

Annual Watermead Parish Meeting

Thursday 19 May 2022 at 7.00pm
Held at the Village Hall, Watermead

Attendees: Cllr Severn (Chair), Cllr A Schwab, Cllr I Schwab, Cllr S Mackay,
BC Cllr Ashley Bond
Noreen Shardlow (Clerk), Michelle Jackson (Assistant Parish Clerk)
plus 3 members of the public – Graham Severn, Peter Dean, Linda Dean

- 1 **Apologies**
Cllr M Singleton, Cllr M Morgan, Cllr E Rose
- 2 **To agree the minutes of 20th May 2021.**
The Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.
- 3 **To discuss any matters arising from those minutes**
No matters arising.
- 4 **To receive reports:**
Watermead Parish Council – Sue Severn

The following is the Annual Report of the Parish Council

This year has been very much easier for most of us due to the availability of the Covid-19 vaccination programme, and the gradual opening-up of the country, giving us the ability to see our friends and loved ones and to enjoy outings, and a more 'normal' life. Despite the difficulties the pandemic had some positive effects including the emergence of enormous generosity and kindness shown by Watermead's community, to those in need.

Recently the terrible events in Ukraine have resulted in many families having to flee their homeland and a Watermead resident has already welcomed a Ukraine national into our community. You are most welcome. Watermead residents rallied round to assist with the collections early on, and in one morning donated 5 vehicle loads of requested items which have been transported to Poland and into Ukraine by Waddesdon's fantastic aide initiative. We are proud to be part of this effort. As always, when asked for help, it is given unconditionally.

In recent years that the path around the large lake has become so eroded that many parts are impassable in winter. Noreen Shardlow worked with FCC and the Community Board to secure funding which allows us to reinstate the path with an Environment Agency approved design suitable for the area which we hope will last for many years, allowing us and our visitors to enjoy our fantastic lakeside walks. The Parish Council has made a small contribution to the cost, and without the support of grants we would have been unable to carry out this project. We are also grateful to Westerleigh Group for their offer of assistance and to the Brown family for providing a compound on their land, without which we would not have suitable access to the work area. We hope that the new route will be ready before autumn.

Cyclists are numerous in Watermead. We all agree that this is sustainable and healthy mode of transport, reducing car usage and helping the environment we would like to ask cyclists to ensure they slow down for pedestrians, and stop if necessary. If you bike has a bell, please ring it to warn pedestrians. We're fortunate that our roads are mainly very safe for cycling and if you do use the pavement please remember to move over and wait for pedestrians, particularly those with dogs, children and the elderly or those with mobility issues. We can all share the space but need to be mindful of one another. This applies in particular to the lakeside paths where dogs are walked off lead in many areas and children run in and out of the wooded areas please take great care.

The litter problem is perennial! To keep our land looking its best our wonderful

volunteers litter pick every day. The new purple bins, while not particularly attractive, do keep litter securely and have high capacity. Volunteers move them to the roadside on Sunday evenings and return them after they have been emptied. If you would like to help, please call Noreen Shardlow on 01296 395211.

HM Queen's Platinum Jubilee event – Sunday 5th June 2022

The Parish Council is arranging a special community event to mark HM Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The event is intended to be a simple celebration in recognition of the Jubilee.

Resident children will receive a commemorative medal at the event. Local bands will play, Bollywood Dancing (with a chance to participate!) will provide entertainment, led by Phil Gomm. Kelvin Wong will be providing a licenced bar and there will be ice cream and a catering vans. Please come along with your neighbours to enjoy our own community lunch. The event starts at 1pm, ending at around 6pm.

We hope to see you there.

Freedom of the Parish

Since we couldn't hold events last year our two recipients of Freedom of the Parish will receive now their Freedom during the HM Queen's Jubilee Community Picnic event on Sunday 5th June. The two recipients are Mr Dave Lang who works tirelessly to ensure our environment remains clean and tidy. He collects litter every day, throughout Watermead and the road verges to the main road. It was felt that Dave's contribution is exceptional. The other resident being honoured is Mr Steven Stevens known to many who meet him walking his French Bulldog, and black Labrador. Still very sprightly, Mr Stevens is a veteran of the D-Day Landings and a Chevalier de Légion d'honneur, another richly-deserved honour.

Roger Jefcoate CBE, a great friend of Watermead, former Deputy Lieutenant and 'phantom Black Poplar planter' will present the Scroll and Key to the Village Hall; (the Freedom confers on the holder the freedom of the Village Hall). Our sincere congratulations.

Watermead Volunteer Army

The Army is still needed and a small number of wonderful volunteers from Watermead open the community store at Roman Park next to Aylesbury Vale Parkway station every week providing families with much-needed food and other items they need. The generous donations made during the pandemic have allowed the food store to continue and it does seem likely that need will increase with increased living costs for all. Thank you to Debbie, Felicity, Kellie-Marie, Julian and everyone who helps. The difference you make to those needing help is incalculable. Roman Park Trust has a simple message 'restoring dignity' and your help does exactly that.

Christmas lights competition

The Christmas lights just get better every year. It has now become tradition for so many families to walk round Watermead to see the lights. Kestrel Way residents provided an amazing display, and so many houses lit up really provided cheer. It seems that many of us add to our collection each year so we can expect to be brighter than ever this year, we hope.

Front Garden competitions

Last year's front gardens were, as usual, spectacular, particularly at a time when it was hard to find visit garden centres. Perennials have become increasingly important to our colour schemes but those taking part make a real difference.

Open Gardens

Last summer's very hastily arranged Open Gardens days raised a significant amount for Florence Nightingale. It was held late in the summer when we were able to mix after lockdown and most of our gardens were past their best.

Nevertheless, visitors loved walking round, getting and giving gardening tips, enjoying coffee and snacks and obviously a sneak peek into others' gardens, usually hidden by walls and fences. This year we will arrange the day during early July and if you would like to open your garden please let Noreen know and we'll add you to map. It's very simple, just put balloons/signs outside your gate and people arrive! Mo and Kelvin collected donations and distributed maps and we hope they will do so again.

Watermead News

Mo is currently on sick leave following major surgery. The Post Office has had to close for several weeks and this serves to remind us of the significant amenity we have in Watermead. We wish Mo well and hope that he has a speedy recovery.

Recreation & Leisure

The basket swing, kindly gifted to Cllr Severn by Proludic, will be installed shortly.

Larks by the Lake and Outdoor Film Night

We were very disappointed that these events had to be cancelled, in common with so much else, but hope they will return next year. Fun day out raising money for four chosen charities.

Photographic competition

The ever-popular competition was again held 'virtually' last year with some fantastic photography on display. We are grateful to Eric Rose for arranging this.

Watermead Inn Pub Lunch club

Mary Singleton, with support from Kelvin and his team has re-started the Lunch Club. It is growing in popularity and much enjoyed by attendees. Thank you Kelvin and team for helping Mary to facilitate this much appreciated event. Yet another return to normality.

Village View

The magazine continues to grow and this year it has been entered, once again, for Village Magazine of the Year, last won under Sandra Landy's Editorship over 20 years ago! Our brilliant advertisers allow us to deliver the View to everyone in Watermead free. Thanks also to the great editorial team led by Mary Singleton, and Stuart MacKay who has taken on the task of finding advertisers from Phil Toler, and Rachel for design. A wonderful team who always produce the goods, it's fantastic. Thank you all so much.

Mary really welcomes contributions and articles for the View, do get in touch if you have anything for inclusion.

Neighbourhood Plan

Our Plan is now moving forward having stalled due to Covid. Public consultations can now take place in person which makes a significant difference. We have now engaged with local businesses as well as residents and the next stage will go ahead soon. **This plan is for everyone, for the future.** Initial questionnaire responses gave us the information that the single most important issue for residents was the state of the lakeside path so this has already informed action. A good example of the way the Plan will help the Parish to prioritise projects and create the vision for the future. Please do take part in consultation and events, when invited.

Parish Councillors

Having sat for two additional years due to Covid-19 local councils in Buckinghamshire were elected in May 2021. Watermead has a full complement of Councillors who work hard on behalf of parishioners. Please do get in touch with any of us if you have any issues or concerns. Noreen Shardlow, our Parish Clerk is a permanent first point of contact if you need assistance with anything concerning living in Watermead.

It remains an honour for all of us to represent our community on the parish council. I would like to personally thank each Councillor, on your behalf, for their service and hard work on behalf of the community. Each brings their own skills and areas of interest, producing events, the Village View, undertaking legal work, marketing, interest in wildlife and environment, governance and finance. Their contributions are significant.

Watermead Parish Council retains the General Power of Competence, giving it the freedom to act, as any individual can, within the law, in a less restricted way, for the benefit of the whole community. We are fortunate to have a qualified Parish Clerk and to meet other obligations to exercise the Power.

I would like to end by sincerely thanking Noreen Shardlow and Michelle Jackson for their hard work. We also owe sincere thanks to Dave Lucas, John Hillier, Darren Adamson, Wayne Samuels and Martin Nolan who work with us, often during emergencies, to keep Watermead safe and attractive. Their work goes beyond the usual transactional relationship for which we are grateful. Thank you for your support, and we wish everyone a healthy and safe summer.

Cllr I Schwab added that listening to the Chair's report it shows how much the PC is doing and how many of the activities that the Chair personally is involved in. Credit was given to the Chair for her time and dedication and thanks given on behalf of the rest of the Cllrs for driving the PC forward. Many of the things would not have happened without her. The Clerk was also thanked for her involvement.

Cllr A Schwab commented on the complexities of the many issues the PC has had to deal with for a relatively small parish council. It was a privilege to live on Watermead and be a part of it. He acknowledged the amount of work that goes on to maintain the land etc. He also wished to acknowledge the Chair's leadership in so many areas and her background knowledge. Thanks were also given to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

Graham Severn wished to recognise the work Phil Toler and The Dung Beatles have done for charity over the last few years.

BC Cllr Ashley Bond, Buckinghamshire Council

The Bucks Awards had been hosted at Ivinghoe and had been well attended by people from Ivinghoe, Pitstone and Wing.

The Vineyard on Gatehouse were looking for more funding for Ukraine and as part of the Community Board, Cllr Bond had been invited to go and speak to people. Cllr Blamires had also attended and a film crew was present and had featured on BBC News. One of the Ukrainian ladies Cllr Bond had spoken to was wanting to find out about her Ukraine diploma in history and whether it could be recognised in England. Cllr I Schwab offered her services to assist with this.

The new cabinet at the Buckinghamshire Council had been appointed.

Thanks were given to Cllr Bond for his assistance over the past years.

5 Parishioners' Views

None.

6 Date of next Annual Parish Meeting

18 May 2023 7.00 pm

Cllr Severn thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 7.30pm.