charge significantly higher rates to non-parishioners. Secondly, that Easterly wind did have its effect and the number of Burials in the year increased from six to eleven with nearly 80% again coming from Brockham or further away. This resulted

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in the planned income of £5,500 rising dramatically to £12,315 and producing overall a “windfall” of some £8,000.

All this has neatly offset the planned need to dip into the Reserves this year, and All I can now do is to just wonder; how popular the Burial Ground will prove to be in this coming year!!

### **Goulburn Cup Tennis Tournament**

*The Clerk delivered the following report on behalf of Eiluned Slot :*

The Tennis tournament weekend is an example of village life at its best. Lots of old and not-so-old and young all get involved in the weekend, including an encouraging number of pushchairs - good news for the future. 2018 gave us a gorgeous weekend. Tennis numbers were down, but the BBQ and Ploughman's lunch were more successful than ever. In order to make up the numbers of tennis players, the golden rules of the tournament were adjusted, so that some under-twelve-year-olds, and even players from Buckland. were included.

Romina and Paul Rushton beat Joan and Ali Bird in the finals.

2019 will be the 40th Betchworth Tennis Tournament. To make it a special weekend, alert your neighbours, old and new, and persuade them to join in.

### **The Arts Society, Betchworth (formerly Betchworth Decorative and Fine Arts Society)**

*Debbie Jones gave the following report:*

The Arts Society, Betchworth (formerly catchily called NADFAS) meets monthly for lectures at Betchworth Village Memorial Hall on a Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Our lectures cover a wide range of subjects – recent topics have included Piers (a look at the history of pleasure piers), the Elgin marbles, and Art inspired by Wine. Membership of our society costs just £40 for a year for which you can attend 10 excellent lectures plus the opportunity of going on day trips to a diverse range of destinations – these have included guided tours to the Armourers' Hall and the Guildhall and the Queen's House and National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. We also hold 'special interest days' where we have lectures throughout the day plus lunch – this years focussed on 20<sup>th</sup> century fashion. We're also going on a five day visit to Vienna with a group of our members.

If you are interested in joining visit the website of the society [theartssocietybetchworth.org.uk](http://theartssocietybetchworth.org.uk)

### **North Downs School**

*The Clerk read the report on behalf of Jane Douglass (head):*

This has been another very successful year for North Downs Primary School. We continue to have one Reception class at Betchworth and two single age classes at Leigh – a year 1 class and a year 2 class. We then have 11 classes of pupils, aged from 4 to 11, at our Brockham base, with a total of 427 pupils across the three villages. We are almost full to capacity and early information indicates that we are significantly over subscribed for our two Reception classes for this coming September.

Since our Ofsted Inspection in 2018, a focus for the school has been to further develop our school curriculum. We feel very fortunate to have such lovely school grounds situated in beautiful villages so we have placed a huge emphasis on



learning outside the classroom, as mentioned in my report last year. To that end we have just been awarded the National Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Mark (Bronze). This is a real coup for all the staff and governors here as it shows that we are really making strides in providing our pupils with potentially life-changing opportunities. Research shows that children learn best through real life experiences. Taking learning beyond the classroom walls makes learning more memorable and appeals to different learning styles. We're thrilled to get official recognition for our efforts and we look forward to building on this award to integrate LOtC into the everyday life of the school.

I have also mentioned previously that parking continues to be one of the main areas of discussion for our parent focus group. We remain committed to minimising any disruption to the residents and also to ensuring the safety of our young people. To that end children are taken along the pavements and paths near the schools and given instruction in road safety rules. Year 2 take part in the 'Pedals' programme in which they bring their bicycle or scooter to school and are shown how to ride it safely. Older children take part in the 'bikeability' programme which trains them to ride their bicycle safely and to be aware of the dangers associated with cycling on the road. Once they have successfully passed this training then, if parents agree, children may ride to school unaccompanied, although I have noticed that many of our children are still accompanied by parents.

Sadly, the roads around our sites are no longer safe for our young cyclists largely due to the speed of much of the traffic, along with some instances of dangerous and inconsiderate parking. This unfortunately remains an ongoing issue for us, despite our regular letters and reminders to parents. A big thank you to the residents who have been supporting us in our endeavours with this ongoing problem. We very much value being part of each of our village communities and are committed to minimising any disruption to the residents and also to ensuring the safety of our young people.

### **Betchworth Archives**

*Karen Wilson gave the following report:*

Last year was a busy one for the Archives. We held our exhibition, 'Trades and Services in Betchworth' in November which was well attended and warmly praised! We were able to display information about early trades (brewers and ale tasters were mentioned frequently) as well as those (just) within living memory. We also displayed artefacts including a drain cover (much coveted!), a toilet cistern and a variety of woodworking tools. Betchworth supported numerous trades and services including butchers, grocers, bakers, dressmakers, coal merchants, bootmakers, builders, plumbers – we tried to cover them all. And Bob Bartlett contributed a mine of information about policing in the 60s and 70s - his pocketbooks were a revelation.

Our regular work in the Archives takes place every Tuesday in the Hamilton Room all year round. Indexing the Parish magazines is progressing and once the photograph cataloguing is complete, work will start on scanning them in. We continue to have regular number of visitors and enquiries. Email enquiries are usually associated with family history and we have been able to help by either supplying information or suggesting other sources of information. Requests have come from America and New Zealand this year, as well as the UK. Locating graves in the churchyard is often requested and we are usually successful with this (except when photographs of inscribed medieval tombstones are requested – they just don't

exist!). Personal visitors come to view documents and photographs for their own research.

We will resume the re-survey of the churchyard this summer, and hope that it is not quite as unbearably hot as last year. We are recording the graves and memorials with written descriptions and photographs. Tony Hines is continuing to photograph the graves in the Burial Ground and has offered his help with photographing the graves in the churchyard.

This year's exhibition will commemorate the signing of the Peace Treaty in 1919. It is being held in conjunction with Brockham and will not only feature the men who fought and died, but also the men who fought and returned. We will be tracing what happened to some of families after the war, especially those who were bereaved. There will also be information about the German prisoners of war who worked in the quarry. The exhibition is being held in Brockham Village Hall on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November.

We are, as ever, grateful for the continuing and generous support given by the Hamilton Room Trust without which we could not function.

### **Betchworth Operatic and Dramatic Society (BODS)**

*Julie Hardy Delivered the following report on behalf of Pam Patch (Vice President):*

Last year's spring production, a comedy thriller interpretation of John Buchan's "The 39 Steps" was a great success. A dashing hero, some sinister spies and a femme fatale provided fun for audience and cast alike. This was an unusual choice, as was the little known opera "Thespis", an early work by Gilbert and Sullivan for which the dialogue had survived but only one original song. Our Musical Director used themes from all the well known G & S scores and matched a them to the words, an Olympian achievement which reflected the theme of the opera based in ancient Greece.

On Saturday May 18th this year we have a one day workshop on Shakespeare with expert tuition from Michael Corbridge, Senior Voice and Text Associate with the Royal Shakespeare Company. The day will include an opportunity to delve deeper into ways of speaking and performing Shakespeare using some of his best known work in a companionable atmosphere. Tickets are £30 to include a light lunch. Booking details are in the March parish magazine.

Lehars "The Merry Widow" will be our November production, with a launch here on Tuesday 25th June. We extend a warm welcome to anyone wishing to brush up their Shakespeare or enjoy Lehar's romantic music.

### **Betchworth Parish Magazine**

*Ros Rokison gave the following report:*

There has been a Parish Magazine in Betchworth since 1892! Beautifully bound copies of all these magazines can be viewed in the Hamilton Room. Parishioners and their helpers have always run the collating of articles, editing and publishing the magazine on a voluntary basis. Printing has always been done by an outside firm.

The magazine's aim is to give information to and about the whole village. As well as Church matters we report on village activities such as the Parish Council, WI, North Downs Primary School and the Betchworth and Buckland Society. It also embraces any local, non- political news, events and activities that it is felt might be of

interested to the readers. The magazine is delivered to every house in the village by an invaluable team of 32 people headed by Susie Redburn. We are always delighted to receive articles, including photos if relevant, which would be of interest to parishioners for possible inclusion in the magazine. If anyone has any good ideas for what might be included which would be of interest, please let us know. Several copies have now been complemented by colour photographs.

Articles for the magazine now arrive exclusively by email to [betchworthmag@hotmail.com](mailto:betchworthmag@hotmail.com). We also will publish appropriate small ads from parishioners at a nominal cost for a limited number of issues, proceeds going to church funds. There is still a waiting list for commercial advertisers, which is always a good thing.

Our editors, Ros Rokison, Sian Winter and Tim Warren have the task of collating, editing and sometimes retyping all the various articles, putting everything into the correct format and font. The articles are then numbered in the correct appropriate order before sending them to the Desk Top Publishers. Their job is to put them all into the magazine template. This is a lengthy process as articles have to fit exactly into the correct number of pages and we try where possible not split articles over the page. Photographs have to be manipulated to fit. This work is done by Ros Rokison, Alison Higgins, and John Scotcher. The magazine continues to be very professional in its construction and production.

If anyone is interested in joining the team we would be delighted to hear from you. We would be particularly interested to hear from anyone who would like to join the team of desktop publishers. The more people involved in the production of the magazine the easier it is for everyone involved. Training will be given if anyone is interested in joining us. In fact if we had a few more volunteers, our hard working team might even be able to take the odd holiday now and then.

### **Betchworth Village War Memorial Hall**

*Ian Wilson gave the following report on behalf of Jean Hurman:*

2018 has been another successful year with our highest revenue to date. We have seen a good start in 2019 although we have had a couple of cancellations due to the threat of snow and ice, but fortunately so far this year the weather has not been too bad.

Our second art class on a Wednesday afternoon and also some Saturdays/Sundays have enjoyed the hall so much they have already booked 2020 dates. Our very popular Pilates class continues two days a week, as does our Thursday art class. I am pleased to say The Mulberry Club is still with us also the Back Club but every other week. The Melodies for Memories are still meeting every Wednesday morning with Alzheimer sufferers and their carers enjoying coffee and sing along to music. We have a new Rock and Roll evening on the second Friday in the month called Lucifers and they too have already booked 2020 dates. Another new user this year are the Betchworth Beaders but we must not forget our existing regular users of many years, The Betchworth Arts Soc., BODS, Buckland & Betchworth Choral Soc. and The Antique Fairs. It is very rewarding to see the hall continues to be well used and we have already a substantial number of bookings for this year and some for 2020.

We have replaced the chain and cone with smart red metal gates which are much easier to

manage. We have replaced all the hall lights with LED lights which we hope will reduce running costs. The mystery leak in the chair store has been repaired and there has been no puddles during the recent wet period. The overhead projector is now connected to peoples computers via a WiFi dongal so no missing leads again. The back steps have been made child proof by filling the gaps between the poles with wire mesh so they cannot fall of the edge of the steps. Thanks to all committee members for the hard work on these projects.

The Committee have been looking at quite a few ways that we can improve the hall, which has led us to the purchase of new blinds for the main hall and village hall china. The old blue village china has gone to good homes.

The hall floor had it usual re-coating at Christmas time and if anyone has any suggestions how we can further improve the hall please feel free to tell us.

### **Betchworth Sand Quarry, J&J Franks**

*The Clerk read the following report on behalf of Peter Crate*

March 2018 saw the last sand leave the site at Betchworth and during the year we received a small amount of inert waste in the old processing plant area north of the Old Reigate Road.

In the summer we started the construction works to create a geological barrier in the base and sidewalls of the quarry before tipping can commence in the second and last phase of the Common Field. The works were completed in September. We then submitted the documented works to the Environment Agency who have just given their approval and we can now start infilling the final phase.

We are going to reopen the landfill on 1st April and plan to get the Common Field completed as quickly as possible. We are hopeful it will be completed by the end of 2020 and depending on when that is achieved will aim to place the soils back on the site either late Autumn 2020 or Spring 2021.

Whilst pulling out of the Common Field we are required to infill the tunnel which will have to be partially done using concrete. Once that is completed we will then work back from the Tunnel infilling the remaining void north of the Old Reigate Road replacing the originally stripped soils as we progress.

We are confident the site will be completed within the prescribed timetable under our Permissions. The Common Field was required to be completed by the end of 2022 and we should achieve that 2 years early which will similarly enable us to finish the rest of the site in advance of the end of 2024 as Consented.

Should any local people wish to ask any questions please direct them to me and I will help accordingly.

### **Brockham Green Horticultural Society**

*Karen Wilson (Chairman of the BGHS) gave the following report:*

The Horticultural Society for our three villages of Betchworth, Brockham and Buckland, is alive and well. We are continuing to support the North Downs Primary School allotment project and were delighted when they received the Surrey Healthy Schools Award (Gold Level) last year. This year we are supporting the 'Brockham in Bloom' competition by supplying judges and a prize and our Fortune bulb planting project will feature in Buckland's 'Parishes in Bloom' entry.

Our winter talks have been very interesting and very well attended – we nearly ran out chairs at our last talk on 'The Secret Life of the Mole'!

DRAFT

Members were invited to Sara and Adrian Smart's interesting and lovely garden on a very warm evening in July. The welcome was equally warm, the evening was enjoyed by all and £400 was raised for St. Catherine's Hospice.

Our Membership Secretary, Linda Dunn, retired last year and we are lucky to have recruited TWO replacements, Ruth Hamilton and Paul Johnson. They have already started to build on Linda's excellent work so look out for our newly designed 'flyers' and membership cards.

Last year's show was well supported by adults and children alike and the new classes attracted new entrants. This year's show schedule will introduce even more new classes which we hope will reflect what members are growing and making; they will include squashes, peppers ugly vegetables and re-purposed handcrafts. We moved our plant sale to a Sunday last year, which proved to be popular. Our plant sale this year will be held outside Brockham House on Sunday 19th May between 2-4pm. As well as plants there will be crafts, books and garden artefacts so we hope that you will come and buy as much as you can.

### **Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society**

*Pat Frankland gave the following report:*

The Choral Society is currently deep in rehearsals for this year's Leith Hill Music Festival. We are singing Bach's Magnificat in D and Haydn's Creation on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April at Dorking Halls. The Bach is proving a bit of a challenge to our brains as well as our singing skills. We would be very glad to see local people in the audience at the evening concert, 7.30pm Dorking Halls, supporting us in the same numbers as they turned out for our carol concert in December.

Our Wednesday evening rehearsals at the Village Hall are very enjoyable. Singing is great fun and provides the opportunity to meet new people. The choir is non-auditioned and very welcoming to newcomers. We hold a number of social events during the year including a quiz night, and a musical soiree. Once a month we go down to the Red Lion post rehearsals and on Festival days we have a choir lunch at a Dorking restaurant to celebrate the fact the competitions are finished for the day, and any successes achieved.

If you are interested come and join us for the taster evening we are running at the start of the summer term on 1st May. In the summer term we are planning to sing for an evening Mass at Guildford Cathedral and then join the St Cecilia Choir, Banstead for a summer concert.

Both our October autumn concert, of Vivaldi's Gloria and Chilcott's Dances of Time, and our December Carol Concert took place at St Michael's, Betchworth. Both concerts were very well attended by local villagers and families and friends of the singers. The Carol Concert raised nearly £800 for The Renewed Hope Trust, a charity for the homeless based around Redhill and Reigate. We are very grateful for all the local support.

Our 2019/20 seasons begins on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September and all are welcome then or whenever they come back from holiday. Our music for the 2020 Leith Hill Festival will be Vaughan Williams Sea Symphony.

BBCS is renowned as being a warm, welcoming and sociable group of people who enjoy making music together. Please will you all spread the message about the two villages' Choral Society. Thank You.

### **Barley Mow Residents Association**

*Julie Barella, Secretary of the BMRA gave the following report:*

It has now been 5 years since the entrance to the lorry yard that was shared with the Barleymow Court entrance was closed, and while we still maintain a good relationship with Moores, we are still waiting for the planting of shrubs to mask the old entrance.

The sign was removed from the old entrance although we still get the occasional commercial vehicle driving into the road. The postcode has been changed however to RH3 7HB, which also covers the Arkle Manor and the cottages adjacent to the pub so as time goes on, there should be even less vehicles coming into our road. We are sometimes woken by early morning noise still – as early as 6am in the week despite the opening hours of 7am. We tried to get into the yard last Saturday morning at around 9am to return a piece of machinery to Dorking Tool Hire but the main gates were closed and remained so all day. Another driver tried to get in and had to punch in a code into the keypad before being able to enter. So we think that they don't open any more on a Saturday which is good news from a noise perspective.

Moores sold the parcel of land behind houses 2-12 to those residents and following a lot of hard work we have transformed them from barren scrubland into gardens we can be proud of and can enjoy the summers in.

*On behalf of BMCRA*

Julie Barella (Secretary), June Butler (Chairman), Rod Smith (Treasurer)

### **Mulberry Bush Music**

*Councillor Julie Hardy gave the following report:*

Sarah Pearson and I have been running Mulberry Bush Music for 8 years.

It is a drop in music group for toddlers and their carers, who can be Mums, Dads, Grannies childminders, etc. We meet at 9.30 on Tuesday mornings in term time in the Geoffrey Browne room of the village hall where everyone joins in with carefully selected songs and rhymes to fit one of a dozen or so themes. All accompanied by the piano.

We have bells, shakers, tambourines and drums, and some of our themes include dressing up.

It can be very noisy but is great fun!

### **Pebblecoombe Women's Institute.**

*Margaret Miller gave the following report:*

2018 started for Pebblecoombe WI with the sad death of Rhona Hill, who for many epitomised this WI. Rhona had been a member for almost 35 years, taking a leading role in most activities. We still miss her.

2018 was also the celebration of the Centenary of the Women's Institute in Surrey, although Betchworth has had a WI for 102 years, with the first Federation President being Mrs Du Buisson from this village.

Visiting speakers have introduced us to the past Pubs of Dorking, remembered by many members, although some may have been under-age for visits. We practiced aromatherapy on each other, with interesting results, shared experiences with a Poet, had a lively History lesson on English freedoms, and learnt of the escapades of various native wildlife animals and the tight places hedgehogs and other creatures get themselves stuck in. Wildlife Aid, in Leatherhead, collects injured native wildlife from all over the South East.

DRAFT

As all WIs know, food is a major attraction at our meetings, January – Fish and Chips, March - the local Dinner, June- Teas on the Green and later the Surrey Federation Centenary picnic at RHS Wisley, and in August we held a Garden party at a member's home in Dorking. Finally we had the traditional Christmas buffet party. 6 events in 12 months, not bad.

Over the year we have also discussed the Resolution, put to all WI members and at the Annual Meeting, held this year in Liverpool, on Mental Health Matters. This gives the National WI Executive authority to hold discussions with the Government and Health authorities, backed by the entire WI membership.

Now to the publicity: Pebblecombe WI is again holding Teas on the Green on Sunday 9th June, from 2 to 5pm. The usual home-made cakes, sausage rolls and cream teas will be on offer, so please, mark the date in your diaries, and come and join us for a Sunny Sunday afternoon on the Goulburn Green.

Thank you.

### **St Michael's Church/PCC**

*The following report was given by Bernard Hawkins, Church Warden.*

The priorities for 2018 were very simple and straightforward. Firstly, to keep St Michael's running smoothly and secondly to identify and appoint a new Rector. We were extremely fortunate that Canon David Eaton stepped up and took on the responsibility for largely running all the services and for finding local clergy to fill any gaps.

The year progressed normally and in May we held our four yearly Flower Festival, themed on "All things Bright and Beautiful". Some twenty-one gloriously creative flower arrangements filled the church and ranged from a stunning altar frontal of the sun, to the subtle colours used to depict the "the purple headed mountains". Many visitors also ventured up into the Bell Tower and on to the tower roof, and a most enjoyable concert was provided by members of BODS and the choir. Over £5000 was raised towards church funds.

Other milestones in 2018 were the Harvest Supper held in the Village Hall on 28<sup>th</sup> September when we were entertained to a high standard by a locally produced Victorian Music Hall. The actual Harvest Festival Service was held on 7<sup>th</sup> October, with a beautifully decorated church and the harvest gifts being distributed to Parishioners and Welcare.

Each year on Remembrance Sunday we gather round the War Memorial to read the names and remember those from Betchworth who made the ultimate sacrifice during the World Wars. This year was the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ending of the First World War and it was noticeable that our congregation that morning was significantly enhanced by rare visitors and parishioners who had their own family reasons to mark the centenary. During the year our Bellringers took part in a national initiative to recruit new ringers to retrospectively replace the 1400 bellringers known to have perished in the First World War.

A third Alternative Christmas Tree Festival was held at the end of November. Again, more than 20 village and church organisations took part creating intense excitement over the voting and the declaration of the winning design. This year the children come up trumps and won both the adult and youngster's competition, and the festival featured another knitted Christmas tree, this time made of nearly 150 knitted scarves, complete with tasselled ends.

Christmas always proves to be a big draw for the church family and the Christmas Eve Crib Service proved as popular as ever with over 400 attendees. This year

there was no Midnight Service at Betchworth as this was celebrated at Buckland. However, the joint service at Betchworth on Christmas morning was well attended and it was particularly lovely to welcome back many old faces and former wedding couples.

Meanwhile the Wardens tackled the recruitment of a new Rector, a somewhat slow and laborious activity. The first hurdle was to produce a "Parish Profile. This turned out to be a 20page document giving a comprehensive description of the parish along with a job description, and indications of the future wishes of the parish. This was completed by the end of June and resulted in an Advertisement in the Church Times at the beginning of September. Interviews were held in October when a unanimous decision was reached to invite the Rev Anna Moore to become our new Rector. She has previously been a curate in St Mark's Church in Reigate and brings with her, her husband Alistair and three charming children. This will be her first appointment and we eagerly look forward to her institution on Wednesday April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at St Michael's. We do hope that you will ALL come and give her a resounding and memorable welcome.

### **Betchworth United Charities**

*Martin Higgins delivered the following report:*

As in many local communities ancient endowments have been brought together in Betchworth to create Betchworth United Charities. The principal source of income in the past, and now, is from the Henry Smith Charity which dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and makes an annual grant to BUC. This grant is the only source of regular income and is intended to be distributed to the "poor and needy" to alleviate "the need, hardship or distress of local people".

What these definitions mean has changed over the centuries and trustees must use good judgement to interpret them for our own day when allocating grants.

The charity is able to do this within the ancient parish of Betchworth which in effect is the now two parishes of Brockham and Betchworth. In the light of this the two incumbents of these parishes are ex-officio trustees along with one representative each from the two parish councils and six other appointed trustees.

The trustees make annual ongoing grants to between 25-35 local beneficiaries who have been commended in need of support, as well as others in their catchment area who may have current one-off needs. Sometimes these recipients are to be found within local institutions and sometimes they are private individuals who have applied or been commended.

The trustees are always ready to receive applications from local residents.

### **The Hamilton Room**

*David Hill, Treasurer, gave the following report:*

This small hall in Church Street now in its 29<sup>th</sup> year is part of the Goulburn Estate and is provided for the use of the local community and Church.

In the Hamilton room there is the Meg Ryan Room which houses many archives detailing local history. Our archivists meet once a week and continue to do a sterling job, sorting and filing our good collection of church village history.

An archives exhibition was hosted on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> November and provided visitors with insights into our local history.

The hall is hired out to various users every week groups like Beading and Singing and forms a part of the regular income for the room.



DRAFT

One of the most popular events continues to be the “Drop in Teas” the last Wednesday of the month afternoons and is an important meeting point for the local community, enjoying tea, cake and a chat.

St Michael’s enjoys the use of the room for PCC and various church meetings, fund raising and charitable events. It has been used on some Sundays and festival days for Children’s church activity sessions.

The room is particularly useful for its facilities when the church is hosting a concert, festival or indeed one of the numerous weddings.

We are fortunate that we have regular users of the hall and little space for other hirers.

Those people who book the Room are highly thought of by us, for the way they respect the room, leave it clean and tidy and most importantly enjoy using the room.

Our Bookings last year maintain a good level, and our income provides the funds for the continued archive work, maintenance and running costs of the hall.

The Hamilton Room is managed by a small dedicated band of volunteers and is a valuable asset to the community and church offering an easily accessible meeting Room in the centre of Betchworth.

Thank you to the hard working volunteers who run the room.

### **Betchworth Parish Crockery**

*Councillor Julie Hardy gave the following report:*

This is my final report on the parish crockery.

For 25 years I have been hiring out blue crockery to villagers and users of the village hall, firstly from home and then from cupboards in the back room of the hall. Now the village hall committee have bought a large consignment of white matching crockery which will be available to all hall users. On the very rare occasions when we need it outside the hall, like the tennis tournament, we will be able to collect it and return it to the cupboards. The old blue china has been distributed to various charities and some to the Hamilton Room.

I cannot say that I will miss it.

### **10. ADDRESS BY SURREY COUNTY COUNCILLOR HELYN CLACK**

*County Councillor Helyn Clack (Member for Dorking Rural Division, Vice Chairman of Surrey County Council) delivered the following address:*

Firstly, may I take this opportunity of thanking your Parish Council for all the work they do to support residents, work with other local authorities like Surrey County Council and the many hours your councillors and Clerk spend in making a difference in our community.

It has been a very busy year at County Hall. We began with the retirement of the Chief Executive and the recruitment of Joanna Killian as our new CEO. Joanna brings with her a wealth of knowledge of improving local government councils. She was CEO of Essex County Council and has turned their services around to be very well regarded.

For the past few years Surrey County Council has been judged inadequate in delivering children services and our priority is to improve services to our most vulnerable children and families in the County. Our budget envelope continues to be challenging, and the County is having to make some difficult decisions regarding prioritising funding on non-statutory services and to consider changes to those services we are legally charged with delivering to be more effective and efficient.

Residents in Surrey are concerned about these changes and as your county councillor it is important to make your voice heard at council.

The County Council continues to transform its services to maintain the budget envelope it has whilst keeping to the allowed increases in Council Tax.

The County Council Leader for 8 years David Hodge CBE, stood down from the Council at the end of last year and we welcomed C.Cllr Tim Oliver to take on this important role with the support of his Cabinet and colleagues. Tim has recently announced that County Hall will move to Surrey with old county hall being earmarked for redevelopment in Kingston. We will be looking for a new democratic home somewhere in the County although many of our staff and officers are already working from several Surrey offices.

I have been a member of the County Council's Cabinet for many years in various roles. I decided to take the opportunity that arose in December to apply for the role of Vice Chair of the County Council and I was successful. Traditionally this role is for two years and if I am lucky, I may then be able to apply for Chair of the County Council. It is a very important role acting as a conduit for other organisations to be recognised at County Hall. I am very grateful for the support and welcome I am receiving across the county working with partners like the districts and boroughs councils, the Voluntary and Faith Sector, the Police and Health.

Locally, we have had lots of consultations regarding County services such as waste sites, children services, bus passes and library usage. We are also being consulted on the District Plans for enlarging villages and Gatwick Airport Master Plan and the Green Paper on Aviation.

We have had earthquakes in the South of my division, and applications to drill and expand oil production. I have been talking to our local MP about how his experience of devastating earthquakes in New Zealand can help us to explore the evidence to see whether these local tremors are related to the drilling..

The County's additional £20 million investment into road repairs after the 'beast from the east' this time last year produced a plethora of potholes across the county is coming to the end of the financial year and a great deal of repairs have been done, although, there is always more to do.

Flooding in various villages has led to some collaborative work between the agencies although funding for major schemes seems to be missing. The new pot of CIL (community infrastructure levy) which will be paid out as a tax to the District and Parishes on new development in our communities does not add anything to the County funding pot. The question therefore arises who will be responsible for community infrastructure in the future?

These and other issues can often be thought provoking and I regularly receive correspondence on all kinds of matters. I visited many residents over the last year and worked with my district and parish colleagues across my division. As usual I am very grateful for their help and cooperation in helping our residents in our communities.

I still hold the EU brief at Surrey County Council, I am President of PURPLE (Peri-Urban Planning in the EU). This lobbying network campaign to make sure that areas like Surrey on the edge of Urban conurbations are not forgotten in the EU world of infrastructure planning. I also Chair the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership European Structural and Investment Funds Board (ESIF). This organisation will migrate to the 'UK Shared Prosperity Fund' after BREXIT is agreed (one way or the other), we are currently trying to work out how to make sure we get our fair share of this fund which will be decided by the UK Government in future.

DRAFT

Over the last six months I have also chaired the review committee of the Gatwick Noise Management Board which seeks to find a way forward for reducing noise over our homes. The review committee is reviewing governance and code of conduct for members of the committee.

A very busy year again, but one that as usual I have found enjoyable. Parish Councils and District Councils are up for election this year and I would like to thank those that have decided to stand down and wish all the very best of luck to those who succeed them.

Last year I spend my annual allocation across all the villages in my division. The next scheme will open on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2019 and I urge communities to apply for funding where needed. ENDS.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.53 pm.