

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT ST MARY'S CHURCH DOROTHY PLUCK ROOM ON TUESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> May 2010, AT 7:30 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Roberts – Chairman, Councillors M Bates, A Eades, P Flynn, E O'Regan, N Schonken  
Councillor T Stone – Cambridge County Council, Mr R Elcock – Fowlmere School, Mr Simon Brooks - Chairman of Fowlmere School Governors  
Mrs J Wright – Parish Council Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Three residents of Fowlmere Village

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr W Kohler, Mrs Tamsin Goodfellow, Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee and PCSO Lindsey Gardiner.

**2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF 4<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL – Cllr Roberts**

Welcome to parishioners, County Councillor Tim Stone and my fellow parish councillors. I would like to report on the resignation of both Dorothy Woods and Peggy Cook for personal reasons and thank them both for their service to the village. A letter has gone round the village asking for volunteers to fill these post and it is important that the PC is brought up to its full compliment as we have important work to be achieved in this coming year. There have been volunteers from within the remaining councillors to fill roles these two ladies previously undertook and this includes, chairing the Finance Committee, the Seniorlink Alarm Scheme, the Poor Allotments Charity and the Cemetery Committee.

The coming year holds a number of important challenges and projects and these include:

**A Social Housing project for local people.**

Possible social housing development of a small area of the Triangle on the Thriplow | Newton roads. We understand from the Housing Authority in question that they are finalising the purchase of this land though with the present economic climate we cannot be sure what might be the consequences regarding the building of these types of homes.

**The Village Hall.**

As we all know the VH management committee has recently found itself in the position of facing a large income deficit. Although the Parish Council has, and indeed still supports the continuation of this village facility by way of helping to fund planned projects and improvements it is not in a position to year on year cover large revenue fallshorts. This is a situation mirrored in many villages. It is however good to see that the situation has galvanised residents into fund raising. The PC has advised the VH management comm. that there are funds still also available at SCDC but it is very important that these are applied for ASAP in this new financial year as naturally with 102 villages in SCDC area the money will soon be called upon by others.

**Fowlmere Cemetery, Mill Lane.**

The newly purchased area has been laid to grass and also over the winter hedging has been planted - I'm sure we can all agree that it is already looking good. In order to avoid any illegal incursions a padlocked gate was also deemed necessary but the area is part of the grass cutting and will be being maintained in the normal manner from now on. The Cemetery Committee met recently to review burial charges as this had not been done for a number of years. We have decided to only have a reasonable rise for village residents but as we do from time to time get requests from outside the parish these will see a doubling of the fees. As a matter of information these will still see our plots are very reasonable compared to many large municipal cemeteries. The PC also keep up their general tidy days in the cemetery and would be grateful (especially from those with loved ones buried there ) if more people would volunteer to help on these occasions.

**Play equipment.**

Regular safety checks are completed by ROSPA (the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) and new equipment is hopefully planned for later this year. My thanks to Cllr Pat Flynn who is very dedicated in her responsibility to keeping a close eye on all the village equipment and undertakes the task of choosing from a huge range of products ones suitable for Fowlmere children.

### **Road Safety.**

The PC are very aware that speeding vehicles still cause concern and this matter has been reported to the constabulary when they recently came along to a PC meeting. This has resulted in them taking some action. The village has now seen speed checks being carried out and indeed I am informed that one took place only last week. We are pleased to note that improvements should soon be starting at the notorious Flint Cross area where over the years many very serious accidents have occurred. The harsh winter of course caused major structural problems to all the roads around and in the village and thanks go to both our county councillor and our clerk who badgered the Highways people to resolve this situation.

The PC worked over the winter with the Postal Services to find a new venue for a post office. We put forward suggestions for possible premises that could give easy access to all our residents and were delighted that our preferred choice came up trumps and that once again there is a daily service available from the premises of the Queens Head public house. Our thanks also go to the pubs landlords for their willingness to provide such a service on their premises.

### **The Round Moat.**

The PC has had a major survey done on all the trees in the Round Moat and is now working to get the correct status from English Heritage to maintain the area with financial input from that body. Many thanks to Cllr Bates who has had the lengthy job of doing all the paper work that was required for this particular task. The likely work needed will have to be planned over a period of time and carefully done as to avoid disruption to the wildlife in this important village amenity area.

The maintenance of the village grassed areas and trees under the PC jurisdiction take a large percentage of the precept and we are very grateful to our local contractors for doing such a professional job for us throughout the village.

### **Senior Link.**

This is a much valued service to our elderly residents and one that the PC continues to fully fund. This was previously coordinated by former councillor Dorothy Woods and Cllr Pat Flynn has kindly volunteered her services for this role - we are in the throes of getting all the information transferred over to the clerk.

Thanks must be expressed to individual members of the parish for their help in improving the quality of village life, including:-

Pat Rowley our village Womble continues with his task of village litter picking and I'm sure we all see the daily benefit of Pats efforts. Hopefully others will follow Pats example in their own areas of the village.

John Stanford has for 20 or so winters helped clear the roads in his area by putting down road salt.

For health reasons John is no longer able to provide this valuable service but we hope that others will now take up his baton this coming winter. Many thanks to both these gentleman.

The Parish Council operates two committees, Planning and Finance & General Purposes. They meet on a regular basis and their tasks are both varied and interesting.

My thanks and appreciation to our clerk Jackie Wright who's invaluable help and support helps the council to function so well even with its numbers depleted.

I'm sure that members of the public in dealing with her direct have appreciated Jackie's helpful, friendly, and meticulous approach to all her varied tasks.

Thanks should also be expressed to our County Councillor Tim Stone for his very regular attendance at PC meetings, his reports and its actions on getting results to our complaints or questions from his council, never an easy task.

My thanks again to my colleagues for their help, support and commitment.

Please remember that they are all volunteers, who with no financial payment of any kind give of their time for the benefit of the village and their fellow residents.

Please feel free to ask questions which hopefully we will be able to be answered now, if not we will attempt to come back to you as soon as possible.

## **4. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT – Cllr T Stone**

### **Thank you**

Since my last report you kindly re-elected me to be your County Councillor. It is an immensely rewarding job and I continue to work with parish councils and individual residents to try to get the best deal possible for our

part of the world. Things can be frustrating at times, particularly when faced with the prospect of severe budget cuts.

### **Social Services**

Earlier this year everyone should have received a copy of the "Your Services Your Council Tax" booklet for this year. County Council tax has gone up 3% but we still expect cuts in services. The main reason is that there are continually more old people in need of help from the County and the needs of children and young people seem to get more and more complex and expensive.

Yet the calls for help I get almost all have something to do with roads. To put it in perspective the County spends over £140 million each year looking after adults, nearly £100 million on children and young people and just over £20 million on roads.

### **Potholes**

And that brings me to the state of the roads. It is a scandal that years of under-funding have brought us to the state where our roads crack up every winter. The Liberal Democrat alternative budget for this coming two years made substantially more provision for highways maintenance and safety schemes. £13 million more than the administration's budget. But of course our proposals were defeated. It remains to be seen who is going finally to grasp the nettle and try to catch up with the backlog. Meanwhile the road network continues to deteriorate.

### **Planning**

During the year we have been busy setting the planning scene for the period up to 2031. After much consultation the County submitted its plans to the East of England Regional Assembly, which has passed them to Whitehall for examination. The County proposed no large-scale development locally. Tesco will have the opportunity to request reinstatement of Hanley Grange at an Examination in Public to take place later this year. Any such request is likely to be hotly contested.

The East of England Regional Assembly itself has now been abolished and replaced by The East of England Local Government Association. The East of England Local Government Association says it has been asked to prepare a new-style Regional Strategy. It says, "The Regional Strategy will set out a clear spatial vision for all parts of the region over a 15-20 year timeframe and will be part of the statutory development plan, to be taken into account in the preparation of local development frameworks and the determination of planning applications." It adds, "Whilst opinion differs about the need for this level of planning, we are clear that local government must act responsibly within whatever legislation exists."

That means that the Conservatives have proposed abolishing regional planning. While there are grave doubts about exactly what they intend, the fact is that we shall have to await the results of a General Election before we can move again.

### **Flint Cross and other roads**

We have managed to get road safety measures agreed for Flint Cross. Construction is scheduled to begin around June. There have been other issues during the year about Mill Road/Fowlmere Road and the roads round the school. Progress always seems to be too slow.

### **Other Issues**

I remain glad that I didn't vote for the guided bus in the first place. We still have no idea when the Trumpington Park & Ride to Cambridge section will be completed.

I'm delighted that we have a Post Office back again. There should be no more Post Office cutbacks in the immediate future. But the opening times make it no more convenient for the residents of Thriplow than the original plan. So Thriplow still has no Post Office and their residents just have to muddle along.

It has been a great pleasure to work with your Parish Council during the year. I am a great believer in Parish Councils as a formal first rung in the ladder of government. It would be nice to see more people turning out to parish councils to find out what goes on.

You can contact me on 01223 836527, e-mail at [timothy.stone1@virgin.net](mailto:timothy.stone1@virgin.net) or write to me at 4 Church Lane, Whittlesford, Cambridge CB22 4NX. My website is at [www.timstone.mycouncillor.org.uk/](http://www.timstone.mycouncillor.org.uk/)

*In response to a question asked by Cllr Flynn, Cllr Stone reported that Mike Cooper (Cambridgeshire Highways) is attending to the problem of the state of the school road. Cllr Roberts thanked Cllr Stone for all his efforts in supporting the village and any delays incurred in any event are not due to him, as he always reacts very promptly to our requests.*

## **5 REPORT BY CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONSTABULRY – Report provided by PCSO Lindsay Gardiner**

This Police report has been taken from January 2010 – 30 April 2010.

There have been a total of seven reports since the above period; five reports of suspicious circumstances. Incidents that come under the title of suspicious circumstance usually involve a member of the public reporting a person acting out of the ordinary or a vehicle locating easy targets for crimes. Here is a list of some of the reports : Two gentleman were seen taken photos of buildings in the Fowlmere area, a gentleman enquiring about buying scrap metal from a business, the others were vehicles seen driving slowly in a particular area for a long period of time. These reports are very important to the police if you suspect it then please report it.

Two burglaries too businesses have occurred these have both been in the Butts industrial estate. The Butts is a regular target for metal theft over the past year the security of the site has improved with devices such as CCTV cameras, security lights, robust locks and good communication between each business, this has reduced reports of theft from the industrial estate.

Road safety is a subject that is very important to the police speed checks has been completed and four vehicles have been caught speeding though the village. The checks have been complete between 8:30am until 09:15 along the High Street. Checks need to be completed where there is a speed limit sign nearby and on a straight part of the road, if there are any areas in Fowlmere that you feel need particular attention and abide by the rules of speed checks then please make your policing team aware.

*Cllr Roberts said that this shows that we are getting some attention from the local police.*

## **6 DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT – Cllr D Roberts**

On SCDC I continue to be a member of both planning and scrutiny committees as well as the main council committee. I also act as a monitor for Scrutiny at Environmental Portfolio Holder meetings and am on the Joint Transport Committee. I also regularly attend other types of meetings including the Standards Committee. I try to miss very few committee meetings and can assure you that unlike many councillors these days who are never heard to speak I always participate and debate when I attend.

The council is of course as we all know very short of cash, this will have (and is already doing) effects across the board in relation to what services we are going to be able to deliver. The public are finding the cost of local government increasingly hard to take as services are reduced but the cost to them continues to increase as often their own incomes decline. I know just how much this fact annoys and often frustrates our residents and will do my best to ensure that we do all in our power in the coming year to not squander money.

The fiasco of the would-be "housing transfer" with the spending of £1.4 million on this exercise was one such event. The writing was clearly on the wall before the exercise ever started but the ruling Tory group did not wish to listen. The council had already had its own evidence that tenants would not be easily persuaded to give up the security of having the council as their landlord rather than sail into the unknown of a housing association especially in the midst of a huge national financial crisis yet still it ploughed on. The result of course was an overwhelming 75% thumbs down. This type of disregard or using common sense is unacceptable and one can but hope that somewhere lessons have been learned.

However the council unfortunately seems hell bent on spending money it hasn't got as it continues its "targets lead" approach to re-cycling. I think many of us see the worth of trying where and when ever possible to avoid waste and sort out the different detritus of modern living but do we really all require or indeed have room for yet another large wheelie bin within the lines of our gardens? I have already informed Environmental Health that I do not wish to be given such a receptacle!

The plastics collection is another item that causes me concern, this waste is shipped to China as at present there is no where here for its treatment, hardly environmentally friendly, what about the carbon footprint of taking it at all that way? Again this is costing money we don't have , I gather that East Cambs are actually withdrawing this service for these very same reasons.

We were during the year all presented with a " dogle " system of getting into our councils emails , no one seems to be able or willing to tell us the cost of this but what is know is that it was pretty much a disaster and we are now in the throws of another new system presently being tested! We also had a huge embarrassment when a deal to go into partnership with a nearby council for recovering money fell through at the last moment as the SCDC cabinet attempted to change the rules at the very last moment , this has lead to talk of a possible move from the other council involved (Uttlesford DC) to recover its costs , this is not a very business-like way in which to see the council behaving.

The practicalities of the councils lack of funds is resulting in staff being either made redundant, having to change jobs and in some cases having to change job titles and take pay cuts, we have over the last few months seen some very good and experienced officers leaving and I think that staff morale is possibly at an all

time low. We have also received the resignation of our Chief Executive and find that in spite of all our financial difficulties a new appointment will continue to see a six figure salary on offer to the new incumbent, I personally do not find this very acceptable and think it about time that such posts were somehow fixed to being linked with outcomes and results rather than simply for being in charge.

Unfortunately under the present " Cabinet " system and especially with that cabinet under the control of one party many councillors feel very frustrated at the lack of the ruling group to listen to anyone but themselves and one result of that has been that Full Council meetings have of late been the only place to vent our frustrations and have often become very noisy and at times almost out of control.

In the light of all the above I personally am hoping that at least in the coming local elections we end up as in the recent past with a " hung council " with no one group in control but instead get back to a situation where all the groups will have to find ways of working together to do the best for the residents of South Cambridgeshire rather than their political groups.

As I am Chair of the PC in Fowlmere I am obviously very involved and the work can be very varied and can go from trees being taken down without permission to dreadful pong coming from manure heaps , I try my best to get a satisfactory resolve!

Much of the work of a district councillor also comes from phone calls or indeed now via my computer , of course much is of a confidential and personal nature but in dealing with them I find much personal satisfaction as well as much more knowledge about all the various aspects of our villages life and the people who live here.

This is now coming up to be my 16th year as district councillor for Foxton and Fowlmere and I have to admit in spite of everything I still love doing the job .

I wish to thank my colleagues on the parish council not only for their continuing support for me in my role which would be a lot harder without all their help but for all they have and continue to do without any financial reward of any kind for the village. I think we need only look around this pretty place to appreciate the results all their combined efforts.

I am as ever available seven days a week and fifty two weeks of the year and am happy for people to contact me at any time. Thank you for your time tonight.

*Cllr Roberts concluded by saying that there are lots of issues / questions but it is very satisfying if she can help solve problems for local residents – it is still a thoroughly enjoyable job. She remarked that this is probably the most 'critical' report she has given over the past 20 years but felt that there were things that needed to be said.*

## **7. PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE – Cllr D Roberts**

The Planning Committee meets very regularly. There have been very few contentious issues in the village in the last year. Cllr Flynn is the Vice-Chairman and takes over if needs be when an application involves someone who is personally well-known to me. The planning rules have changed very recently and many applications no longer require approval, just sign-off from SCDC. Some developments are quite unbelievable as the size of a property can seemingly be doubled, due to permitted development rights.

Cllr Roberts thanked her fellow councillors for all their efforts in the past year.

*Simon Brooks asked about tree felling in the village and if it falls under the jurisdiction of the Parish Council? Cllr Roberts responded by saying that if a tree has a TPO (Tree Preservation Order) it would fall to SCDC for responsibility for giving permission to undertake any work but if there isn't a TPO then the local council won't take responsibility but the Parish Council can try to get involved. Cllr Roberts said that mature healthy trees in the village are very important to the feel of the area and add to it and it's very sad to see them erased down to ground level. The PC have written to a recent property owner for doing just that and expressed the disappointment of the PC. The PC is looking to get further TPO's on important trees in the village.*

## **8. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE REPORT – Cllr D Roberts**

Cllr Roberts reported that she had not prepared a finance report because the previous Chairman has only very recently left, unfortunately there being no Vice Chair in place. We now have an acting Chair and Vice Chair and this will be formalised at the next meeting. It is therefore unfair to ask them to give a formal report at such short notice but in brief, the finances are well within budget, having been very well managed by Cllr Woods and the precept has not been increased for this financial year. Projects for the coming year include some new playground equipment. The PC aims to keep well within budget for the coming year.

## **9. FOWLMERE SCHOOL - Mr R Elcock presented the report by Mr S Brooks, Chair of Governors**

## **Introduction**

Fowlmere Primary School serves the Parishes of Fowlmere, Great Chishill, Chrishall Grange and Heydon. The roll in May 2010 is 102, 90% of whom live in the catchment area. Those living out of catchment are from Melbourn, Barley, Royston and Shepreth. The roll continues to gradually increase (from 88 in 2001) and next year's intake (September 2010) is likely to increase the total to 104 with an intake of 17 or 18. This is very encouraging and the school has met with representatives from the Local Authority to consider how best to deal with the predicted growth in pupil numbers in the longer term.

We have been very pleased with the continued educational successes of the children over the past year. There were good Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results, both in actual attainment and 'value-added'. Results in Reading, Mathematics and Science were particularly pleasing, but Writing continues to be an area to focus on. Foundation Stage remains a key strength of the school.

Sport continues to play a key role in the life of the school with our extensive range of clubs including athletics, netball, football, hockey, cricket and rounders. Inter-house competitions and local tournaments have been held in many sports including netball, swimming, Kwik Cricket, cross country, rugby, football, rounders and athletics. The Athletics and Multi Sports Clubs continue to be well attended, and are funded through the PTFA's Arthur Fund, for which we are very grateful. Chris Mephram has been running his popular after school rugby club on The Butts.

The school is focused on delivering the new School Development Plan which was completed during the Spring term. This key document informs the planning of the school and contains these key strategic themes: Teaching and Learning; Personal and Professional Developments, The Environment of the Future; and The School and the Community.

## **Teaching and Learning**

We strive to provide the best possible education. The new Literacy and Numeracy frameworks have been embedded into the curriculum and we spend much time analysing test results and putting initiatives in place to further improve pupil attainment. Alongside this, we remain committed to a wide range of extra activities. Activity clubs which have been running this year are Cross Stitch, Percussion, Writing, Nature, Netball, Football, Friends, Fun and Games, Philately and Choir. Many of these activities are only possible thanks to the hard work of all staff and a dedicated group of volunteer helpers who bring their expertise to the school.

Cambridgeshire Music are continuing to provide piano, guitar, clarinet, violin, cello and drums tuition. As part of the Wider Opportunities music initiative, Year 3 are all receiving instrumental music tuition on the violin. We are very pleased that Mrs Hopkins from Cambridgeshire Music has started an orchestra, on Mondays after school.

## **Personal and Professional Development**

We continue to place a high priority on staff training to ensure our teachers have the opportunity to develop in line with the priorities of the School Development Plan.

We were sorry to receive the resignation of Mr Leon Robichaud, who has accepted the post of Deputy Headteacher at Cromwell Park Primary School, Huntingdon from 1 September 2010. We congratulate him on his success and thank him for all his creativity, enthusiasm and hard work.

Interviews have taken place to find a replacement KS2 Co-ordinator and a suitable candidate has been identified.

We have 2 students from Homerton College working with us this term, following on from the very successful placements in previous years.

## **The School Premises**

This year we expect to invest in a new central heating boiler for the school at a cost in excess of £80,000. After much deliberation, the Hall floor will be replaced over the summer holidays.

The grounds continue to be developed, the Reception Garden being a current area of focus. The new pond to the rear of the school is proving to be a haven for wildlife with bats sighted frequently in the evenings.

## **PTFA (Parents, Teachers and Friends Association)**

The PTFA is very active, and is able to provide significant funds to the school. The calendar of events for the first half of 2010 includes:

- Children's Disco (held in January)
- Our first 'Jamie at Home' party (held in March) which raised £170

- Easter Craft Afternoon (which was sold out)
- Safari Supper (biggest ever attendance with over 50 people taking part)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Art Exhibition (promising to be a huge success, as ever)
- Summer Fayre
- End of Term Disco
- End of Term BBQ

### **The School and the Community**

Community links remain a priority for the school. Parents receive an annual report on the progress of their children, and regular opportunities arise for discussions with teachers. Some examples of school involvement with the community include:

- Community Arts project – the Bus shelter refurbishment is still progressing
- Fowlmere School Choir has been invited to sing with the Cambridge Choral Society at their summer concert
- The School Choir continues to sing at local events including the URC coffee morning and the church harvest festivals
- This term the school we be taking part in the Meldreth Manor Music Day,
- A link has been established with Canon Linda Church and she has conducted assemblies at school
- The ongoing funding issues at Fowlmere Village Hall have been discussed at Governors meetings, regarding how the School could make more use of the Village Hall facilities
- The After School Club continues to operate in Thriplow, and a driver has now been appointed to take children from Fowlmere to the Club
- A questionnaire was sent to all parents of children at the school to gather feedback on a range of issues. The outcome is broadly very positive.

### **Finance**

This year the school was assessed for compliance with the new Financial Management Standards in Schools (FMSiS). This required significant work on the part of the finance staff and governors, and I am pleased that we passed first time, with no recommendations for improvement.

School financing for the next financial year is, as previously predicted, very tight. The Governors will be working with Mr Elcock and the Senior Management Team to ensure we are able to maintain the current high standards of teaching while ensuring we remain within our budgets.

### **Governors**

We are fortunate to have a ‘full complement’ of active Governors:

Simon Brooks	(Chair)	Philip Stiles	LA Governor
Steve Lester	Community Governor	Andrew Newby	Parent Governor
Andy Williams	Parent Governor	Juliette Webb	Parent Governor
Chris Ramsey	Parent Governor	Iverna Moss	Community Governor
Pat Flynn	Community Governor	Leon Robichaud	Staff Governor
Christine Hannington	Staff Governor	Richard Elcock	Headteacher

### **Conclusion**

Once again the governors thank all those involved with the school for their hard work and dedication to the children.. We are very conscious of the central role that school plays within their community and the Governors will continue to support the hard work of the staff and helpers which makes Fowlmere School such a special place.

*Cllr Roberts added that the PC have felt nothing but great pride in how our children in the village are looked after at the school and the results are that we have delightful children in the village. The school should be very proud of their results, academically and otherwise and asked for their congratulations to be passed on to all concerned for their hard work, it is very successful school.*

### **10. VILLAGE HALL REPORT – by Mrs Tamsin Goodfellow – Chair of the Fowlmere Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee**

I am delighted to present this report on the Fowlmere Village Hall and Recreation Committee to the Parish Council. This report summarises the action that has been taken since the Committee called a forum meeting to discuss the future of the village hall and ground earlier this year.

That forum meeting was convened because the charity that manages the hall and ground has suffered in the same way as so many other businesses from falling income and rising costs. At that meeting we reported on the situation and invited members of the community to give us a mandate to continue the village hall as a

going concern and to support us by helping to raise funds, to promote the hall and ground, to increase the use of hall and ground, and in such other manner as the community thought appropriate.

We have been delighted with the response that we have had. A lot of people have come forward and are actively supporting the hall in a number of ways.

- We have welcomed new members to the management committee
- In addition we have formed a designated 'fund raising group' which includes people who are not on the management committee. Led by Mandy Thornton this group has put together an imaginative and varied programme of fund raising events. The administration load is spread so that one or two people take responsibility for organising a single event and then call upon others to assist.
- Fund raising events to date have been:
  - A jumble sale, organised by Lamorna Thomas which raised £650
  - A book sale organised by Pat Flynn which raised over £200
  - A 'Soccer All Stars' day for the children was organised by Julie Webb which raised over £60 for the village hall and the same amount for the school
  - A car boot sale organised by Les and Maureen Thurley which raised £883
- Events yet to come include:
  - A possible holiday event for children in June half term building on the success of the same event in the Easter holidays
  - July 11th Family Fun Date
  - football club will run a tournament on a date to be determined
  - Farmers market to start on 9th October and run 2nd Saturday of every month
  - September – another car boot sale
  - October/November quiz night
  - November 20th barn dance/ceilidh
  - January table top sale
  - May Ball
  - Beer festival on a date to be determined
  - Wimbledon cream tea

One of the joys of these events and the sheer variety of them is the gathering together of people in the village. There is something here that should appeal to everyone and we are delighted by seeing new faces at the hall. We look forward to seeing them again and to seeing more new ones as well as seeing the more familiar ones.

- Mandy has also set up an easy fund raising scheme whereby anyone can raise funds for the village hall every time they shop online. They need to go through the website <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/fowlmerevh> or use the search engine <http://fowlmerevh.easysearch.org.uk>. A proportion of the profits will go to Fowlmere Village Hall. The website boasts supporters like John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, Amazon & hundreds more high street shops

We do need more awareness of this facility but are working on it.

- Gift Aid: we are now registered for gift aid so can claim a contribution back from the government in respect of qualifying donations.
- Bookings have increased: not dramatically but they are improving. One couple who came to the car boot sale were so impressed with the hall that they were inquiring about hiring it for their wedding. At least one significant birthday party has been booked to take place at the village hall because the person celebrating wanted to support the hall. And there have been others.
- Existing user groups have also shown their support : either by increasing their hours of using it or by increasing the amount that they pay
- The recreation ground is the subject of ongoing discussion and co-operation between the football players and the cricketers with a view to establishing a second cricket pitch as well as having the two football pitches. Active consideration is also being given to extending the use of the ground to other groups.
- Kitchen: one member of the community has come forward offering to help to improve and upgrade the kitchen. Discussions are ongoing but the proposal is to improve facilities by adding stainless steel



tables, an industrial sized fridge and a large cooker. We are currently waiting for the report from the environmental people as to what, if anything is required, with regards to the kitchen and then propose to make an application to South Cambs for a grant towards the cost of a new cooker and potentially anything required as a result of the environmental inspection. We will be seeking the support of the parish council for any such an application. An improved kitchen should make the hall as a whole more attractive to potential customers.

- A thorough review of the hiring charges for the hall and ground has long been on the agenda. A lot of research and consideration has been conducted by a sub-committee who are due to report to the full management committee shortly
- Sadie Tokley is very nobly not only producing but also distributing a monthly news letter. This is a marvellous tool for spreading the word about what has happened, what is happening and what is going to happen at the hall.
- We understand that in September Big Lottery will be launching a new community buildings fund. We very much hope that we will be in a position to submit an early application for some of the available funds and are actively seeking assistance in conducting the necessary research as to what the community would like to see at the hall and ground and why. We would very much like this research to be led by the youth in the village. We are also seeking adult help to assist them and to assist the committee with making the grant application.

We are not out of the woods yet and figures will always need careful monitoring. However we believe that, with the continued active support of the community we are moving forward and can go on to the next stage of endeavouring to increase our revenue and, in time, improving the village hall and grounds.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

*Cllr Flynn asked if something could be done about the state of the Takdir gardens? Cllr Roberts agreed and said it would be an agenda item on the next PC Meeting in order to see who best to approach.*

*Simon Brooks recently received a leaflet to attend a meeting about a nearby windfarm and asked if the PC have any information and should residents be concerned? Cllr Roberts replied that the PC has had documentation from the planners, not an application but a scoping study for those who may be affected including visual impact. The PC decided that they wouldn't participate in the scoping exercise but would keep a watching and active brief on what other PC's are doing. There are to be 11 of them and they are to be very tall.*

*Cllr Schonken added that the only negative thing for Fowlmere is the visual impact which is distracting. Cllr Stone added that the 'return' from a windfarm is considerable but the aesthetic is a matter of personal choice.*

*Cllr Bates agreed it would be in the local press as is a matter of local interest.*

*Cllr Roberts concluded by saying thank you for those who attended and she also thanked her fellow Councillors for their continued time, support and efforts.*

*Cllr Bates asked for a vote of thanks for the Chair and the Clerk at the meetings to be recorded.*

*Everyone was thanked for attending and the meeting closed at 8.40 pm.*

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