

FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 24 April 2023 at 7pm at Foxton Village Hall

Present Caroline Ilott, Deborah Roberts and Ian Francis of the Parish Council, District Cllr. James Hobro and 24 members of the public including guest speakers.

1. Introduction and welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting.

The Chairman explained that the Annual Parish Meeting was a meeting of the parish electorate rather than a meeting of the Parish Council.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 25 April 2022 - approved

Caroline Ilott signed the minutes at the meeting.

3. Matters Arising – None

4. Report of the Chairman covering the activities of the Parish Council in 2022/23

See Appendix 1 for written report.

Cambs. County Council will not reinstate the central white lines on resurfaced High Street as Highways regulations have deemed the road too narrow. A resident raised concern that buses do sometimes speed through the village, especially on Fowlmere Road. A resident asked whether speed bumps in the village had been looked into - these are expensive and not favoured by County Council Highways. A resident asked whether there would be a children's goal on the recreation ground – the previous goal had been removed due to conflict over its location and there are no villages in the local area with such a large sized goal. This is not part of the current playground project.

5. Presentation of Annual Accounts

See Appendix 2 for RFO report.

6. Village Groups and representatives' reports

a. Friends of Foxton Woods – Catherine Cairns

Foxton Woods is owned by Cambridgeshire County Council and the woodland was planted by Foxton residents in 1994. Foxton Woods is a key landscape feature, an important habitat for wildlife and amenity for local residents. The friends of Foxton Woods is an informal group of about 20 volunteers interested in stimulating active management of the woodland. Coppicing events are held twice a year, supervised by Cambridge Conservation Volunteers. The group needs more volunteers, particularly younger volunteers to pass knowledge onto. For anyone interested, there will be a one-day wood craft workshop in the summer. There will be a small charge to cover costs and cut hazel from Foxton woods will be used. If you are interested in taking part in the workshop or joining the Friends of Foxton Woods, please contact Catherine Cairns on catherine.cairns4@gmail.com (by the end of May for the woodcraft workshop).

b. Care Together - Leneva Nwachukwu, People Services Cambridgeshire County Council

Leneva has been commissioned to review the way care and support is given to over 65s, to find ways to engage more with local communities and GPs and help older residents remain independent in their local community, activities and home.

Leneva provided the following information to share on the Parish Council website and Facebook:

Care Together is a Cambridgeshire County Council led programme in collaboration with Health and community partners. Its aim is to support the growth of voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) to support older people to remain living independently for longer, in their preferred community.

I will be visiting villages across South Cambridgeshire to speak with groups of older people to understand what gaps exist in services in their community with the view of resolution. If you have a social/activity group you would like me to visit, please contact me at care.together@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

For more information, please review our website [Care Together website](#)

c. Over 60s Group –Alan Fosbeary

The Over 60s group was set up 30 years ago. It is a small, self-funded group, run at no profit, that supports over 60s in the village. Various activities are organised by the group such as theatre and cultural trips, soup lunches (£3 per person), Christmas and Easter lunches (no charge) and a monthly games event (£2). Assistance is also provided in organising communal flu jabs and a communal car scheme (e.g. prescription collection/supermarket/ medical and dental appointments). Drivers are vetted by the County Council. There are 100 Foxton residents who use the car scheme. It was noted that the Cambridgeshire Volunteer Service can provide advice to voluntary groups on matters such as insurance. Click on the link to find [further information about the Cambridgeshire Volunteer Service](#).

d. Meldreth, Shepreth & Foxton Community Rail Partnership - Sarah Grove, Project Officer

The rail partnership of Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton is one of 75 partnerships in the country, and the project officer role is paid for by the train operating companies with contributions received from Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Parish Councils. The partnership provides a voice for the local communities in relation to rail issues. The partnership (i) acts as a consultee and lobbyist in major projects such as EWR Cambridge South station, the proposed Foxton travel hub and the Melbourn Greenway; (ii) promotes healthy, sustainable travel and travel confidence - working with schools and organisations; (iii) maintains station gardens/ flower pots; and (iv) provides information on timetables/ travel disruption/ guides to exploring the area by train. If any clubs or organisations would be interested in arranging a train trip for their group to build travel confidence, please contact Sarah at sarahgrove.msfcrrp@gmail.com.

- e. Neighbourhood Watch – Noleen Brady
The Neighbourhood Watch was started 10 years ago after a spate of burglaries in the village and has coordinators within the village. There is great communication between village residents when there is any suspicious activity. Residents can sign up to the ecops website at <https://www.ecops.org.uk/> to receive regular police updates by email.
- f. Twinning (Foxton-Montigny) – Peter Howell
The Twinning Group has been running for 6 years, with the 5th exchange arranged for Friday 28 April 2023. The group was started by two friends, one from Foxton and one from Montigny with both communities having a lot in common (equitable location, population and housing mix). Montigny is surrounded by forest, whereas Foxton is surrounded by open fields. The visits to Montigny and Foxton are taken turnabout each year, with the group arranging accommodation and social activities. Good friendships have been made and language is not a barrier. The group is self-funded with fund raising events held throughout the year (French café/ cinema). The group would be pleased to welcome new members.
- g. Foxton Preschool – non attendance
- h. Foxton Village Hall – Tessa Howell
Foxton Village Hall is run by a group of volunteers. The AGM is on Tues 16 May 2023 with refreshments provided.
- i. Foxton Gardens Association (FGA)/Stream - Steve Tongish and Rebecca Rajendra
Stream helps to maintain the fabric of Foxton church. The FGA was formed in 1943 as part of digging for Britain and all Foxton residents are members. The AGM is being held on 25 April 2023 at 7.30pm. Fund raising events: plant sale and swap 21 May 10am to 12pm, Open Gardens and tea at St Laurence Church 25 June 1-5.30pm, Cream teas 8 July 2-5pm, Foxton Village Show 9 Sept 2-4.30pm, wine tasting 11 Nov 7.30pm. The FGA are always looking for horticultural projects to be involved in.

It was noted that the FGA had generously offered a contribution of £1500 to Foxton Parish Council for the playground project which will be used for planting, in the next phase of the project.

- j. District Councillor James Hobro
Cllr. Hobro shared his written report on Facebook. The main points covered were (i) the Greater Cambridge Local Plan; (ii) assessment of housing need and council housing stock; (iii) business support; (iv) carbon emission reduction grant schemes/ 6 free trees and electric bin lorries for waste management; (v) the Community Chest Scheme (cycle racks at the village shop/ pub); (vi) village bus service; (vii) the cost of living crisis (warm hubs/ support packages); (viii) Homes for Ukraine; (ix) Key goals looking ahead - fly tipping, civil parking enforcement, mobile warden scheme for the elderly, support for health & wellbeing projects, new energy efficient council houses, tailored business support/ help for greener businesses, local markets, addressing water scarcity/ safeguarding rivers and streams, supporting local Zero Carbon projects, providing greener waste collection.

A resident asked about the Thakeham development – James advised that at the moment it seemed that this won't be taken any further. A resident asked if the bus could travel as far as Tesco and Aldi in Royston. Cllr. Hobro agreed the bus service could be improved. Please contact Cllr. Hobro by email cllr.hobro@scambs.gov.uk / phone 07768 706670 with any questions/concerns.

k. County Councillor Peter McDonald – non attendance

l. Woman's Institute Sue Humphreys

The WI group was formed in 1923 and is a laid back and friendly group that needs more members, particularly some younger members that will be able to keep the group going in the future. The group meets on the first Tuesday of every month and anyone interested in joining can have 3 free trial visits to get a taste of what the WI does. The meetings are in the village hall and speakers are arranged most nights. Membership is £46 per year.

7. Open forum for Q&A – no further questions

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

Annabel Wright

Parish Clerk

15 May 2023

Appendix 1: Foxton Parish Council Chair's Report by Caroline Hott 24 April 2023

Parish Council membership

This Parish Council is now 1 year into its 4 year term of office. We started off in May last year with only 5 elected councillors. Over the past 12 months we have had up to 8 councillors of our allotted 10 but are now back to 5. This gaining and losing of valued colleagues is a reflection on the increased life pressures all of us have had to deal with through and post Covid, but I am very grateful to everyone who has devoted their time and skills to public service for Foxton.

A Parish Council has limited powers to make decisions, but we do have the ability to influence and negotiate with organisations that do ie District and County Councils. Our aim is to represent the interests of the whole community and to balance those needs in as fair a way as possible against ever increasing costs.

So what have we done since April 2022?

1. Playground

After much research and village consultation, the playground plan and design was put forward for major grant applications at the start of the year. It was always made clear that the plans could not progress without grant funding as we only had approx. half the needed funds. Unfortunately, we heard in March 2023 that our bids were not successful, with the grant pots being oversubscribed 8 times. Grants from anywhere are now much harder to gain.

So, in the light of 'cutting our coat according to the cloth', the Parish Council will now adapt the original design and use a portion of the funds in the bank set aside for this project to refurbish some play equipment, remove old equipment and put in new items. There will be a new area for under 5s plus new equipment in the main area and part of the existing basketball court will be repurposed for play. This Phase 1 will provide something for everyone but not to the extent of the original plan. We have to be realistic in our aims of providing Foxton's children with something better than the current layout.

Full details will be provided in the next month or so.

2. Infrastructure

- i) A close working relationship with County Council Highways officials and help from Peter McDonald resulted in the High Street being micro asphalted rather than having loose chippings in summer 2022.
- ii) The poor finish on the slurry work of village pavements was eventually rectified after much complaining.
- iii) New storm drains were put in on The Green
- iv) Potholes and missing grids were and are chased up for repair.
- v) Storm drains on the High Street were cleared.
- vi) New pavement was installed on Fowlmere Road.
- vii) Broken street signs were replaced.
- viii) The 2022/23 Local Highway Initiative (LHI) was successful although the installation which should have been done at the end of 2022 has been delayed by CCC contractors to May 2023. We will have 2 solar powered MVAS units (flashing signs) on Fowlmere and Barrington Roads plus 40mph buffer zones at Fowlmere, Shepreth and Barrington Roads.

This, plus the ongoing work of the Speedwatch group, should help to reduce vehicle speeds in the village.

ix) FPC are also applying for another LHI for a 20mph limit throughout the village roads.

3. Planning

FPC have commented on various planning applications over the past year, mainly extensions and solar panel applications. There were some applications of note – the Fowlmere Road grain store conversion, a new grain store with fertilizer tanks nearby, the 4th iteration of plans for dwellings at 32 Fowlmere Road, the old Trinity School site in Station Road conversion to 6 dwellings, a 6 dwelling application on Cambridge Road and the large application for turning the Burlington Press into a research and development site.

Foxton is very fortunate to have a robust Neighbourhood Plan, which planners must consult when deciding applications. This helps guide planning and gives us a degree of protection against speculative development as long as the 5 year housing supply remains constant.

There has been nothing new on the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) proposed Foxton Travel Hub, but their next move will be to go to the County Council for planning permission. FPC is keeping a close eye on any developments.

4. Recreation and Amenities

This forms a major part of FPC's work with the focus on maintaining the recreation ground and other green village areas plus ensuring all trees and hedges under the Parish Council's care are safe and present no public risk.

All grass cutting, fertiliser treatment, weed spraying and general remedial contract work is handled by FPC. Annual safety checks of the whole recreation ground are done and the Dovecot field and building have regular checks and cuts.

Many thanks to our village warden, Peter Evans, who does regular litter picks and carries out all routine and other maintenance work, as do parish council colleagues.

5. Finance

The Parish Council's finances remain sound and we have managed to hold the Parish Precept (the portion of your Council Tax that comes to the Parish Council) at the same rate for the last 3 years. However, as costs have gone up everywhere, this is not possible for the new financial year. Following our annual Parish Budget review we have made an overall increase to £3500 which means that a Band D property will only have increase of £2.04 for the year. Lower band properties will be between £1.13 to £1.82 for the year.

We will endeavour to keep costs to the public purse as low as possible while providing a realistic service to the village.

I am grateful to my fellow parish councillors for all their hard work and support over that last year, to Annabel Wright, our clerk and RFO for her careful financial management, guidance through correct governance procedures and doing the many administrative tasks that need

doing on a regular basis. I would also like to thank our County Councillor, Peter McDonald and our District Councillor, James Hobro, for their ongoing help and support.

Finally, we would very much like to be able to progress many village projects and to hear what you would like for Foxton in the next 3 years, but with only 5 or our 10 Parish Councillors, we can only do so much. If you think you can help, then please do contact Annabel Wright on clerk@foxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Foxton is a wonderful place to live and your Parish Council want to keep it that way.

Thank you

Caroline Ilott
Chair
Foxton Parish Council
24th April 2023

Appendix 2 – APM Finance report for financial year 2022-2023

Bank accounts

The Parish Council has bank accounts with Unity Trust, Lloyds and Barclays, with funds shared between the accounts to ensure that funds are protected by the FSCS (Financial Services Compensation Scheme) deposit protection limit per firm of £85,000.

Audit

Last year's external audit was successfully completed with no issues raised. An internal audit is undertaken each year prior to the external audit.

Income

Precept £45,000, general reserves interest £162, S106 interest £376

VAT

£5,138.58 VAT has been reclaimed this year.

Budget and expenditure

The Parish Council kept well to its annual budget, transferring unused funds where needed during the year to cover the compound/skatepark fence costs and a government approved increase in staff pay, mid-year.

The largest expenditure of the Parish Council was for Open Spaces (£17,143), followed by clerk cost - average 70 working hrs per month (£16,705).

Other expenditure included:

- New skate park/compound fence: £5858
- S106 funded: tree planting near playground, a new mower for Foxton Cricket Club, Village Hall WIFI, Dovecote wildflower planting, quantity surveyor for playground project
- Admin (inc. insurance, website, gmail, accounts software, audit fees, training) £4860
- Village hall office and meeting room hire: £845
- Memberships (County Association, Cambs. Acre, SLCC): £718
- Street lighting

A total of £900 in donations were made as follows:

- British Legion Wreath £50
- Rail Partnership Administrator: £700
- Royston Community Transport: £100
- Christmas tree: £50

Parish Council reserves on 31 March 2023

Total all bank balances: **£155,431**

Playground project EMR: **£104,939** (£103,090 S106 funds and £1,849 fun run funds)

Other EMR: **£10,515** (including funds for LHI road safety works (£6902), legal/ consultancy, tree works and defibrillator maintenance)

General reserves: **£39,977**

The Good Councillors Guide recommends to keep 3-12 months annual expenditure in reserves. Annual expenditure excluding S106 was £47,668.55. General reserves at the end of the previous financial year were £40,808. EMR: Ear marked reserves

Foxton Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
Summary - Cost Centres Only

Cost Centre	Receipts			Payments			Net Position +/- Under/over spend
	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	
08 Highways			0.00 (N/A)	-335.00	-391.16	56.16 (-16%)	56.16
05 Open Spaces	810.00	810.18	0.18 (0%)	17,690.00	17,143.16	546.84 (3%)	547.02
10 Donations			0.00 (N/A)	900.00	900.00	0.00 (N/A)	0.00
01 Income	45,010.00	45,172.55	162.55 (0%)			0.00 (N/A)	162.55
11 Earmarked reserves	60.00	2,273.88	2,213.88 (3689%)	132,623.52	19,383.11	113,240.41 (85%)	115,454.29
02 Staff			0.00 (N/A)	16,600.00	16,705.03	-105.03 (-0%)	-105.03
04 Village Hall			0.00 (N/A)	860.00	845.27	14.73 (1%)	14.73
03 Admin			0.00 (N/A)	4,777.00	2,411.00	2,366.00 (49%)	2,366.00
09 Memberships			0.00 (N/A)	697.00	718.25	-21.25 (-3%)	-21.25
06 Play Area & Skate Park			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
07 Planning			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
NET TOTAL	45,880.00	48,256.61	2,376.61 (5%)	173,812.52	57,714.66	116,097.86 (66%)	118,474.47
Total for ALL Cost Centres		48,256.61			57,714.66		
V.A.T.		5,138.58			3,733.17		
GROSS TOTAL		53,395.19			61,447.83		

	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
Balance at Bank	163,483.74	
Precept	45,000.00	
Bank Interest	162.55	
Rent	10.00	
Parish Clerk Salary		13,650.70
HMRC		2,383.48
Home working allowance		264.00
Phone & internet		429.36
Payroll		190.50
Training		480.00
Insurance		1,313.47
Audit Fee		300.00
Internal Auditor		125.00
ICO Registration Fee		35.00
Website, Gmail, Zoom		805.47
Office equipment/ stationary		174.94
Election fees		150.00
Scribe Accounts subscription		288.00
Office Hire		341.52
PC Meeting Room Hire		406.55
Recharge for street lighting		97.20
Village Warden/ Maintenance		2,231.00
Grass/ hedge cutting & maintenance	810.18	13,300.96
Dog & litter bins		858.00
Dovecot rent		105.00
Play area inspection		465.00
PC owned street lighting (metered)		233.59
Village Street Lighting (unmetered)		-744.75
CAPALC		434.75
SLCC		186.00
DPO Service		50.00
S137 - British Legion Wreath		50.00
S137 - Rail Partnership Admin		700.00
Other		150.00
S106	375.98	10,046.11
Defibrillator maintenance	48.00	
Tree works (survey and surgery)		3,480.00
Clerk's Mileage		99.90
Other		183.20
Pension		670.85
Street light maintenance agreement		120.00
Cambridgeshire Acre membership		47.50
RGT VAT reclaim		-2,448.63
Unity Trust Account fee		72.00
Arnold Baker new edition		131.99
Play project raised funds	1,849.90	
Skate park fence		5,857.00
VAT	5,138.58	3,733.17
	53,395.19	61447.83
Closing Balances:		
Balances in Bank Account		155431.1
TOTAL	216,878.93	216878.93