



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH 2023

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday 11th April 2023 in Dinton Village Hall

Present & Officiating:	Cllr Dick O’Driscoll (Chairman of the Parish Council) Mr K Gray, JP (Clerk to the Parish Council)
Parish Councillors:	Honor Vane, Terry Heath, Nick Cottman
Buckinghamshire Councillors:	Non Attendance
Residents of the Parish:	16

The Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Parish Councillors R Lamkin and J White.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th April 2022.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th April 2022 were received, agreed and signed as a correct record.

3. Council’s Annual Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council – Cllr D O’Driscoll

This is my first report as chair of the Parish Council and when I sat down to write it, I realised a major part of my report is recognition of thanks due to those who have helped to make my role that much easier.

Firstly, I am delighted to report that we now have a full quota of councillors. After the very sad loss of Jon Horn last year, who so well represented Ford on our Council, we are fortunate in that we were able to co-opt Jim White from Ford who will, I am sure, continue to give Ford a strong voice in the Parish.

My thanks go to all the councillors who have helped and supported me in the last year chairing the Council. In particular, I would like to thank Honor Vane and Nick Cottman, who are also so active in helping to run the Village Hall.

Alan Floy has agreed to take up the position of Tree Warden and has prepared a Spring/Summer report on the trees in the Parish which has been circulated to all Councillors and will be discussed at the May Parish Council meeting.

During the year we have extended the children’s playground thanks to funding received from the Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board and the Dinton Beer Festival. Benches commemorating the Queen’s Jubilee have been situated in Upton, Ford and Dinton.

We have, over the last year, experienced an abnormal amount of construction work in the parish, which has resulted in considerable disruption and inconvenience to parishioners. Westlington Green, more than other areas, has suffered significant damage to its verges and we have recently restored these verges and with a system of posts and edging tried to ensure protection of the area for the future. This may not be to everyone's liking but the Council feels it is better than leaving this green to deteriorate further. The Council are also concerned about the significant deterioration in the grass verges by the church due to school and churchgoer parking.

The Village Hall, which is now the responsibility of the Parish Council, continues to be a source of concern, losing money with the current level of hirers, following the closure of the Dinton Pre-School. We need to increase revenue somehow to keep our heads above water.

We have had a basic survey carried out on the Village Hall which recommended spending approximately £135,000 (which we don't have), to bring the hall up to date but still in its current form. In a nutshell, as the Village Hall committee sees it, there are three options 1. The hall could be refurbished at the cost of some £135,000 giving us the same hall as we had in 1927 or 2. The hall could be rebuilt or extended where it is, although there are various restrictions on the site including the existing oak tree and restricted parking or 3. It could be relocated, if possible, on the Parish field, subject to being able to obtain planning permission. These are issues the Parish Council and Dinton Village Hall Committee are currently much occupied with.

As we will hear, following this report, the various village organisations are thriving and continue to contribute to making this Parish a lovely place to live.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to Martin Usherwood and Keith Gray, who have both been unstinting in helping me with their time, experience and valuable counsel over the last year.

CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL
Dinton with Ford & Upton Parish Council

4. Report from Buckinghamshire Unitary Council Members & Community Groups

Buckinghamshire Councillors M Caffrey & Cllr A Waite

St Peter's & St Paul's Church, Dinton – Revd. Nigel Featherston
Associate Minister, Wychert Vale Benefice

It was quite an eventful year, beginning with our introduction to the Romanian Orthodox Church in March 2022. Fr. Gavril and Fr. Julian arrived at the end of another successful Aylesbury Arts Society meeting, (the Society have been using the church as a meeting venue for a little while now.) This was fortunate timing because the church is not normally open during the day. They met with Lorraine Gooch and Rosemary and introduced themselves, explained that they were looking for a church that they could regularly worship in for their Buckinghamshire congregation which is largely drawn from Aylesbury and High Wycombe. A further meeting was arranged with myself and Rev Phil Groves and we all agreed with Rosemary's assertion that this was indeed an answer to our prayers for the church to be more fully used as a place of Christian worship.

We readily agreed that they could hold their Sunday services on the second and fourth Sundays when historically we don't hold a morning service, they also have requirements on Tuesday evenings for prayer and confessions and Saturday evenings before their Sunday services. We checked with Cassa our Benefice Rector and also Archdeacon Guy and the Diocese, all approved our working with our Romanian friends which is viewed as a very positive collaboration.

We will shortly have a legal Licence ready to ensure everything runs smoothly and everyone's responsibilities will be clearly defined including cleaning, cost sharing and storage of materials. This will represent the culmination of much preparatory work and consultation with Diocesan lawyers in Oxford who are also working on the same Licence under Faculty arrangement for a church there.

During the year we have enjoyed a service together where they invited us to join them and share a lunch afterwards and more of the joint ventures will come in the future. Due to their urgent requirement for a viable sound system in time for their Easter services last year we have been able to enjoy use of it since and all the works including some remedial action have been approved by the Diocese. We are currently working together on restoring the Victorian sheds in the churchyard to create more storage capabilities which will greatly help our Romanian friends avoid having to bring and then take away much equipment for each service. There will be other projects to come such as the church path from Upton Lane to the South Porch which is slippery and muddy in parts during wet weather.

In addition to our work with the Romanian Orthodox Church we have also had a busy year with five weddings during 2022 and have now finally caught up with all those weddings and baptisms that were delayed by the Covid lockdowns and restrictions. We had a number of funeral services and a memorial service during the year with especial mention to those for John Horn in May and Tricia Withers in October, may they rest in peace.

In June we marked the late Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee with a special service of Holy Communion and again in September after she sadly died, services reflected our National loss with prayers said for her, the Royal Family and particularly for our new King, Charles the third.

All festival services such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas plus the Service of Remembrance in November were well attended and we continue to work closely with Cuddington and Dinton school with assemblies taking place in the church plus events to mark Easter in the last week before the Easter school holiday.

We must also mention the use of the church building as a concert venue with many successful events taking place over the year primarily organised by Mike Trotman.

We look forward to another year of service to our community and wish you every blessing for the rest of this year and beyond.

Community Event Team (CET) – Mr Steve Merry

Report of activities April 2022 – April 2023 and future events.

Our team of more than 20 volunteers, established pre-pandemic, meets on a regular basis at The Seven Stars. Year-on-year we define a calendar of events for the enjoyment and participation of our parishioners. The Calendar is published in the Big Issue newsletter together with a list of contact numbers.

Our events are largely self-funding through small event charges, and we have had donations from the Parish Council and Dinton Beer Festival. Many of our team have selflessly absorbed costs themselves such as: Poster materials, Printing and Laminations, other advertising, Christmas Tree (courtesy of Paul Roads), and decorations, Quiz Prizes, and use of vehicles for transporting event props etc and other event materials.

To minimise costs, we strive to use Parish facilities to stage events and the Village Marquee erected on Dinton Cricket Club from March through October, has been frequently used to stage events and save on costs.

Last year, in collaboration with the Cricket Club, we funded the purchasing of a Dance Floor to be used for such as the Summer Ball, within the marquee. The availability of the Cricket Club Bar and other facilities (toilets etc) has significantly helped to avoid large expenditures we might otherwise have incurred. We sincerely thank the Cricket Club for their contribution in making our events so successful and much easier to organize.

The limitations of Dinton Village Hall can restrict the type of event we hold there and numbers attending, but with the help of the Cricket Club and the Seven Stars we are able to host a variety of events across multiple locations that we believe appeal to most of our diverse Parish population.

The Seven Stars and the cooperation from Steph and her team is a significant factor in the success of events with the provisioning of BBQ's, use of the pub for the Quizzes, CET meetings and sponsoring the Parish Cribbage Team and of course the end of year Christmas Spectacular in the pub garden. Steph knows we all love her.

In 2022 and 2023 year-to-date the CET have organized and run the following events:

1. 9 Monthly Quizzes (we take a break July/August). The 'Bumper' Christmas Quiz is particularly popular and one of the quizzes is always dedicated in support of our nominated charity The Florence Nightingale Trust to which over the years we have donated upwards of £9,000
2. The Norvil & Josephine Vaudeville Magic Show – held in Dinton Village Hall in April as a family show partly sponsored by the Arts Council. This offbeat Comedy Alternative Magic Show was a great success and very favourably commented on by those attending. The show included a stand-up Comedy Routine by Westlington resident Susan Earl bringing belly laughs from the audience. The event illustrated the limitations of the village hall for events requiring a stage and the CET had to fund and source a stage extension, special lighting and recording equipment. The access and exit points were somewhat exposed and it was only possible to seat about 70 people.
3. Thanks to the Marquee availability, we were in April, able to facilitate a 21st Birthday Party for Richard van Bergen's daughter and his generous donation helped facilitate lighting for future events.
4. Much effort was expended organizing for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June with excellent cooperation across the Parish including use of Cricket Club facilities, Seven Stars BBQ and the erection of a multitude of colourful marquees on the Parish Field. A 60's tribute act provided music of the decades of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and we were delighted to present a prize to the best fancy dressed children. Although rain eventually turned up, we managed to celebrate well into the evening at the Cricket Club and Seven Stars. All children attending were given a Jubilee Celebration Mug and many distributed across the parish in the following weeks. The event did absorb much of the funds the CET had built up but more than justified given the significance of the event.
5. On Saturday 16th July we ran the Summer Ball in the Marquee on a splendid summer's evening with the backdrop of a Dinton Cricket Match still in progress versus Aston Rowant. With the marquee sides rolled up, attendees were able eat, drink and be merry while watching a very entertaining game. The sensational live band Sledgehammer provided a stunning performance as the parish danced into the early hours. Sledgehammer have been booked for a repeat at the 2023 Summer Ball
6. The annual Conkers Night took place at the Cricket Club in October with an accompanying BBQ attracting families from across the Parish and once again demonstrated that this timeless seasonal pastime is as popular as ever.
7. Our most ambitious event of the year saw the return of Firework Night on the Parish Field after several years absence but brought back by popular demand. The event was subject to approval of the Parish Council who were satisfied that we were able to comply with strict

Health & Safety rules. Previously a 'free' event, we had to charge by family such are the price of fireworks these days. A BBQ was staged in the Marquee and helped to supplement costs thanks to Steph Seven Stars who charged at cost and no profit The whole event was masterfully crafted by our resident ex Commando and explosives expert, Will Hughes, and his services colleague. Feedback from those attending was very positive, and requests that the event remains in the calendar ongoing and hopefully to include a bonfire next time.

8. Our final event of the year, and very popular with everyone across the Paris, was the Christmas Tree 'Lights On' celebration at the beginning of December in the Seven Stars Garden. A fabulous tree donated by Paul Roads and with excellent help from John and Greg King, facilitated a great kick-off to Christmas in the Parish as we enjoyed mince pies, mulled wine, roast chestnuts, and carol singing around the tree. The event was followed later that evening with the Bumper Christmas Quiz in the pub with takings donated to Florence Nightingale
9. In January we ran our annual Wine and Cheese evening moved from November to January so as not to clash with other events in a crowded autumn schedule. This worked very well thanks to Debbie, Martin, Fiona and Julie and helped recover other costs expended during 2022.
10. In October 2022 we formed a Parish Cribbage team based at the Seven Stars and playing in the Chinnor and District British Legion Cribbage League. We have 10 people from the Parish registered to play and always on the look-out for new members. The season ended in March 2023 with the Seven Stars Peggys being awarded a Trophy for being the most welcoming and sporting team in the league and definitely the best food as supplied once again by Steph. The next season starts in October.
11. For the remainder of 2023 we have the following plans:
 - a. we are currently deep into making arrangements to celebrate King Charles III Coronation with a Parish wide Treasure Hunt to be held Sunday 7th May commencing 2pm at Dinton Village Hall and suitable for all ages which culminates in a BBQ at the Seven Stars (see advertising around the parish)
 - b. Quizzes in March, April, May, June. September, October, November, December
 - c. The Summer Ball in the Marquee Saturday 24th June featuring Sledgehammer
 - d. Conkers Night TBA
 - e. Home Made Gin tasting night - TBA
 - f. Firework Display November TBA
 - g. September – March 2024 Cribbage League
 - h. Christmas Tree 'Lights On' December TBA
 - i. Others TBD

Dinton Beer Festival – Mr Dennis Dunn

This is an annual event held in August in the grounds of the Seven Stars. Planning for the event starts weeks in advance by a small group led by Dick O'Driscoll and myself. The group solicit sponsors for the beer, cider, Pimms tent, souvenir glasses, entertainment, printing, etc.

As well as sponsoring a barrel, Steph at the Stars puts on a barbeque and the Stars remains open to sell alternative drinks or food. Her team help with setting up and taking down the small gazebos and moving garden furniture. The car park is blocked off to extend the garden and create safe space for families and children. The ticket sales, beer tent and Pimms tent are manned by volunteers from the community who give their time generously to make the day go smoothly.

So far the Dinton Beer Festival has raised £12690. The money has been distributed to various projects to benefit the community, either as complete funding or contribution towards costs.

Main benefactors have been:

<u>Dinton Village Hall</u>	<u>Value£</u>	<u>Year</u>
Replacement Boiler	1400	2015
Kitchen Refurbishment	700	2017
Wi-Fi Installation and running costs for 2 years	720	2023
 <u>Dinton Church</u>		
Messy Church, children's tables and chairs	500	2019
Platinum Jubilee Bench at Church gates	553	2022
Contribution towards Flag fixings on church (pledged)	500	2023
Refurbish Stocks near Church (pledged)	770	2023
 <u>Parish Field Playground</u>		
Contribution to Children's Playground	1700	2016
Dinton Playground Table installation	115	2019
Playground Table and Bench	270	2021
Contribution to playground extension	2000	2022
 <u>Access and Footpath Gates</u>		
Parish Field Gate	317	2018
Donate a Gate	375	2019
Kissing Gate in Ford	500	2022
Kissing Gate in Dinton	500	2023
 <u>Florence Nightingale Hospice</u>		
Village Defibrillator located outside Seven Stars	300	2018/2019
	700	2017

Smaller donations have been made to:

Bishopstone Beer Festival, Ford Marquee Insurance, Christmas Tree Lights, Dinton Golf Society, contribution to glasses at Jubilee Party, etc.

We are always looking for sponsors and help on the day. We would welcome any ideas for projects and good causes in the Parish to consider for funding. We still have just over £1000 to donate.

The next Dinton Beer Festival is planned for 19th August 2023. There will be a good variety of beers to satisfy the connoisseurs, and entertainment for all. Everyone is welcome.

A huge thank you to all those sponsors who have donated a barrel over the years, or have made other types of donations to make this festival possible.

Ford Village Society – Sarah Ellis (Treasurer of the FVS)

I would like to start by paying tribute to the contributions to the Parish, of three people from Ford. Since last year's Annual Parish Meeting, we have mourned the passing of Jon Horn, a Parish Councillor for 24 years and Mary Hobden, a Parish Councillor for 28 years. Both of them worked hard to make their community a better place and made it their business to get to know so many of you and understand the issues that we all face. They are greatly missed.

Monica Dunton retired as the secretary of the FVS in January this year, after 19 years in the role. Monica was also a regular attendee of Parish Council Meetings, on behalf of Ford Villagers and we are grateful for her long and diligent service to us.

FVS has received huge financial support from the Parish Council this year, for which we are enormously grateful. We have been given the finance for two commemorative plaques, one each for Jon Horn and Mary Hobden, a tree and a bench for Ford, to mark the Late Queen's Platinum Jubilee and an ex-gratia grant of £1,000 towards the running costs of FVS.

That grant has helped finance our events, including the cost of our Christmas carol service (during which we raised £250 to be split between the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity and the Alzheimer's Society - in memory of Jon and Mary), the Platinum Jubilee event on the Parish Field, last year and will help to subsidise our celebrations for the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, in a month's time.

As a village we have also come together for a vigil for the Late Queen, on the eve of her funeral and for the annual Remembrance Day service. We also hold regular coffee mornings or afternoon teas, to raise funds for FVS.

The village now has a book club, financially supported by FVS, a history society, a book exchange (a cabinet for which has been financed by FVS) and our own Foodbank, giving residents the opportunity to help support those in need in the surrounding areas.

We have also used FVS funds to contribute to the maintenance of the defibrillator, situated in the car park at the Dinton Hermit, to finance the printing of our regular newsletter, purchase table cloths (as a sustainable alternative to disposable cloths, for our events) an urn for tea and coffee making and our annual insurance premium which is our highest cost.

In addition to the funds received from the Parish Council, we are also extremely grateful for the donation of £200 from Marilyn Pipe, a resident of Ford, who raised money in November 2022, from her sale of beautifully created arts and crafts made locally, by Marilyn and her fellow artist friends.

We also receive periodic community donations from Boilerjuice, raised from the sales of their oil. For the future we plan to raise further funds from a raffle at the Coronation Celebration, a Quiz Night, further coffee mornings and a community clothes collection via Bag2school.

I cannot finish this report, without saying a final thank you to the village residents who manage our Vehicle Activated Speed signs and monitor the ever-increasing traffic through the village, at speeds usually well in excess of the 30mph limit and on occasions approaching speeds closer to 70mph. We would all welcome more action to calm the traffic through our community.

Dinton Village Hall Management Committee – Nick Cottman

Cllr Nick Cottman, on behalf of the committee, announced the plans for the Dinton Village Hall 100 Club scheme.

Dinton, Ford, Upton, Gibraltar and Westlington Village Hall - 100 Club

Following the loss of the regular Village Hall booking by the School nursery, the Dinton Village Hall's expenditure (utility bills etc.) is significantly more than the monthly income that we receive. The Hall is currently losing approximately £350 per month and is in danger of running out of funds. Consequently we have decided to introduce a Dinton Village Hall 100 Club scheme in order to raise money to help fund the Hall's running costs.

The scheme is available to anyone, but we hope that the majority of members joining the Club will be local villagers keen to help fund our valuable Village Hall. There is no limit to the numbers of applications that one person/family/household can make. See details on the

Application form.

The cost of joining the Club is £3 per month or the preferred method of £36 per year. Each applicant must complete the enclosed joining form and will then be allocated a random number (1-100) which will be entered into an annual prize draw with the following prizes which will be paid once we have reached 100 members:

1st prize of £150. 2nd prize of £75. 3rd prize of £50. The winners will be contacted by the Treasurer and their names will also be published in the Bigg Issue. Once the Club reaches 100 members we will continue to add new members and may either increase the annual prize money or the frequency of prize draws accordingly. The Treasurer will keep a list detailing all the Club member details. This will be password encrypted only accessible by the Dinton Village Hall management committee members.

It is anticipated that the draw will be held annually perhaps at a Community Event to be held in the Village Hall. If a winner cannot be contacted after 6 months, the winnings will be donated to the Village Hall funds. We hope that as many people as possible within our community will join and help our Village Hall.

Please also don't forget that you can hire the Hall for your own personal events by contacting Honor Vane, the Bookings Secretary

5. Public Questions and Proposals

There were no questions or proposals from residents of the parish.

- Resident asked Revd. Nigel Featherston if it was possible for him, and residents of the parish, to have a copy of the proposed legal document/agreement between the Diocese and the Romanian Orthodox Church's use of St Peter's and St Paul's Church.
- The Chairman of the Parish Council also asked for a copy of the proposed Diocese agreement with the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Revd Featherston said the above requests would be possible.

- Resident asked for clarification on the attendance at the Firework Display and also what kind of sponsorship is the Beer Festival looking for.
- Resident thanked the parish council for their overall, continued, commitment and work for the parish.

There being no further business to deal with, and no further questions or proposals made, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____