

Bilbrook Parish Council, Bilbrook Village Hall
Annual Parish Meeting held on
Tuesday 16th May 2017, 5.00pm

Minutes

Present:

Councillors:

V Chapman (Chairman), I Fieldhouse, P Fieldhouse, D Hutchinson, P Hutchinson, R Marshall (Vice Chairman), A Morrison

Also present: Mrs K Daker (Parish Clerk). Representatives from Holy Cross Church, St Nicholas Church Codsall, Codsall and Bilbrook History Society, Codsall 5th Rangers. No members of the public.

1.0 Apologies

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr M Barrow, Cllr Adrian Hill, Cllr Ian Kenyon

2.0 Minutes

Minutes of meeting held on 20th April 2016, having previously agreed were distributed for review. No further comments received.

3.0 Chairman's Report– presented by Cllr Mrs V Chapman

The Chairman welcomed everyone for coming this evening and introduced herself and fellow councillors.

The Chairman then went on to say that 2016/17 has been a challenging but successful year for the Parish Council. There have been the usual monthly Full Council meetings on the first Wednesday of the month with additional committee meetings, site meetings and seminars to attend. Budgeting for 2017 was also challenging for the Parish and bearing in mind the cut back in public expenditure which has undoubtedly had an impact on the services being provided by our partner organisations. The County and District Councils in particular have seen their rate support grant dramatically reduced but, to their credit, both organisations have taken all measures possible to reduce the impact on our residents.

Sadly former Parish Councillor, Carole Yates, passed away in September 2016, after a long illness. Following the resignation of Parish Councillors Tim Davies and Anthony Pearson, we now have two new Parish Councillors, Ian Kenyon and George Price, who enthusiastically joined the various sub-committees on the Parish Council to the betterment of the Parish of Bilbrook.

One way and another it's been a terrifically busy year for the Parish Council but there is no doubt that the two highlights of the parish year are Remembrance Sunday and Bilbrook at Christmas. A lot of hard work and preparation goes into these two events on behalf of the Village and the good turnout of so many parishioners makes it all so worthwhile. Long gone are the days when Bilbrook had no focal point and we now have our own War Memorial in honour of those who lost their lives in armed conflict.

We were particularly pleased with our Christmas street lighting this year as it has now been extended to include Bilbrook Road, Pendeford Mill Lane, Duck Lane and the village green. The Bilbrook at Christmas on the Village green was tremendously successful. Switch on of Christmas lights this year was done by Cyril Plimmer and Jack Holmes, veteran Bilbrook residents, who are trustees of the Boulton & Paul Aviation Association. The Parish Council decided to introduce stalls on

the village green which turned out to be very popular so we are intending to build on this for Christmas 2017. We are very grateful for the input from Rotary who brought along Santa for the children and the carols played by the Salvation Army put us in the Christmas spirit. None of this is done on a whim and it is only the hard work and dedication of our Parish Councillors on behalf of Bilbrook Parish that raises our profile as one of the best Parish Councils in South Staffordshire. It's a small team on the Christmas sub-committee and I want to give my personal thanks for their enthusiasm and dedication.

The two Jubilee Walks and Twentyman Playing Fields continue to be well used and we encourage people to get out and enjoy the countryside of the Parish of Bilbrook. Our playing fields are the 'jewel in the crown' of Bilbrook and something for the parishioners of Bilbrook to be really proud of. The Village hall on the Twentyman Playing Fields has been re-furbished and is well used and we would encourage local residents to use the facilities which are a credit to the Twentyman Playing Fields committee who manage the village hall and playing fields. The floral displays around the village, on the War Memorial, the Welcome sign in Pendeford Mill Lane and the Heritage sign on the old village green are a wonderful sight for visitors and parishioners to see

Bilbrook Parish Council will continue to be forward thinking in its approach to meeting the needs of the parishioners of all ages in Bilbrook and will continue in its work with local partnerships for the continued development and improvement of facilities in Bilbrook.

We continue to raise our profile in the community and grateful for the support we receive from various local organisations as well as South Staffordshire District Council and Staffordshire County Council.

Thank you to our Parish Clerk, Karen Daker, and Caretakers Arthur Skidmore and Roger Southall, for all their hard work throughout the last 12 months. Last but not least, to all the Parish Councillors. Parish Councillors are volunteers who give themselves to the community. Here, in Bilbrook our Parish Councillors are a dedicated and enthusiastic Team working hard for Bilbrook.

Bilbrook continues to move forward.

4.0 Community Reports. (Organisations who have received grants from Bilbrook Parish Council from 1st April 2016 to date.)

4.1 1st Bilbrook & Codsall Scouts

Apologies Sent. Report sent by Diane Head and read by Cllr Chapman:

Our Scout group currently has 75 young members, we have slightly more from Codsall Parish as it covers a wider area and we also take a small number from the surrounding area who do not have their own scout group if we have available places. We do not record numbers of which parish our members live in but it probably averages out between the two parishes.

Our Beavers (age 6-8years) has 24 youngsters and 2 leaders, 2016 saw the Beavers celebrating their 30th birthday joining with the district for a range of activities and challenges. The new year saw them among other things doing badge work, visiting Cosford air museum and attend a weekend camp at Patshull.

The Cub section age 8-10 years has 28 youngsters, 3 adult leaders and 2 helpers. After a fantastic 2016 celebrating our 100th Anniversary we are now busy doing badge work having already completed Science, international and Entertainer badges. We had talk on how to keep safe and internet safety. We joined the district for St George's day celebrations and renewal of promises.

The Scout section has 23 members, 2 leaders and help from young leaders. They continue with a wide variety of activities including making bat boxes and insect hotels in partnership with Friends of Bilbrook, Air Rifle shooting competition, Scuba Diving, survival camps, Hill Walking and communications badge.

All three sections are working towards this year's Carnival in June.

We continue to remain a strong group encouraging our youngsters to take part in all scouting offers. We would like to thank the Parish Council for all the support they give us.

The Chairman commented that they do a fantastic job in Bilbrook

4.2 Bilbrook & Codsall Work Club –presented by Cllr Mrs V Chapman

Charity Number 1149436

Dear Members,

Bilbrook Parish Council's support of this successful and worthwhile registered charity is much appreciated.

Bilbrook & Codsall Work Club:

Bilbrook & Codsall Work Club has been running now for 6 years, the busiest Work Club in South Staffordshire, open to residents every Thursday from 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon and based in South Staffordshire Council's Members Room. This particular Work Club is by far the busiest amongst the 7 Work Clubs in South Staffordshire and is now seen as the 'flag ship' Work Club. South Staffs Citizens Advice Bureau are now based within South Staffs Council offices on a Thursday morning which coincides with Bilbrook & Codsall Work Club. A relationship has been built for cross-referrals.

Bilbrook & Codsall Work Club figures at 31.3.17:

* 155 people have been to Bilbrook & Codsall Work club since last April 2016.

* Weekly attendees average at 24

* 11 attendees have moved into work, this is 34% of the total number who have got a job.

A concern that we are currently dealing with is that some of our clients have difficulty with literacy and numeracy skills which, of course, does bring its problems not only with seeking work but also day to day living. This is something we are now looking into regarding assessment, client profiling and 1:1 support in order to help our clients live a fulfilled life. As a former teacher I will am leading on this client support programme and working closely with Wolverhampton City Council's adult education programme.

The emphasis on how the South Staffordshire Work Clubs originally started and where they are now has changed and we are a tremendous support to the community right across South Staffordshire. We not only work with job seekers but also the more vulnerable in society; the Work Clubs provide careers advice, I.T. classes, educational courses, volunteering placements, benefits advice and a whole host of other skills to survive in today's world.

South Staffs Work Clubs – Overview:

South Staffordshire District Council (SSDC) has fully recognised the work undertaken by South Staffordshire Work Clubs and we are now embedded in the SSDC Plan for 2016- 2020, 'A skilled and prosperous district' whereby the focus is on 'backing business development, supporting vulnerable people to move closer to work and self-sufficiency and opportunities for young people. The target for South Staffordshire Council and South Staffordshire Work Clubs is to support 200 vulnerable working age people to either gain work, volunteer or receive education.

Members of South Staffordshire Council staff now work alongside the South Staffordshire Work Club Board of Trustees and attend the bi-monthly South Staffordshire Work Club Operational meetings regarding marketing and publicity, revenue and benefits at our work clubs and funding advice and guidance.

Staff and volunteers have continuous training and as, Team Leader and Trustee, I work alongside South Staffordshire Council staff with continued professional development in Benefits and Universal Credit.

Following on from the introduction of the new South Staffordshire Council website, South Staffordshire Work Clubs are easily accessible for residents who can hyperlink to the South Staffordshire Council website and follow through the South Staffordshire Council customer support focus whereby job seekers can be led through an easy process to the correct South Staffordshire Work Club contact(s). .

Over the last 12 months, the Work Clubs have supported 35 residents move into work and 40 into training or volunteering. According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, on average the local economy benefits by more than £14,000 per year, every time an unemployed person begins a Living Wage job.

Statistics for SSWC from 1/4/16 – 31/3/17

434 clients attended SSWC Work Clubs

205 clients received Careers Advice

139 clients received I.T. support

82 clients received advice from SSVA

267 received Benefits Advice/SSDC

South Staffordshire Work Club appreciate the support that your Parish Council gives to their local Work Club, Bilbrook & Codsall Work Club, as this helps us to continue the support for unemployed and the vulnerable in the local area of Bilbrook and Codsall and other residents in South Staffordshire, giving them the tools and confidence to either find value in themselves, first time employment or return to work.

4.3 Holy Cross Church - Presented by Mike Spragg

Holy Cross church does not receive anything from the Church Commissioners or the Diocese so have to raise the money themselves. They have to pay a parish share of just under £26,000 which enables them to share a priest with another church. The church roof has become an increasing problem. A survey last year revealed that previous repairs had been done badly. The estimated cost of repairs is £20,000 which is significant for a church that is just about meeting the Parish share. Holy Cross have succeeded in getting a few small grants. However, most grants available are to support listed buildings rather than small churches. Holy Cross will take a loan from Lichfield Diocese to cover the deficit which will take 7 years to pay back. Once completed they will be looking at the internal decoration. Holy Cross Church are very grateful for the grant of £2,000 from the Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked Holy Cross for all the work they do in the Community.

4.4 St. Nicholas Church

Report written by Roger Marsh and presented by Mr John Dodd

I have produced a quick summary below of the work undertaken in previous years. The number of burials and interment of ashes have been calculated from the fees received. These do not include child burials for which there is no charge, or reburials.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Burials	28	34	24	30
Burial of Ashes	26	47	36	33
Grass Cutting	£6,020	£6,625	£7,040	£7,040
Moles + path spray	£455	£410	£410	£550
Hedges	£3,898	£180	£180	£0
Trees	£930	£0	£330	£0
Sundries	£1,804	£455	£1,308	£247
Total cost	£13,107	£7,670	£9,268	£7,837

There has been considerable work undertaken in the churchyard in the last 12 months clearing a lot of trees and low lying branches. This has made a considerable improvement to the general

condition and appearance and we are most grateful to a small but dedicated team of volunteers which has meant that this has not been reflected in high costs

Sundries was mainly smaller items in 2016 but the lych gate in the Mill Lane section of the churchyard is being renovated in 2017 and at a cost in excess of £4,000. The path around the back of the church is also due to be renovated but work on the church building are hopefully due to take place shortly which will involve digging up a part of this path, so this is on hold pending completion of the other work.

The churchyard has continued to be well visited in the last year and we have had our usual bi annual clean up. The original burial area is almost full with just a small number of plots for burials of ashes and the relatively newly consecrated area is being well used.

The chairman thanked the church for keeping the graveyard in such good condition.

4.5 Codsall and Bilbrook History Society – Presented by Mrs Judy Davies

Activities during 2016-2017

Our current membership is in the 150's and our evening talks always have an audience size of around 70 to 100 people.

We have 9 indoor meetings and 1 coach trip each year.

Last June we mounted a display of photographs of our local parishes as part of Penn History Fair.

We remain affiliated to the Friends of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service and the Staffordshire Parish Registers Society.

No new publications have been produced during the year but "Memories from around Codsall" has been reprinted yet again.

Members have been happy to support the "Beating the Bounds " walk around the Parish boundary last May and the vigil for the Battle of the Somme in June.

With the aid of grants from Bilbrook Parish Council and South Staffordshire Council we have finalised a pictorial display for Bilbrook Village Hall to reflect the changing history of the Village and to highlight the role of the Twentyman family, as many people have heard of Twentyman playing fields and Village Hall, but they have no knowledge of the significance of the name.

Judy made a request for any pictures of pictures of Bilbrook Halt.

The Chairman thanked Judy Davies for all her dedication and enthusiasm in helping the Parish council to provide photographs of historic interest to visitors to Bilbrook Village Hall. The collages of history photographs on the wall in the main room of the Village Hall will help to promote interest in the Village's past. It is important to remember our history in order to focus on the future whilst remembering the past.

4.6 South Staffordshire First Responders

Apologies sent. No report available. **Matter of Report:** The boxes for the two defibrillators have been installed at Bilbrook Village Hall and Holy Cross Church Hall. It was confirmed they would be maintained by the South Staffordshire First Responders.

4.7 Codsall 5th Rangers

Report presented by Kristie Manders. The unit opened in April 2016 with 8 Rangers. The currently have 10 members and meets at Trinity Methodist Church. In the last 6 months they have organised a number of activities including:

The Senior Section Ball - This was held in Manchester on Saturday 22nd October 2016 to celebrate 100 years of this section of Girlguiding. We travelled by train to and from the event, with the girls deciding to have lunch at Nando's prior to going to the ball. We all dressed up in our posh frocks and were entertained by a live jazz band, magicians, a silent disco, photo booths

along with plenty of popcorn, sweets, candy floss and finger food through the evenings celebration.

Trips & events - We attended Warwick Castle sleepover which was arranged by Midlands Region and slept in the newly built luxurious chalets, entertained by knights having a sword fight and ate a banquet fit for a King. The Rangers have joined up with the Guide unit for Spangles Sweet shop party on a princess theme, to celebrate some older Guides leaving to join them in Rangers. The Rangers have asked that each term for an outing, which the majority of the time involves food, we have visited 'The little dessert shop' twice and Cosmos at Christmas. The Rangers have already decided at the end of the Summer term they are visiting Kasper's in Wolverhampton.

Craft - The girls are very talented when it comes to craft and as we only have an hour a week, it sometimes takes many weeks to complete craft project. The girls designed and decorated jute bags using acrylic paints & sharpie pens. They have also used decopatch to decorate papier-mâché animals. We are hoping to be able to decorate a small table & chairs in decopatch which will be donated to either a local playgroup or childminder.

St Patrick's day - We celebrated St Patrick's day in the unit meeting by making & decorating cakes, learning Irish dancing as one of the girls has lessons in the type of dancing. We also had some fun with an Irish photo booth set and had plenty of laughs.

Equipment & Badges - Bilbrook Parish Council's grant has also been used to purchase plenty of stationary (pens, pencils, paper, scissors, glue, ink cartridges) Girl Guiding literature in the form of achievement certificates, badge syllabus and a number of pin and woven badges (promise badges, County Badges, Thinking day badges, Birthday badges, Senior section badges)

Future Plans - We are always planning more exciting adventures for the girls in and outside the unit meetings. We are hoping to be able to take the Rangers and Guides to Disneyland Paris in early 2019, but this is dependent on all the leaders undertaking additional training and also obtaining a Rangers/Senior Section Residential licence. We are awaiting the Midlands Region booklet of events for 2017-2018 and likely that we will offer a number these event to our girls (previous events we have attended - Sleepovers at Warwick Castle, Alton Towers, Drayton Manor, Twycross Zoo, Young driver experience in Birmingham, Think Tank & London visits) Lots of other activities are planned for the rest of the year.

The chairman thanked Kristie Manders for an extremely interesting presentation and the enthusiasm and hard work that goes into encouraging the Rangers. It's only with the dedication and enthusiasm from volunteers that youngsters in our area have such opportunities.

4.8 Voluntary Car Scheme (The Community Council of Staffordshire)

Apologies sent. No report available. **Matter of Report:** The Community Council have requested that we hold onto the £500 grant until they have heard from the other locality 4 Parish Codsall and Pattingham Parish councils, because if they say no, the scheme may not be able to continue. Perton have already approved the amount they asked for.

5.0 **Community Reports.** (Other Organisations who have not received grants from Bilbrook Parish Council from 1st April 2016 to date.) None Present.

6.0 Open Discussion

Councillor Marshall raised the issue of Potholes – One pledge in the Conservative Party manifesto for the County Council Election was to promise £3 million to deal with the back log of 12,000-15,000 potholes.

No other issues were raised. The chairman thanked everyone for coming so early.

Meeting closed at 5.38pm

Signed: Dated: