



# Swyncombe Parish Council

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## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Swyncombe Parish Council Held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7pm -Zoom Meeting

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Liz Longley (EL) - Chair  
Peter Green (PG) – Vice-Chair  
Peter Willis Fleming (PWF)  
Tracey Taverner (TT)  
Sam Fielden (SF)

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan (KT)

**District Councillor:**

Anna Badcock

**Members of the Public:**

Mark Allison, David Crowther (7.15pm)

1. Welcome

EL welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 21/5/2019

**Resolved:** That the minutes from the above meetings are a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman when possible.

3. Chairman's report 2020/2021

I am very pleased that, I am able to give you my Annual Report in person – albeit over Zoom, unlike last year. Sadly, we are still suffering restraints on our lives due to Covid, however, we are moving forward finally, thanks to the excellent efforts of the NHS and so many others, to get the vaccines into arms.

**Lockdown and VE75**

Due to a technical hitch Peter Green read out the Chairman's report:

I am, as ever, proud to live in Swyncombe. Our several communities, Swyncombe, Cookley Green, Park Corner, Russells Water and Maidensgrove have all pulled together. The Community Spirit and support has been second to none. A few people we need to thank for their kindness and support. E J Milner-Guilland of Park Corner, who set up and is running a Newsletter for residents of Park Corner, bringing articles of humour, interest and support. Adrian de Segundo in Russells Water, who kept the Community Spirit alive and well. The residents of Cookley Green and Swyncombe, for their email articles to amuse their neighbours. Dan and Tracey Taverner who looked after us all so well with Takeaways, Groceries and a smile. Those who collected prescriptions, delivered food and cheer thank you.

Clapping for the NHS became a weekly event. Lots of noise and waving to distant neighbours where possible.

In the middle of Lockdown, we found that we had a cause for celebration with VE75 and a VJ75. How to do so in such difficult circumstances? However, Park Corner, Russells Water, and Cookley Green managed it! We had sunshine, singing, flag waving and the odd celebratory drink. All socially distanced but happy. With a recording of the Last Post by Charlie Clinton, technical support from Jenny and Peter Green, and Bob Warner, and many others, thank you.

**The Village Hall at Russells Water**

The Hall's activities were obviously curtailed. However, I am happy to report that its finances are in good shape due to the receipt of Covid grants.

### **Shopping Bus Service**

The shopping bus remains in good hands and will be resumed subject to OCC and Henley Bus Service.

### **Signage**

Coates Lane now has a new sign indicating Coates Lane as a No Through Road and directing traffic to St Botolphs. Hopefully this will stop traffic trying to go down Coates Lane to get to Watlington or looking for the church.

We are also looking at replacing/repairing a similar sign at Park Corner.

### **Chalgrove Development**

Swyncombe are opposing this development of 3000 houses on the airfield. Currently the Aviation Authority are opposing this development from Homes England. We are waiting to hear more.

### **Planning**

Planning has been extremely busy over the last year and has had its own set of challenges.

### **Travellers**

On 7<sup>th</sup> May we had for a very short time, travellers with 10 caravans on the south side of Cookley Green. They were very threatening to residents. Fortunately, they moved on within an hour, but it was a very nerve-wracking time for all involved. We have since assessed what we can do to protect ourselves in the future. The last time we had an event such as this was 20 years ago. The Travellers then stayed for a week and were well behaved and left no mess. We have since been in contact with the Traveller Liaison at Oxfordshire County Council. If this were to happen again, we will be calling them out to help deal with the situation and if necessary, calling in the Bailiffs. The Home Secretary is currently working on legislation to restore more power to landowners and police to move them on more easily. This is a very positive step.

### **Bonfire Night**

Sadly, no Bonfire Night in 2020 but we did hold a virtual one which went well. Part of which was a design competition for bonfire night 2021. This was won by the Campbell family. We look forward to seeing it in November! (Hopefully!)

### **Litter Blitz and Flytipping**

Litter Blitzes had to go by the way, but thanks to individuals who kept going out and collecting litter and reporting Fly Tipping. Fly Tipping has sadly got worse again. Please report any you find on Fix My Street Website. We have also had at least twice pork dumped at Maidensgrove and Russells Water. Stonor Park are currently working with the Police on this. We have no idea where it has come from.

### **War Memorial**

We were awarded a Grant from our SODC Councillor – Anna Badcock this year, which has meant that we were able to repair, replace and repaint the lettering on the War Memorial.

Continued thanks to Graham Ryes Webb and Nicola Perry for doing such a fantastic job on maintaining the War Memorial.

### **Speed Signs**

We have just received the mobile Speed Sign or SID. We will be sharing it with Cuxham and Watlington. We will have possession of it for 4 months of the year in two monthly intervals – is an aim but we may change this as circumstances dictate. It will be sighted at Park Corner and at Cookley Green. Ollie Brake has very kindly stepped up to help move the camera when necessary. Thanks to Peter Green for organising this.

### **Cricket Club - From Peter Regent - Treasurer**

A local authority grants supported Swyncombe Cricket Club during 2020, which supplemented our parish vice presidents' fantastic and ongoing support.

This income allowed us to weather the storm through lost match day revenues. It also allowed us to budget covid and non-covid related expenditure.

**These included;**

- toilet hand dryers
- conversion of internal and external lighting to more energy-efficient LED's, plus the repair of Emergency Lighting and Smoke Detectors
- Outside power socks installation, plus bola bowling machine power supply, meant net practises could follow covid guidelines throughout the season.
- New white line marker to replace broken.
- Gazebos to replace broken Bonfire Marquee

**2020 Projects Budgeted from the Grant but scheduled works in early 2021.**

- wicket roller, engine upgrade, due to safety concerns, estimate £1,800
- external repairs and painting of the pavilion, estimate £2,000

As many of you know, it cost around £1000 per year in loam, fertiliser and grass seed to keep the wicket looking so fantastic.

Without the ongoing support of players and vice presidents, this fantastic cricket ground would sadly go the way of so many village cricket clubs.

Thank you for keeping this wonderful club and ground alive and thriving on behalf of Clive Goodall and myself!

The Swyncombe CC 2020 season was allowed to start on the 12<sup>th</sup> July and we managed to play 11 matches. Of these we won 9, drew 1 and lost 1.

This season we have 22 matches on the fixture list starting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April.

**Power Outages at Russells Water**

Ongoing issues with power outages at Russells Water are being discussed with SSE and the Residents. More to follow.

**Instalcom and Trees Along the B481**

I would just advise you at this time that we were very disappointed to discover that Contractors working for CloudHQ to lay a fibre optic cable from Slough to Didcot have dug and disturbed the tree roots round the trees lining the North Side of Cookley Green along the roadside, and which could result in the death or damage to the trees affected. At this time, we are working towards an agreement about a way forward. An Arboriculturist's Report has been undertaken by Martin Gammie and we are taking this forward in our discussions. Once I have more to report I will do so.

**Parish News**

Sadly, the last Parish News was issued in December. Thank you to all involved in editing it and delivering it over the years.

**Michael Colston**

We received the sad news, on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April, of the death of Michael Colston. A staunch supporter of Swyncombe. He worked tirelessly with the Police supporting good relations and developing strategies. He helped the introduction of the internet to Swyncombe many years ago. Michael also set up Dogwatch, a service that has been used by many of us. He will be much missed. Our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

**Parish Councillors**

I would very much like to thank my fellow Councillors, Peter Green, Tracey Taverner, Peter Willis Fleming and Sam Fielden for all their hard work and commitment in a very difficult year. Kristina, thank you. Always there, always positive and always keeping us in order, thank you.

4. To receive Annual Reports from:

1. **District Councillor** – Anna Badcock

AB reported that the officers at SODC responded amazingly to the Covid pandemic with some being taken off their normal roles to take on positions to support local communities as well as operating the Covid grants available and said she was so grateful to them for running various schemes to help individuals, communities and local businesses. They are now working on the restart business Covid grants. They also worked on Test and Trace. Central Government supported the leisure centres who are working with preventative social prescribing of activities to help with health problems. The money given by Central Government was also critical. AB stated that she personally thinks that because of Covid 19 there will be big shifts on how people live and work.

AB said that during the pandemic CIL applications were paused. She said it is interesting to what the money can and cannot be used for. Cuxham Parish were looking for CIL money to repair verges, but this would not be appropriate. CIL and Section 106 applications are now open again.

The Local Plan was at a stage it could not be reversed as the current leadership had wanted and this cost £250,000 in legal bills. Bio- Abundance had put in a legal challenge on this but lost. The next Local Plan will be a joint one with the Vale. AB suggested that all Councillors pay attention to the meetings which will be held on this.

During last year the brown bins for garden waste had to be suspended for a while due to the pandemic with operators off sick etc. There were lots of queries about the waste collection during this time. AB said that if anyone has problems with bin collections to contact her direct as it is important that they are reported in. SODC also put up dog bin emptying costs to parish councils as they were previously subsidised and now the whole costs need to be borne by the parishes.

The Ox-Cam Expressway will no longer go ahead, and she is against the Chalgrove Airfield being developed.

AB suggested that SPC could have a meeting to just discuss SODC issues and AB and KT to find a suitable date.

AB said she continues to fight against a third Reading Bridge.

2. **County Councillor** – Steve Harrod has sent his annual report and sent apologies for this meeting.

3. **Thames Valley Police** – There was no report

4. **Cricket Club** – Report in the Chairman's report.

5. Public Forum

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.40PM**