

STOKE GOLDING PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Report

Introduction by the Chairman, Cllr Rachel Terheege:

This year we were planning on trying something different. We intended to invite villagers who wish to discuss this annual report to call in for an informal chat (and coffee), before the May Parish Council Meeting. You would be able to meet your Councillors – some familiar faces and some new faces. However, because of the Coronavirus outbreak there is now uncertainty about any future meetings of the Parish Council and meetings have been suspended pending government guidance on how to proceed in this difficult time.

It was lovely to see so many people at the recent open event regarding the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan team are working so hard, with very little appreciation, so I would like to thank them now. It is a sign of the times that developers have an eye on our village and with the Neighbourhood Plan and other volunteer groups we are trying to choose our own future and not have one thrust upon us.

Routine work for the Parish Council during the year, includes maintenance of all our cemeteries and green spaces, the safeguarding of play areas and community land trees as well as statutory work to memorial stones and to the church cemetery wall. We have also claimed grant money towards the village street signs and are hoping to include all the new roads in the village.

Throughout the year there are numerous sporting and leisure events available for our enjoyment. This year saw the Scarecrow event which was a huge success – so thanks to the organisers of that new event. We hope to see a return of Stoke Fest this year. Also, the Christmas Santa is a long-standing event - along with the lights switch on – with many volunteers making them annual events to look forward to. Unfortunately, if I try to name every event /group that is run by volunteers, I will miss some as there are so many. Let me just say we are lucky to have such a community spirit in our village. Long may it continue and thank you all.

The Diocese has decided that they are no longer able to maintain the Baxter Hall and so it is going on the market for sale from the end of March. The Parish Council has made an application for an asset of community value. If/when this is accepted, it allows 6 months for a community group to put forward a bid. Bids would require a viable business plan to purchase the premises. If the building is sold, the proceeds of sale would be put into Trust for educational needs for Stoke Golding and Dadlington. In this case, the Diocese could remain the trustee or would be happy to discuss transferring the trusteeship to local people.

End of Year Accounts and Budget Summary - Parish Clerk:

Receipts:

	For Audit (draft) 2019/20	Budget 2020/21
Precept	45,320.00	52,595.00
Other: Cemetery Charges	10,908.50	8,500.00
Recreation Ground Fees	2,196.00	2,196.00
Grants and Donations	12,570.68	356.18
106 monies	-	
Interest	594.92	600.00
VAT Recovery	1,718.31	2,000.00
Miscellaneous	880.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS:	74,188.81	66,247.18

Payments:

Cemetery Interments	1,060.00	1,570.00
Cemetery Admin and Maintenance	3,248.62	930.00
Works to trees – cemeteries	2,904.26	2,200.00
Grave memorial repairs	5,445.54	5,795.00
Churchyard Maintenance	5,306.00	500.00
Ground Maintenance, Playground Inspection and Other Ground Maintenance Work	21,014.07	22,492.80
Works to trees – recreation Ground	2,828.50	2,200.00
Other Works to Recreation Ground	1,345.50	1,500.00
Litter/Dog Waste Disposal Contract	2,009.28	2,344.00
Village Hall/Pavilion Maintenance including Trade Waste Contract	978.30	1,280.00
Salt (for Grit Bins)		
Village/cemetery planting		200.00
Administration, Insurance and Audit	21,882.07	15,300.00
Subscriptions and Donations	2,750.62	800.00
S137 expenditure		545.00
VAT	3,924.97	2,000.00
Capital Expenditure	1,527.90	750.00
Small Projects/Emergency Fund		1,256.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS:	76,225.63	61,862.80

Future Provisions:

Wykin Lane Cemetery pathway – 50% funded	5,400.00	
Pavilion - available funds		34,173.12

Recreation field car park extension – estimated cost		20,000.00
Recreation Field pathway – funds available		16,000.00
Recreation field car park barrier Medium Term 9 upto 3 years)		
Possible future land adoption	642.00	642.00
Start up costs for 'Making Tax Digital'		2,500.00

Balance of Accounts 31st March 2020

NSB Investment Account	£39,329.41
Nat West Business Reserve Account	£39.94
Nat West Current Account	£45,726.08
CAF Gold Account	£1,395.78

Financial Report - Parish Clerk:

2019/20

The precept for 2019/20 was £45,320.00. The full precept has been received.

Cemetery income was higher than the estimate. Income from pitch hire was as estimated.

Small projects and emergency work have been approved in this year at the total cost of £1,590.52 with £134.80 from grants and donations. Total cost to the Parish Council was £1,455.72 which was within the budget allocated. Additional ground maintenance work has been approved at a cost of £1,469.00, which is within the contingency budget.

Work to trees/hedges at the cemeteries have been approved in this year at the total cost of £1,747.96. Total cost to the Parish Council was within the budget allocated.

Work to trees/hedges at the recreation field have been approved in this year at the total cost of £1,388.50. Total cost to the Parish Council was within the budget allocated.

In addition, the allocated tree budget of £2,335.00 which was ring-fenced for tree work has covered the cost of urgent inspection work at the recreation field, Hinckley Road Cemetery and the churchyard with £45.00 remaining. The following medium/large projects have been approved in this year at the total cost of £20,447.84, but with £6,951.00 funded by the EIP grant: Grave memorial repairs, churchyard wall, street name signs and Wykin Lane Cemetery pathways. These projects were over budget by £9,579.84 and this will be paid from the working reserves.

A sum of £2,000.00 has been allocated and in the budget for Neighbourhood Plan admin and ring-fenced, £3,080.59 of the existing ring-fenced admin budget remains unspent. A further grant of £8,514.00 has been received and £890.50 is remaining.

Some projects/budgets agreed may not show in the accounts, as they have not yet been invoiced. Accounts may also include items that were approved in the previous financial year.

Other significant differences from the budget include: Churchyard includes extra work to wall, trees and railings, cemetery trees includes items from allocated reserves and subscriptions and donations includes payment to SISG. The budget includes £3,784.00 unallocated income for Medium term planning items.

The total reserve in the NATWEST bank going into 2020/21 is £45,726.08: £5,400.00 is required for agreed works that have not yet been invoiced, £3,971.09 ring-fenced for the Neighbourhood Plan remaining, £628.32 maintenance grant remaining for the gym equipment, the remaining tree allocated budget of £45.00 plus £763.00 to be ring-fenced from 2019/20 budget, £200.00 ring-fenced for the planters and £500 ring-fenced for election costs. This leaves £34,218.67. A reserve of £20,000 enables claims for the Parish and Communities Initiative Fund for the large projects in the future, as payment is only received once work is complete and invoices paid. This would leave a working reserve of £14,218.67 that is not allocated, to be carried forward to 2020/21.

Precept Report 2020/21

The Precept for 2019/20 was £45,320.00 with a Band D figure of £58.47 per household. To cover the cost of the proposed budget and medium-term planning for the next 3 years the total precept for 2020/21 required will be £52,595.00, this will increase the Band D figure to £65.63 per household, an increase of £7.16 per household. This is below the national average of £67.18. The precept will increase by £7,275.00 on the previous year.

2020/21

Cemetery income and expenditure is estimated based on the average net income over the three years prior to 2019/20.

Recreation ground fees will be based on Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council fee structure and the number of teams playing.

As usual the ground maintenance budget will cover the cost of the ground maintenance contract, playground safety inspections, planters and Christmas tree arrangements. There will be a £1500 contingency for any necessary works which are not included in the contract.

Pavilion and village hall maintenance take account of annual increase in trade waste collection, estimated cost of water supply and the cost of pavilion electricity.

Litter/dog waste collection by HBBC will increase annually.

The Clerk's salary will increase in line with NJC pay scales and contract.

The allocated budget for the Neighbourhood Plan is £2000.

The budgets for PC admin, cemetery admin and subscriptions have been updated to reflect increased costs and a budget for S137 spending has been added.

Budgets have been allocated for small projects and emergencies, works to trees at the recreation field, works to trees at the cemeteries, grave memorial repairs and planting in the village.

Projects agreed for 2020/21 are street name signs for Ryland Crescent, Ridgeway and Laburnum Close.

Potential future medium-term provision will include: possible acquisition of open space at Laburnum Close and Bosworth Manor and potential cost of 'making tax digital'.

Projects

There is currently no estimated cost for the pavilion project. 106 funds from the Bosworth Manor development will provide funds of £29,173.72 provision and £23,859.54 maintenance. The £10,000 from the solar panel farm was ring-fenced for this project, with £5000 already allocated for initial admin and consultation fees. Total funds available are £34,173.72.

Reserves - The NSB account

Ring fenced reserves moved to the NSB account: £5,000 remains of the solar panel farm donation which is ring fenced for the pavilion project and the sum of £16,094.70 has been ring fenced for maintenance of recreational facilities. The unallocated reserves in this account are currently £18,234.71.

The government external audit ensures that all reserves are appropriate. In addition to any allocated reserves the Parish Council may hold the equivalent of twelve months expenditure in general reserve.

Planning Report - Parish Clerk:

Since the 1st April 2018 the Parish Council has consulted and offered comments where appropriate on thirty one planning applications. These were for three erection of dwellings, one erection of modular classrooms, twelve extensions and alterations to dwellings, eleven works to trees, two agricultural buildings and two variations of condition to previous application.

Cemetery Report, Cemetery Administrator - Mr. Ray Tunks

Hinckley Road Cemetery

In Hinckley Road Cemetery in the last 12 months (April 2019 – March 2020) there has been one burial of ashes and one scattering of ashes in the garden of remembrance. Permission was granted to erect one memorial and to place two plaques on the memorial wall. Approval was given to add wording to four memorials. One grave plot was purchased, and permission was granted for 2 kerb sets to be installed.

These transactions resulted in £2204.50 going into Parish Council funds.

Wykin Lane Cemetery

In Wykin Lane Cemetery in the last 12 months (April 2019– March 2020) there have been four full burials and four burials of ashes. Permission was granted to erect six memorials and seven grave plots and four cremation plots were purchased. There was one scattering of ashes, permission was granted to attach one plaque to the memorial wall, and approval was given to add wording to two memorials. Approval was given for one full burial plot to be exchanged for a cremation plot.

These transactions resulted in £8994.00 going into Parish Council funds.

Both cemeteries continue to be maintained by the Parish Council to a good standard.

Village Hall Management Committee - Ruth Fisher

We have held seven varied and well received Stoke Arts events since last April. We are hoping to put on a production of Robin Hood near Christmas, but sadly we haven't any other shows planned.

Recently we were pleased to welcome two new members to our Management Committee, and we can always make room for more. Please contact Ruth Fisher 01455 212489 if you are interested in joining us.

The hall continues to be well used throughout the week and maintained by a hard-working group of people. As always, my thanks go to them for their support.

Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee – Chair Cllr Sarah Beale

The Neighbourhood Plan draft is almost complete. We still have some work to do on important views and open and green spaces.

As we have designated a site for potential development, we also need to go through a full Strategic Environmental Assessment which is taking place in the background by a third party.

The informal open event in January was very well attended and we have taken onboard any comments and feedback that was given to us.

The Advisory Committee are working extremely hard to get the plan finalised as quickly as possible however, we still have many "hoops to jump through" which is frustrating for all of us.

Realistically it will be towards the end of the year when it could be completed. This is mainly due to statutory requirements which are beyond our control.

Hopefully we will be able to hold a six-week public consultation at the end of the summer, referendum in the autumn and if the village vote favourably for the plan it could be adopted November / December this year.

If there is any way of making this happen any earlier rest assured, we are all working hard to try and achieve this. We are all fully aware of how important this is to the Village and it is the Parish Council and the Advisory Committee's top priority to get this moving ahead.

If the plan is adopted, it should give us some protection and influence how our village evolves through to 2036. It will be used by the local authority to help determine planning applications in our area.

It covers many different areas including where new houses and businesses should be located and what they look like. Identify and protect important local and open green spaces, conserve local heritage and protect areas of natural conservation interest. It will identify locally valued landscapes and help maintain the character of the village. Our public meetings are held every other Monday in the Methodist Church Hall from 7pm . Details are published on the village notice board, the village website and in The Stoker. You are more than welcome to come along and ask us any questions you may have.

Reports from Charities registered with the Charity Commission

Women's Hall Charity – Parish Clerk

Funds from the sale of the Womens Hall were invested in shares. Dividends and interest will be used to provide improvements for all within the village and this year were £282.18. There was no expenditure. The current amount available to spend is £1,395.30.

The Charity of Thomas Barton

The interest from the investment portfolio of the Charity continues to fund the many projects in the village which the Charity undertakes.

During the year the Charity has provided funds for the following:

Village Web Site Expenses

Donation to Gardener for Old Cemetery Maintenance

Best Kept Front Garden Competition Prizes

Donation to Village Garden Society Show

St Martin's School Awards Scheme

Village Christmas Lights

Village Christmas Lights Switch (Refreshments, Band, and Sleigh)

St Margaret's Church Lighting Costs

Repair of Village Sign

Support for Repair of School Trail at St. Margaret's School

Grants for Flower Festivals at Churches in the Village

Repairs to Church Gate

Provision of Bench in Village

Support for 'The Stoker' (Village Magazine)

Kit and Equipment for Village Youth Football Team

Donation to First Responders

Purchase of 'Tommy' WW1 Silhouette

Purchase of Village Great War Booklets

Over £15,000 has been spent on village projects since the last report.

The Stoke Golding Boys' Charity

The income of the Charity after payment of expenses will be distributed to boys and young men of Stoke Golding under the age of 25 years. The amount payable this year will be in the region of £7000.

The Mistress Hester Hodges Foundation

In 1678, Mistress Hester Hodges left a legacy for the education of children. We are delighted to advise that even now in 2020, the legacy is still very much active.

Whilst we do not have huge reserves we ensure that the annual interest is shared equally between the children of St. Margaret's Primary School and any past students from the school who can apply for an educational grant. The school usually uses their allocation to buy Bibles for the children and students have been successful in receiving small awards to support their further education at University.

If you have attended St. Margaret's Primary School and are at university, please send us a written request by October 2020 and it will be considered for a grant. Details of how and where to apply will be published on the Parish Notice Board and in The Stoker.

A copy of the APM Minutes 2018 is available on the Stoke Golding Village Website

If you wish to contact Stoke Golding Parish Council please contact:

Clerk to Stoke Golding Parish Council – Mrs Theresa Case at Email: clerk.stokegoldingpc@gmail.com

All electors in Stoke Golding are invited to the Annual Parish Meeting, at present no date has been agreed due to the Coronavirus outbreak. Should the meeting be permitted the agenda will be posted on the Stoke Golding Village Website and Parish Council Noticeboard.