

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH GREAT AND LITTLE CHISHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Venue:	Village Hall and Remote
Date:	21 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
Chairman:	Clr Dring
Parish Councillors:	Clr Clements, Clr Dring, Clr Harrison, Clr Hatt, Clr Ridge, Clr Pine
County Councillor:	Clr McDonald
District Councillor:	Clr Roberts
Clerk / Proper Officer:	Sarah Scott
Members of the Public:	Online: Three members of the public
Start Time:	19:30

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### 1. Apologies for Absence (and reasons)

Post meeting note: Apologies were received from Clr Wiseman

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of APM on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019

The minutes were approved as an accurate account of proceedings and were duly signed by the Chairman.

### 3. Chairman's Report written Addendum 1

### 4. Financial Report – RFO

The RFO thanked Jeff Gill of Blanche and Co with their continuing support in undertaking the internal audit. The precept increased this year to £23,000. Out goings were larger than normal mostly in part due to the grant we offered the pub group in their quest to see The Pheasant open again. Our spend this year was just over £28k and we ended with £14250. However the pub group have repaired nearly £2k of their grant and I have reclaimed £800 in vat back, which will bring us nearly back in time with our budget forecast of last year. We have signed off our internal audit and our external will be sent to the auditors next week. The spread sheets for are updated regularly on the website and the full audit papers will also be on the website soon. Going forward we do not anticipate any large outcomings.

### 5. Report by the District and County Councillors – Addendum 2

Clr Roberts (our District Councillor) reported that she had become more tech savvy this year! She had 100% recorded attendance on licensing and planning committees. It had been busy again for the licensing committee making sure that the public is kept safe. She said that hopefully the next stage of the LDF will happen by the autumn. The first full council meeting was held yesterday at a hanger at Duxford and it was the AGM. She reported some good ideas on the 'Green agenda' and some other good ideas going forward. She proposed her great thanks to Clr McDonald for getting the Covid funding out to those who needed it. She went on to say however, she has great concerns about the council investing in commercial properties and is worried that it could fail in the long term so as a business plan Clr Roberts could not support this. She added her thanks to the Parish Council and the Clerk for working well with her and also commented that Clr McDonald is a perfect gentleman and great to work with.

Clr Ridge asked about the legalities of gambling with money (ie investing in commercial property) and Clr Roberts said it can be done but she would feel more comfortable if they invested in houses. Clr Roberts also has concerns about delegation and how so far, the Parish Council have not yet been consulted in the process (as was promised).

Clr McDonald added to his report that there is change of administration at County level and a new mayor, offering a new dynamic and all looks very positive..

Clr Hatt asked if the highways team comes and checks on the works carried out by its contractors and it was reported that in all honesty no one does as they don't have the resource or time.

The Chairman thanked both Councillors for their support and assistance.

### 6. Report from Fowlmere School (attended remotely) – Addendum 3

### 7. Report and Election of Representatives from the Playing Fields Association - Addendum 4

### 8. A Report from the Village Hall Committee Addendum 5

### 9. A Report from the Windmill Group (attended remotely) - Addendum 6

### 10. A Report from the Childrens Playgroun / Youth Group - Addendum 7

### 11. A Report from The Pit Club (attended remotely) - Addendum 8

## **Addendum 1 Chairman's Report**

Good evening everyone and welcome to the Annual Meeting of the Parish.

As some of you may know, all Parish and Town Councils throughout England are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting, although Covid rather hampered this process last year.

The main purpose of this meeting is for the Council to report what it has been doing over the last year and to enable the electors (i.e. you) to have their say on anything which they consider is important to the community.

At the meeting an Annual Report is given by the Chairman of the Council and by each of the Chairs of the Council's Committees and organisations in the village. The written reports will be made available in the Minutes of the meeting and will be presented to you tonight.

Firstly I will provide the Chairman's Report, summarising some matters in which the Parish Council have been engaged over the last 12 months.

### **Covid**

Let me start my report by discussing the topic that has dominated so much of our lives over the last 15 months: Covid.

Particularly in the un-nerving early stages of the first lockdown, it was humbling to see so many in the community volunteer to help their neighbours, providing shopping services, meals, prescriptions and whatever we could in the way of social contact. I would particularly like to highlight the work of Sam Allen who created a network, co-ordinated with the PC and just made things happen.

The PC took on work sourcing and co-ordinating support where we could, particularly for those having to shield or needing elevated levels of attention.

The requirement to meet in person for the PC was suspended in April last year, and has only just returned (hence this meeting today) but that hasn't stopped the PC from continuing to meet virtually on a monthly basis to continue to transact our business.

Members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings virtually, which is something we will look to continue to provide even as we move back to physical meetings.

### **Finance**

The PC finances remain healthy and prudently managed, always maintaining a reserve of at least half a year's precept in line with good practice. The clerk will report more detail in a moment, and any one of you are welcome to review the finance papers published after every meeting if you would like more detail.

This year the PC took the decision to raise the precept (raising the PC's annual income to £23,000). This is only the second time in 10 years that the precept has been raised, and was not a decision unanimously reached on the council.

Overall, we believed that the need to increase our reserves having offered un-budgeted support to a couple of local groups required that we raise a little more money. Such money is then distributed to support the community groups and projects that benefit the community in all manner of ways (and about which you will hear more over the course of the evening).

### **Planning**

When it came to small developments within the village, the PC continued to receive and review our steady small drumbeat of applications this year, trying, as we always do, to maintain a consistent and unbiased approach to comments on planning applications.

We have also kept our eye on the larger topics with respect to planning. Many of you will be aware that SCDC is putting together a new Greater Cambridgeshire Local Plan, which considers how best to develop and support the entire area over the next decade or so.

One of the first stages in the creation of this plan is that the SCDC has held a Call for Sites to receive submissions from landowners who would like their land to be considered as suitable for development under the new Local Plan. Several sites in our parish have been submitted.

To be crystal clear, the submission of those sites means nothing with respect to planning yet, and only a small proportion of all sites are likely to be taken forward. The next stages will involve formal consultation and the production of a draft plan, before final submission. Such process is likely to take about 2 years from now to complete and involve rounds of consultation at which the PC, and you, will be able to provide feedback.

Rest assured that we on the PC keep abreast of developments, and will look to involve the whole community as and when needed.

### **The Pheasant**

It's great to be able to say that we are soon to have a working pub in Great Chishill once more. The PC have been involved with trying to secure this outcome ever since it was closed down. This was spearheaded by the creation of the Community Pub group, which quickly developed a plan of action for community research and fundraising. Particular thanks go to Tim Scott and latterly Jamie West, and the research done by the group has already been given to and gratefully received by the new landlords.

I can't help but be impressed by the effort the new landlords, Jenna and Stuart are putting in to updating the venue and look forward to seeing many of you in there in the not too distant future.

### **Highways**

One perennial area of focus for the PC is trying to keep the highways and paths around us in a reasonable state. We do not always succeed in getting action from the County Council to address the issues we raise, but rest assured we are trying as hard as we can.

### **Thanks**

I would now like to issue some thanks to those who keep the community and the PC running.

Thanks to our District Councillors. Firstly Deb Roberts who always lends her advice and insight, particularly on planning matters. And to Councillor Peter MacDonald who works on our behalf, often to wrangle the Highways department to improve roads and pathways. He has been incredibly vocal and proactive in trying to get the remedial works completed. We will hear more from them later.

Now let's turn to some parishioners who have contributed to the quality of village life.

First, thanks to Will Parson who does such a great job of putting out a friendly newsletter to the entire village every month.

We would also like to thank Peter Johnstone who keeps the flower beds at the crossroads tidy, and has done an enormous amount of litter picking all around the area.

And thanks also to Ruth and Robin Diblee who have transformed the state of the chalk pit, hauling out many barrows of rubbish, and planting 150 new trees.

There are many other community groups who make a difference to village life, and you will hear from some of them over the course of the evening, thanks to all such groups and their members.

Finally, I'd like to express my thanks to my fellow Parish Council colleagues who volunteer their time to come together to do good work in support of the villages and community.

In particular I'd like to express my thanks to the indefatigable Sarah in her role as Parish Clerk, and who works many unseen hours to ensure the smooth running of the PC and many elements of village life.

If you have any questions about the work of the PC, we would welcome them at the end of individual reports or at the end of the evening.

## Addendum 2 County Councillors Report

Cambridgeshire Country Council

Represent 11 Parishes: Duxford, Shepreth, Whittlesford, Foxton, Fowlmere, Hinxton, Babraham, Thriplow & Heathfield, Chishills, Heydon, Ickleton.

### Budget Headline

- For 2021-22, Cambridgeshire is set to receive £645m of funding\*, excluding grants retained by its schools. But its total expected spending 2021-22 - despite finding savings and additional income of £4m, will be £655m - leaving a £9.612m gap.
  - The costs of running the Council have risen by £42m (6.9%) compared to the last financial year. In particular, the impact of COVID-19 has led to increased challenges across all services areas but especially in Adult's and Children's Social care which have seen increases in both the amount and complexity of need.
  - Increasing the rate at which the Adult Social Care Precept is set. The council's current Business Plan is currently based on the council being able to set an Adult Social Care precept of 2% in each of the five years that the plan covers to 2025 – 26.
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- The key sources of Cambridgeshire County Council's funding are council tax (£323m), business rates (£64m), central Government grants (£136m) and fees and charges income (£122m).

### Additional Spending

- 2021/22 Budget
- £20 million extra for footpath maintenance
- £2.73 million extra for flood attenuation and improving our biodiversity. • £6.97 million in improvements to the B1050, however
- A cut of £7.5m to the roads programme !
- What the Lib Dem group wanted to see....
- Increased adult social care especially money for Long Covid
- Green apprenticeships.
- Roads programme to be enhanced.
- More information on 'This Land' (loans of £122m from County Council)

### My Priorities

1. Two committees:
  - Commercial & Investment
  - All commercial aspects e.g. new capital spending
  - General Purposes
  - Oversees general financial position – I have asked for clarity on This Land the Development company.
2. Highways Matters • Pot holes !
  - General maintenance • Gully cleaning.
3. Thakeham Action Group- SWCAG
  - Fighting the proposed new 25,000 house development
4. Infrastructure • A505

- Foxton & Whittlesford Travel Hub. • 5. School support
  - Post C19
  - Duxford school re-build
  - Supporting Foxton on the pre school provision.
- 6. Represent you on County Farms • Currently 33,000 acres
  - Environmental Land Management
  - Tree planting
- New farm acquisition.



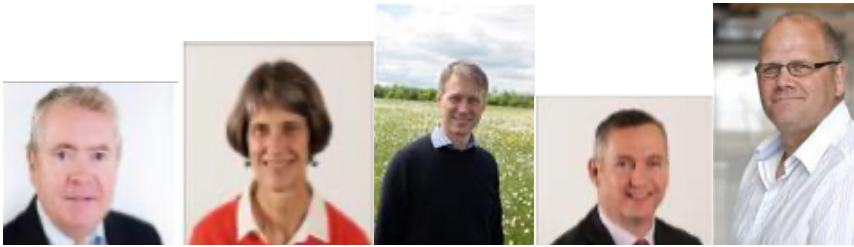
South West Cambridgeshire Action Group

Update on Progress

District & County Councillors

***Representing villages within the Thakeham proposal area, & promoting SWCAG objectives – 'Prevent the proposed Thakeham development'***

- Jose Hales - *District Councillor for Melbourn, Meldreth, Whaddon, Shepreth*
- Sebastian Kindersley - *County Councillor for Barrington, Orwell, Wimpole & the Gamlingay Division villages*
- Peter McDonald – *County Councillor for Shepreth, Foxton & the Duxford Division villages*
- Susan van de Ven - *County Councillor for Bassingbourn-cum- Kneesworth, Whaddon, Meldreth, Melbourn*
- Aidan Van De Weyer - *District Councillor for Barrington, Orwell, Wimpole*
- ***(District Cllrs Nigel Cathcart and Deborah Roberts – Observers only, protecting their right to vote on the Local Plan)***



#### What SWCAG Have Done..

1. Engaged with 800+ people in a new Facebook page & website.
2. Filed FoI's with HM Government departments – HM Treasury, Ministry of Housing.
3. Lobbied Thakeham directly.
4. Started to engage with the 'Save West Grinstead & the Weald' campaign in Sussex.
5. Engaged with Anthony Browne.
6. Held 3 public meetings.
7. Held 2 parish meetings.
8. Now engaging with National Trust, RSPB

#### Support we requested from Anthony Browne:

1. Get the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to make a Government statement that the stakeholder bid for 4 new settlements excludes Thakeham.
2. Represent us on the select committees with ref to OxCam Arc, that the 25,000 homes proposal is completely unsustainable.
3. Write to Environment Agency to ask them to highlight water resources are completely unsustainable for Thakeham.
4. Write to the Mayor to confirm his opposition to the Thakeham proposal, based on lack of infrastructure.
5. Write to the Greater Cambridge Partnership to secure opposition based on housing numbers and traffic (50,000 extra cars).
6. Ask The Chancellor to make a Government statement ruling out Thakeham as one of the 2020 budget stated development corporations.
7. Write to the NFU asking landowners not to engage with Thakeham as the plan will never come to fruition.

#### **Addendum 3 Fowlmere School Report**

What a year the last 12 months have been!

It has been a year when we have had to redesign what we do multiple times and it has certainly had its challenges. As you will remember, on 20th March last year, schools were asked to close for all but a handful of children and learning began remotely.

Given the situation, we were reasonably well prepared. We had surveyed parents to see what access to technology they had in the weeks before the closure and we had trained staff on using some online tools to communicate with families, set and receive work. We had about 10 children in school and everyone else stayed at home. We continued our after-school childcare so that key worker families could continue to work (many schools did not do this).

Trips, events and tests were all cancelled and this was particularly hard on our Year 6 children who had been working the year so far on their right-of-passage events, such as their residential visit, school play and, of course, SATs.

Staff worked with children remotely, and we all got used to new ways of working with children.

In June, we were allowed to have more children in school. Our childcare groups had grown and so we were only able to accommodate Reception and Year 1 children. We had wanted to be allowed to have all children in school on a week-on-week-off rota system (learn at school for a week, learn at home for a week), but the Department for Education would not allow this. Nevertheless, about half of the school was at least attending in person.

September was a full return to school, but with significant restrictions. No trips, no assemblies, children sitting rows and separated lunchtimes and playtimes for different classes. It was school – but not as we know it. Many schools had families keeping children at home because of safety fears, but for us, everyone came back. Testament to the work staff had done in making the school not only safe, but feel safe too.

Nonetheless, we got used to it and when a second lockdown began in November, it really did not affect schools. Clinically vulnerable staff had been able to work from home and we were all now fully versed in running meetings and training in Microsoft Teams.

In January, we opened for our training day, expecting school to be as the Autumn Term, but, as you all know, our children were told on the evening of starting back to school that schools would be closed again. We considered ourselves lucky that, unlike some schools, we had not had the children back for a single day, and then had to close again.

This closure proved more challenging than the first. By now the powers that be had some idea of what *could* be done and they imposed this on schools. Many of our families found this hard, some working regularly to 1 and 2 o'clock in the morning because their normal working times were taken up with home-schooling. About 40% of our school population was coming to school – four times more than the first time and this meant that all our teachers were teaching in school from 8.30 to 3pm and then preparing materials for the children at home from 3pm to late in the evening.

But we made it. We are all back in school again and although it looks and feels much like the Autumn term, the restrictions are gradually being lifted. If things go well, we are hopeful that September may look a little more normal, but as we wait to really understand the impact of the roll out of the vaccines, we all hold our breath.

There have been moments of great discovery. We have learnt that we don't always need to drive around the county for meetings. We have learnt that a video call with a visitor can be just as good as them popping into school. And we have learnt that, even in the most challenging of circumstances we can all pull together.

The last time I was here – which was two years ago now – you might remember to talking about our concerns about our pupil roll. At that point we had 106 pupils on our roll, which is just about sustainable for us. Since that time our roll had fallen to 94 children which has meant an incredibly tough year for the school – especially considering the additional costs Covid has brought to schools.

Thanks to a large intake in September our numbers have risen from that concerning 94 to 107 today, supported by a number of pupils who come to us from surrounding villages. We continue to need the support of all our feeder villages to help keep our lovely school sustainable.

I hope that we see a return to some normality from next year and that we can continue to work together for the benefit of the children in Great Chishill. Finally it was announced that the current head is leaving the school at the end of the year and a successor has been found who is currently working at the school. Cllr Roberts wished him well as did the Parish Council

#### **Addendum 4 PFA Report**

In a year when not much happened for many a lot has happened for the PFA, This has resulted in changes in way we and other groups have used the facilities.

We have had to make changes in the way we meet. During the last year we were only able to have one face to face meeting of the PFA committee. In line with Covid-19 restrictions we used a mixture of e-mail and distant face to face meetings

As mentioned last year the village football team folded at the end of 2019 which resulted in the loss of 2 committee members from the football club plus 2 other committee members decided that they no longer wished to serve on the committee. We have therefore lost 4 committee members in the space of a few months.

I would like to thank these committee members for supporting the PFA. In some cases they have in some form or other been involved for nearly forty years

I would also like to thank them for helping to get a new set of volunteers safely trained on the use of the grass cutting equipment. This was achieved during the first lock down in line with Covid rules and regulations

Despite the football club folding with the resulting loss of income, a reduction of income from the nursery which was forced to close for periods throughout the year plus the cancelation of some other bookings our finances have remained sound.

With our good financial situation it enabled us to go ahead with the planned repair and repainting the external structure of the pavilion. We had planned to repaint internally but as we were about to start this work we were approached by the cricket club about applying for grants to upgrade facilities. We successfully applied to Sport England.

We also entered another competition. Much to our surprise towards the end of 2020 we heard that we had won.

With the help of the grant and competition win we plan to bring the pavilion up to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards for everybody who want to use it.

We had originally hoped that we would be in a position to update the PC and the village on our progress at this meeting but Covid unfortunately has severely affected our progress in moving his forward. We are now making good progress and intend to fully update everybody at the either the June or July meeting of the PC.

As mentioned earlier on the village lost the men's football team at the end of 2019. This has prompted us to look for other users. As a result of a village contact we were approached by Saffron Walden football club about using the football pitch. I am pleased to say that we now have the under 12's and under 13's football teams playing on Sunday mornings. These teams include few boys from the village and surrounding area. We also have a girl's team that are considering in using the football pitch.

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In recent weeks the playing field has been extensively used, with the cricket club running Saturday morning sessions for children, men's cricket in the afternoon, junior football and also a hockey teaching session for children on Sunday mornings.

The nursery continues to use the pavilion during the week. We have also managed to have a couple of cycle events using the pavilion between lock downs.

We are also exploring new ways in which we can make full use of the pavilion and playing fields.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We are appreciative of the grant given to us by the parish council.

#### **THANK YOU.**

I would like to express my thanks to all our volunteers who have helped maintain the playing fields.

A special thanks needs to go to Gebe and his wife Margret who have look after the PFA accounts for over 35 years

Tim Scott for cutting the grass in The Plaistow.

Peter Wiseman for his help in keeping our grass cutting equipment running .



## CURRENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS WISHING TO SERVE

Alan Ferrie CHAIR  
Jeff Gill VICE CHAIR/TREASURER  
**Damon Dean** SECRETARY  
Alastair Cockerton CC REP  
Angus Gent. CC REP

I am currently looking to see how we can organise the committee as the way in which groups use the facilities over the years has changed. I will seek your approval once we have agreed these in changes within the PFA.

I HOPE THAT YOU WILL ADOPT THIS PROPOSAL – THIS WAS ACCEPTED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

### **Addendum 5 Village Hall Report**

What a strange year it's been. As with many other groups in the village, Covid has had a huge impact on what we've been able to do. Our doors have been closed for much of the year and many popular village events haven't been able to happen – there was no annual Cricket Club dinner, no Village Fun Day, and no children's Christmas party. Many of our regular groups, including the bowls club, WI and youth club had to stop, along with the Antiques Fair and Messy Church who you may have seen at the hall some weekends.

Even though there have been lots of restrictions to deal with, we've opened the hall whenever we could. Last summer we welcomed back some of our exercise, dance and kick-boxing groups. Then sadly had to close the hall again when the second national lockdown came into force in November.

Throughout this period, the village hall committee have worked hard to keep up-to-date with government guidance, and received lots of helpful advice from ACRE, who helped us work out what we needed to make the hall a Covid-secure space and keep everyone who uses the hall as safe as they can be. We've carried out multiple Covid risk assessments, put up signs, placed a hand-sanitiser station at the main entrance, added PPE to our first aid kit, and drawn up a new Special Conditions of Hire document explaining all the additional cleaning and social distancing measures that users now need to follow. Not something any of us ever have imagined doing!

On the plus side, the hall remains in good financial shape. We've been able to access additional grant funding via South Cambridgeshire District Council, to help us through the periods where we haven't been able to hire the hall out – and have been able to use some of this to cover ongoing maintenance work and overheads.

Looking forward, we hope to see more and more people using the hall again. The easing of restrictions from 17<sup>th</sup> May has allowed our exercise groups and dance classes to get going again. Chimps is reforming and are looking to restart weekly parent and toddler sessions soon after the summer half-term break, and hopefully we'll see the bowls club, WI and others return later in the year.

Our current committee members are: Andrew Brown, Anna Coney, John Crawley, Andrea Hamblin, Gillian Philpott, Rebecca Pine and Nigel Russell. Chris Ellis joined the committee for part of the year, but sadly had to step down when he moved away from the village. We are always keen for new people to join us, so do get in touch if you're interested and we'll tell you a bit more.

Lastly, I'd like to convey my thanks to everyone on the committee for helping to steer the hall through such a tricky year. Hopefully things will get easier in the next one!

### **Addendum 6 Windmill Report**

Progress on completing the restoration project has been slower than anticipated due to restraints introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic and the workload on our millwright. We are, however, pleased to report that a significant milestone was reached in September with a demonstration of the mill turning to wind driven entirely by the tailfan. A move from west to north-east was made one day and subsequent tests took the mill to its present south-westerly position. It is currently tied in this position.

The millwright, Bill Griffiths, has recently completed the fitting of the hand-winding gear and wheel covers and is now address repairs and the fitting of safety barriers to the upper floor which will allow regular access to all parts of the buck. This latter work is being paid for by a grant from the South Cambridgeshire Community Chest.

There are a few more small jobs required to ready the mill for risk assessments by our technical advisers in June. The mill is also being cleaned by Neptune Softwash Solutions to remove the combination of dirt and mould that accumulated. Cleaning may become a routine requirement.

We have agreed a schedule with the millwright to complete all outstanding works in time for the planned 'Windependence' event on July 4th. Details of this will be announced shortly but it will be a gathering allowing villagers and Friends to celebrate the completion of four and half years of restoration (plus the easing of Covid restrictions) whilst raising funds for the Trust.

The overall finances of the Trust are in good shape, thanks to standing order donations and the grant received from the Parish Council for which the Trustees are most grateful. The PC donation will cover regular outgoings, such as insurance, site maintenance (grass cutting, etc.) and the expected ongoing cleaning of the exterior paintwork.

Actually, since writing this report, the mill has been moved to a southerly direction as the millwright tested the hand-winding gear. He has not quite completed the hand-winding installation due to a mishap with one of the pieces. This is now corrected and he will be working to complete the installation next week. He will then start the work on the upper floor.

Neptune Softwash has tested its equipment but is awaiting two or three dry days to complete the cleaning task. Again, hopefully this will be next week.

### **Addendum 7 Playground and Youth Group Reports**

#### **Great Chishill Playground**

**Chair: Emily Brown**

**Secretary: Laura Barnes**

**Treasurer: Islay Dring**

**Other Committee Members: Claire de Froberville**

The Playground Committee are continuing to keep the playground maintained to a good standard. We are currently in the process of assessing recent wear and tear to the equipment and wooden fencing with the intention of repairs to be made as soon as possible ready for the summer months.

Our thanks also to the Playing Field Association's wonderful grass cutting team who keep it safe, neat and tidy.

We continue to work closely with the other village groups and The Village Children's Christmas party plans are already in process for December 2021. In December 2020 we were pleased to hold an 'alternative socially distanced' Christmas float in which all the local children and families were visited by Santa and his elves and treated to gifts, music and treats. It was a huge success and brought some much needed joy to the end of a tough year.

Our great thanks to The Parish Council for their ongoing financial support of the Playground and Children's Christmas Party.

#### **Gt Chishill Youth Club**

**Chairperson: Amy Tait**

**Secretary: Betsy Kagwidzo**

**Treasurer: Emily Brown**

**Youth Workers: Dan Horne and Stephanie Hicks**

Great Chishill Youth Club offers a local meeting place for young people aged 10 to 17. Due to the pandemic, the club has remained closed since early March 2020. We are currently making plans to re-open in September this year and hoping for a one-off outdoor 'pop-up' club in early July. We are working closely with South Cambs Youth Services and other local youth clubs on how we can fully re-open safely and within the guidelines.

Steph and Dan continue to be our Youth Workers, supported by extra volunteers on club nights. We are also keen to welcome local young people volunteering with us as part of their Duke of Edinburgh awards.

As always, we desperately need extra voluntary support. We will be advertising locally for anyone who can offer just a few hours of their time a month.

The club hopes to continue offering a variety of activities including lots of sports and games, food and theme nights, fun competitions, cooking, crafts, and specialist evenings such as our most popular Kung Fu and Kickboxing with local tutor Chris Ellis. We are keen to raise awareness amongst our members about local charities and needs in the wider community. We plan to make the July pop up club night a fundraiser in memory of Sara Morgan who has volunteered for the club over the years.

Our great thanks go to the Parish Council for their continued funding support, for without which we would not be sustainable. We would also like to thank the village hall committee for the continued provision of storage space for our equipment.

#### **Addendum 8 – Pit Club Report**

The Pit Club is a secret village organisation devoted to making the Chalk Pit a pleasant place to pass through for the village. Why the secrecy? It is because the Public Liability situation of this site is unclear – and the Pit Club does not accept ANY liability for any injuries suffered by people veering off the footpath which meanders through the site. One HAS to be careful.

There are two related insurances: from The County Volunteering scheme which indemnifies participants clearing highways, of which the footpath is a part. The Highways Officer in charge has verbally confirmed Registration but we have never had this in writing. The farmer Nick Kiddy has the lease-hold to the site and also has PL insurance – but this does not equate for permission to trespass.

The Pit Club over the past two years has removed 40 cubic yards of metal scrap, as well as eradicating an infestation of *Clematis Vitalba*, which has killed many trees in the Pit. These have been replaced by the Club with 150 free 'whips' of indigenous species, under the scheme 'I Dig Trees'. The Parish Council has paid for scrap disposal, with the last skip-load removed last month. Village kids will be involved in the 'Chishill Children's Trees' initiative, preserving them for future generations

The Scouts, who have their own insurance, have helped clear and dispose of the undergrowth/creeper and are eyeing the opportunities for Woodcraft that the sites represents - and for outside 'COVID-safe' gatherings.

The footfall through the Pit has increased 5-fold over the past year and the removal of *clematis* from trees has opened up the site. It is now a peaceful wooded area, distinct from the surrounding chalk downland. Cautious trespassers can benefit from a picnicking spot to the North, with fine views down towards New Buildings.

The Pit Club has been magnificent in responding to various 'Calls To Arms' to undertake this work. For legal reasons we cannot name them - but they know who they are . . .

After discussion the Clerk to see if the land might be gifted or some formal arrangement could be made. She will make contact with Cllr McDonald who has now taken on responsibility for County Farms.

There being no further notifiable business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:45.