

# **Minutes from the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting for Gotherington.**

**Held at the Rex Rhodes building on Tuesday 11th June at 6.30pm.**

## **1. Welcome from Chair.**

Chair opened the meeting at 6:30pm and welcomed everyone to the Annual meeting and thanked the councillors and residents for the support during the last year.

## **2. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Dean and Cllr Neighbour and noted by council.

## **3. To confirm the minutes for the APM 2023**

Minutes were accepted and sign by Chair

## **4. Chair Report.**

Once again, this year we are pleased to see our community going from strength to strength.

The Old Chapel has reported its first year of continual trading and is proving to be a great asset to our residents, providing additional space and opportunity for community groups to meet.

The village hall continues to support groups, some which have been in existence for 50 plus years, right through to those which are newly formed.

Our football club now has more girls than boys playing and it's great to see weekends where the entire field is in use. They have been proactive in helping to solve the parking issues, which seem to have calmed down recently.

Our cricket club is still to draw in new youngsters, and the adults team continues to play at a high standard.

Our tennis club are enjoying the newly re-laid courts. After some teething issues the new code lock system on the gate is working well and is helping us monitor usage.

Our pétanque club continue to be as active as ever. They are on the piste in all weathers and their social events continue to be well attended.

It's brilliant to see all our social and sports clubs thriving across our community.

It's great to see so many of our new residents from the Grange development getting involved in village activities, and we welcome the vitality they are adding to our community.

The parish council has had a busy year. We have secured the services of Selina, our new clerk. She is undergoing intensive training currently so thanks to her for her ongoing efforts.

We have been called upon to support our residents in many areas this year, with much of our effort going towards dealing with the contractors of the new Meadow Development. The complaints around traffic going through the village, have needed persistence, and polite reporting, but the developer has been supportive, we currently see a great reduction in that traffic movement. But we continue to monitor.

The parish council has tried to foster a positive relationship with the developer to allow a flow of information between residents and developer to deal with issues as and when they arise.

As a community we have fought that development for many years and now it has started, it is undoubtedly having a massive impact on how we use our village space.

The main projects for this year have been.

1. The renovation of the telephone box and installation of the defibrillator. Frustratingly still not completed but we keep pushing.
2. The work to renovate the war memorial is pushing on at pace and, despite some setbacks, we still hope to complete it in time for Remembrance Sunday.
3. We worked with the pétanque club to install a bench near the piste. This is backless for their use while facing the piste but can also be used by spectators of events on the field.
4. There had been some damage caused to the fencing around freemen field this year, with sports players wanting to gain access to retrieve stray balls. This has been repaired and there is a body of work underway to install ball netting, to stop this issue going forward.
5. We worked with the village hall management committee to install a blue plaque to commemorate the life of Elizabeth Malleson. It was a very successful day, and we are eternally grateful for everything she did for Gotherington.

We have supported Mr and Mrs Churchill after Denise's accident. We continue to offer any assistance we can and report the issue regularly to Gloucestershire Highways to secure a permanent fix in that area.

We also continue to report regularly to Gloucestershire highways on the issues around the flooding seen in Manor Lane and along Gretton Road. We share resident's frustrations that there continues to be a standoff between highways and Severn Trent as to who is responsible.

We have given two Community Volunteer Recognition Awards this year – one to Edmund Barfield for his excellent work as Editor of The Topics magazine and another joint one to Brian and Yvonne Cosgrove for their service to the cricket club and to the wider village generally. If anyone has any suggestions for further recipients of the award, please let us know.

As you may have seen on local social media, we desperately need new members. With Caroline and her family leaving the village, and Eddie wanting to focus elsewhere, if we could get more help we could focus on the many exciting projects, we have in the pipeline but have no manpower to action them currently.

Just a few are.

1. Redevelopment of the area to the northeast corner of the field, including replacement of the gazebo.
2. Work to remodel the changing room of the Rex Rhodes building, including the urgent need to establish separate male and female changing areas.
3. Also included in this is the provision of more space for community groups to store their items securely.

4. We also want to cut down our electricity and gas usage, and one option proposed is to add electric water heaters in this building. We also want to investigate solar energy and increased insulation in this building.

5. There is the project to install ball netting as I previously mentioned.

6. We need to resurface the car parks.

7. We also need to re-roof the parish council shed.

That's just a snapshot of the works we would like to undertake which would benefit our whole community, but we are restricted at present without more residents getting involved.

Another focus for us going forward must be the ongoing, wider issues which will affect us and the need to have a voice in the decision-making process.

You might have seen that the consultation to investigate changes to the M5, junction 9 has been agreed by Tewkesbury and Gloucestershire. This is to investigate ways to help with the congestion through Ashchurch, and it includes the possible provision of some new access roads or even a new junction, called 9A of the M5. Almost all these solutions will have a massive impact on this part of the borough, and we need to have active participation on the Parish Council Liaison Forum to understand and pass comment on the proposals.

As part of the most recent call for sites, a few worrying areas have also been highlighted which will need active and vigorous defence by the parish council and again, while we can employ external consultants, an active community making its voice heard is vital.

So, on reflection, our community continues to thrive. It has all the heart and soul that it ever has, and as we continue to grow, we remain strong and bonded together.

How blessed we are as a parish Council to be part of that.

Many thanks,

Bev Osborne.

Chair, Gotherington Parish Council.

#### **5. Community award for Gotherington.**

Awards were given to:

Edmund Barfield for his excellent work as Editor of The Topics magazine.

Brian and Yvonne Cosgrove for their service to the cricket club and to the wider village generally.

#### **6. Public comments.**

None received

#### **7. Updates from County and Borough councillors.**

None received

### **Reports from Village Groups.**

### **8. Gotherington Primary school.**

No Report.

### **9. Gotherington Village Stores.**

No Report.

### **10. Garden house Nursery**

No Report.

### **11. The Old Chapel.**

The Old Chapel community Project was established as a registered charity in 2018 with the objective of providing an additional community building whilst preserving a village landmark.

We currently have ten trustees and several regular helpers.

After a complete refurbishment at no cost to the residents of the village and following the Covid pandemic we are now fully operational and established as a community facility.

Our finances are sound, and our bookings calendar shows events booked almost every day.

Our aim is to provide something of interest to a wide range of age groups.

Our regular events include:

Film club – with screenings for both children and adults

Chat at the Chapel

Café Church

Book Club

Chess club

Traditional games

Electronic gaming

Children's art class

Wi art class

Mindfulness

Fitness

New Beginnings Anti-natal class

We also have speakers and musical evenings, the occasional coffee morning as well as Bingo and soon a Racing evening

We are proud the Old Chapel is an established vibrant venue.

## **12. GET Team**

The last event held in 2023 was The Roaring Twenties in the Village Hall and proved to be a popular event with many people dressing up in the appropriate clothes and we had various games such as roulette, poker and blackjack. A great evening and enjoyed by all those who came along. Our first event of 2024 Mamma Mia held in March of this year was a sell out and a truly wonderful evening with Sarah Hewson, a female solo tribute act, performing and singing many of the ABBA hits. We are currently busy preparing for the annual Village Fete. This year we have a combination of over 40 stalls including many children's activities. The Fire Service with their fire engine and the local Police are also in attendance. Hopefully many of you will come along and enjoyed the daytime fun of the Fete, along with the GFest in the evening with the hog roast and great live music played until late. Our next event is in the Village Hall on Saturday September 21st and the theme is the Wild Wild West. The first thought that comes to mind is cowboys and cowgirls, swinging saloon doors, line dancing, gambling and drinking of course. We are planning to have live music probably a mixture of western, country and the odd cowboy song! This already sounds like it will be another memorable evening of music, food and drink to capture the essence of the American Frontier era. More information will be available nearer the time, so please keep an eye open for our advertising posters and social media coverage. The Events Team are keen to contribute any surplus funds made during our events back into the welfare of the Village. To date we have contributed to the War Memorial renovation and purchasing of a defibrillator. We will continue to do this and any suggestions as to what you would like to see are very welcome. Gotherington Events Team

13. Gotherington Cricket Club – No Report. 14. Gotherington Football Club – Report to follow. 15. Gotherington Tennis Club – No Report.

## **16. Gotherington Local History society**

The Local History Society held another interesting programme of talks during the 2023-24 season, booking a series of eloquent speakers to talk about a variety of subjects: - the life of William Davy, an 18th century Gloucestershire Persian scholar, whose heart is buried at the cathedral; the Gloucestershire Mummy that should rightly still reside in the county but has ended up in Liverpool's City Museum; and two subjects closer to home, that of cider making, and a visit by Shepherd's Crook to sing songs that would have been sung back in the day by agricultural workers toiling in the fields around Gotherington.

In October 2023, the LHS was proud to support the installation of a blue plaque on the Village Hall, dedicated to the memory of Mrs Elizabeth Malleson. She is a figure of national importance having been responsible for the founding of the Rural District Nursing Association. However, for us local residents, we will always be indebted to her for the establishment of a community building that has been the hub of village events for the past 119 years; a place of welcome for all, whatever their sex, political or religious persuasion.

The Local History Society continues to reach out beyond its core membership. Y4 and Y6 pupils at Gotherington School are taken out on guided walks that enable them to see history beyond the textbook. The Ancestry village tree continues to grow, albeit at a slower rate than previously. To date there are 3,475 profiles and 598 photographs on the tree, bringing our heritage within touching distance of our global family. The Society also reaches out via social media with 297 followers to date on Facebook and 45 on X (formerly known as Twitter).

On a personal note, this is the moment to say goodbye to my close connection with the history of the village. It all began for me in 1974 when my class teacher, Mr. Robinson, led us all over to Woolstone to record the gravestones that were to be removed prior to the building of a vestry on the north side of the church. He also told fascinating stories about the old school that sparked a life-long interest in local history that, for me, will never fade. There has been a long line of local historians who have captured the heritage of this place, Nellie Green, Hilda Bishop, and Geoff Pitt to name just a few. I sincerely hope this will continue well into the future so that whenever new residents choose this village as the place to live it brings with it a sense of identity; what it is to be a Gotheringtonian!

### **17. Gotherington Pétanque Club**

Members have played a full season of events and social games over the last year. The season began officially with the Men v Ladies evening match in May followed by supper in the RR Building, although we do play whenever the weather is reasonably good during the winter. In April we welcomed players from teams that also play in the Cotswold League to our Invitation Doubles Tournament. In July we held a Club melee tournament followed by cream tea in the V. Hall. Singles and doubles Club championships run through the summer, the Shutter Shield singles final is staged at our Picnic Day in August. The Gotherington Stores doubles final is played later in the year. Our closing event sees us retire to the RR Building again when we hold the World Soft Boule Championship after supper. Throughout the year we have enjoyed the new bench. Many thanks to the Parish Council for helping us finance that. We have gained a few new members over the last year – most from outside the Village. Membership now stands at around 40 playing members. The current Committee is keen to keep the Club running but several members are trying to retire and pass on responsibilities. As many other Clubs are finding we have few volunteers willing to take on commitments.

### **18. Gotherington Village Hall.**

The Village Hall continues to be well used and is an excellent resource for the community and at the recent AGM it was agreed that the hire prices per hour remain at £8.00 for residents and £10.00 for those residing outside of the Village. The committee although small have ensured that the Hall is well maintained and that all safety regulations are adhered to. Feedback from our Users is very important and we respond and handle any problems or suggestions as to how we can help straight away. A recent suggestion that the handle on the inner door to the Hall was easy to access by children has been moved higher up the door and makes the situation where young children are concerned more secure. The AGM was held on May 1st at the Village Hall and the existing Trustees have agreed to stand again and we welcome two additional Trustees, Jane Nicolson and Julie Brown both of whom are much involved in Village activities. The Hall is due for a makeover and will be redecorated beginning in early August, although the colour scheme is still under discussion the overall effect will create pleasant surroundings for all Users. The general election on the 4th July 2024 will result in the Hall not being available to hire on that day. The Hall master booking system is used extensively and continues to be a very reliable and easy to use system for both keeping our bookings and invoicing secure. Users like the fact that they can log onto the booking system and easily see when slots are available to hold their event. The Village Hall has always been the meeting hub of the Village and is an important facility for the Village and if you would like to become involved and can help then please contact us for further information Christine Godsell (Acting Chair) and Howard Samuels (GVH Treasurer)

**19. My Fit 30**

No report received.

**Meeting closed 7:10pm**