Draft Minutes

Halstock ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday the 15th of May 2024

Halstock Village Hall

12 members of the public were present.

The meeting started at 7.30pm and was chaired by Richard James

1. **INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME**

2. **APOLOGIES**

   Mike Clarke, Peter Brink, Richard Fry, Helen Sherwood

3. **APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 2023 MEETING**
   Proposed M Manning, 2nd J Hodesdon
   Approved

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

5. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 2024

This has been an interesting year for the Parish Council with a number of projects taken forward or completed in support of the community. These have included:

- Upgrading of playground equipment in Corscombe.
- Repair of finger posts – ongoing work.
- Additional Defibrillator sites, in partnership with the Friends of Corscombe and Halstock Community First Responders - there are now two in Corscombe, two in Halstock and one in West Chelborough.

- Support to Public Rights of Way - fifteen new gates to replace styles.

The Parish Council has supported the Great Big Dorset Hedge Project, Community Tree Project and speed watch initiatives. We are always looking at ways to support the community and actively consider and comment on proposed highways, planning applications and report potential planning breaches. The Council is also trying to identify an appropriate site for a playground in Halstock.

We have ensured that the Parish Council undertakes its statutory powers and duties.

Richard James

6. **REPORTS FROM HALSTOCK ORGANISATIONS - see appendix 1.**

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

   Playground for Halstock – Historically this has been looked at previously both by the Halstock Village Trust (HVT) and the Parish Council. It was agreed that the Parish Council should undertake a Parish questionnaire to canvas residents about a need for a playground as well as to encourage greater involvement/communication of residents with the Parish Council.

   Tony Ashfield raised a concern over the smell of the river leading into the sewage works. Cllr Richard James agreed to look into this.

   Tony Hill - Speed watch raised concern over the speed limits on the Road leading into Halstock from Corscombe and into Adams Green. He would like to see a 40mph speed limit buffer leading into the 30-mph speed limit in the village to mirror the 40-mph buffer leading from Yeovil into Halstock.

   Funding for SID monitoring is also requested of the Parish Council.

   Meeting closed 9.15 pm.

   Copies of the reports can be found on the Corscombe, Halstock and District Parish Council website CHDPC@org.uk or by request to the Clerk Tessa Safadi chparishclerk@gmail.com / 01935579783

Appendix 1

Corscombe, Halstock and District Public Rights of Way Group

Report to parish meetings, May 2024

The group has been relatively inactive following the major project of producing the "Walks Guide" in the summer of 2022. Copies of the Guide are still available in Halstock Community Room or from Diana Staines.

The walks are also all available to download on both Halstock and Corscombe village websites.

We had one informal meeting during the year to discuss the future of the group. We agreed that the group should continue as a "Working Group of the parish council", subject to the latter's agreement. Our aim is to support and encourage use of the public rights of way in our parishes.

Walking in the local area has not been easy over the last year. Summer 2023 produced a proliferation of brambles, nettles and other undergrowth which made many routes difficult to almost impassable. The almost unprecedented wet winter meant that all routes were muddy and some very wet. Dog walkers faced a daily chore of cleaning up muddy feet and most of us lived in wellies throughout the winter. Unsurprisingly, some people who took up walking during the lockdown have dropped out!

The Group have continued to monitor local ROWs and to report problems via the Dorset Council website, but responses have been mixed. Damage to bridges, where there is a clear danger to walkers has been prompt, but other reports have taken many months for a response. Reports can be made by any member of the public by googling "report a problem on a public right of way Dorset". We share information on problems within the group through a WhatsApp group.

We have been able to purchase three further self-closing gates to replace stiles, through funding from the Parish Council and Halstock Village Trust. These should be installed in the near future.

The group recently liaised with Rick Smith of “Wildwoods” at Higher Halstock Leigh, to arrange a walk in his coppice woods, to enhance understanding of the benefits of coppicing woodlands. We have also liaised with the Rivers Trust who are arranging a walk around the perimeter of Sutton Bingham reservoir. Beaminster Ramblers had a walk in our area, led by Simon Dalton, from whom further details of their events can be obtained.

Diana Staines

PROW

Corscombe, Halstock and District Parish Council Meeting of 14 May 2024

Friends Group Report

1. The Friend’s Group full title is ‘Friends of Corscombe and Halstock Community First Responders’, formally known as The Friends Group

a. The Group is not a charity but is treated as such in its ability to claim gift aid on donations made to the group by individuals.

b. Objectives of the Friends Group, as stated in its constitution are as follows:

The Friends of Corscombe and Halstock Community First Responders is established for charitable purposes only.

In particular The Friends of Corscombe and Halstock Community First Responders is established:

To promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community in the Corscombe and Halstock area, specifically the advancement of emergency health care.

To provide training sessions to the community so that the people we serve become systematically better equipped to provide elements of

Community First line support whilst waiting for the emergency service to arrive.

c. The Friends Group historically raised funds to meet the expenses incurred in running the First Responders

d. The Southwest Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWASFT) now covers the expenses of each First Responder, so The Friends are not now liable for these expenses.

e. The First Responder Team is now down to one member, and there has been no success in attracting new members to the team.

2. The Friends Group has therefore moved its focus to supporting the local community in terms of educating and training the community to provide emergency first aid for themselves until an ambulance arrives. In addition, we aim to provide emergency First Aid equipment for use by the community.

3. The Friends Group is working in partnership with the Parish Council with respect to 2 above, which greatly enhances what each can provide. In particular, the Parish Council and Friends are working together in providing Public Access Defibrillators to the local community. The Parish Council has agreed to adopt this as essential infrastructure for the support of the community.

a. The Parish Council is providing insurance against theft of the machines.

b. Has resolved to maintain the provision into the future.

c. Provision currently in place:

i. Defibrillator and cabinet to Corscombe

ii. Replacement of a defibrillator cabinet for Corscombe and rewiring of the electrical feed to the cabinet.

iii. Defibrillator and cabinet to Halstock (external to village hall), and

power supply to the cabinet.

iv. Defibrillator and cabinet to West Chelborough, together with

electrical feed to the cabinet

v. Provision of steps at West Chelborough to facilitate access to the cabinet.

vi. Defibrillator and cabinet located behind the Halstock Shop – with 24

hour access

d. A familiarization session will be held in Halstock Village Hall, in the autumn. This will be a repeat of the successful event held in 2023. Each person handled the defibrillator and practiced removing it from the cabinet. The session was backed up by a British Heart Foundation interactive video presentation about defibrillators and how easy they are to use.

4. Current Funds held by the Friends Group:

a. Accounts as of May 2023

i. Bonus Account: £4257.96

ii. Current Account: £303.51

iii. Petty Cash: 191.63

Making total: £4753.10

b. Funds raised since May 2023

i. A further £200 was gift-aided to the Friends Group, uplifted by 25%.

ii. Halstock Fete Committee donated £500 in support of the defibrillator initiative.

iii. Corscombe Fete Committee donated £606 in support of the

defibrillator initiative.

c. Accounts as of May 2024

i. Bonus Account: £4823.91

ii. Current Account: £1159.51

iii. Petty Cash: £237.63

Making total: £6221.05

d. The accounts are audited annually, and findings are reported back to the Friends group.

e. Strategy:

i. To go on funding the defibrillator programme (as well as providing training)

until the funds are exhausted.

ii. The Parish Council has resolved to support the provision directly once the Friends Group funds are spent.

iii. Funds raised by the Friends Group will be used to support the Parish

Council, thus reducing the cost to the Parish Council for as long as The

Friends Group has funds.

iv. The joint funds of the Parish Council and Fiends Group will be used

so that VAT costs can be recovered into the Friends Accounts.

v. There are two defibrillators operated by SWASFT. These will need replacing in 2027.

vi. The three defibrillators and cases bought this year will need replacing in 2033.

vii. There are ongoing expenses in maintaining the defibrillators –

provision of single-use pads and kit, as well as replacement battery.

f. Once the Friends Funds are exhausted, the Friends group will make a decision on whether or not to close the Group.

5. Fund Raising:

a. The Friends Group have no plans for fund raising currently. This may change should the Friends and Parish Council identify a project that

falls within the remit of The Friends Group, and for which the Friends group wish to be active.

b. The Corscombe and Halstock Fetes have donated to the Friends each year, and a resident has made a gift payment of £200 annually. In addition, Halstock Trust has supported the Friends.

Halstock Community Room

Halstock Community Room is a comfortable small-scale meeting room for casual or formal use by anyone in the community, during daytime hours or after the shop closes. Casual use if free but a fee of only £5 per half day session is charged for exclusive use, including access to the kitchenette, toilet, and free Wi-Fi! Casual use of the room is moderately healthy but is, of course, hard to quantify and it remains frustrating that the free use of such a flexible space has still to fully return to its pre-covid popularity.

By contrast, the popular, weekly, drop-in coffee mornings on Thursdays are often packed to capacity, providing a valued and important service by bringing people together for coffee and conversation. Attendees greatly value the Community Room's existence, not to mention the delicious home-made cakes they enjoy at just £1 a slice!

A new, flourishing Craft Group has also established regular use of the room in recent months and an Art and Craft sale in December was very popular. Others of this nature are held periodically – a Plant Sale being organized for later this month, on 25 th May.

Sales of good quality coffee from our bean-to-cup machine remain buoyant - unsurprisingly at just £1.50 per cup. Compare that with commercial coffee shops. All of this also brings important footfall for the Village Shop as well as contributing to its

snacks-and-takeaway food offer.

Halstock Village Trust, of which the Community Room is a part, recently offered the Village Shop the use of a small percentage of the floor area of the Community Room. This will enable a reduced version of the planned shop extension to go ahead, after the Shop Management was unable to obtain quotations within budget for its larger extension. The Trust regarded this as a justifiable sacrifice, providing real support for the shop's future development and financial security, while still ensuring the Community Room maintains its long-term role as an important community resource.

Tony Hill

Halstock Community Room

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

Community Speed Watch (CSW) is a voluntary national scheme which, in Halstock, operates in partnership with the Parish Council and in close association with Dorset Police's '*Dorset Road Safe Partnership*'. Its aim is to act both as a reminder and a deterrent to speeding drivers and under the scheme, drivers reported to Dorset Police receive written warnings which, if persistent, lead to a uniformed visit to discuss driving behavior and possible further action.

Halstock CSW is a small team but is frequently supported by the physical presence of a uniformed Police Officer using a TruCam portable speed enforcement camera. This officer is able to issue Notices of Intention to Prosecute, thereby strengthening the deterrent effect of CSW.

Four years ago, the Parish Council and CSW launched a bid to introduce Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) in selected places but was at the time unsuccessful. These devices present drivers with a clear and obvious flashing reminder of their speed. Our long-term aim remains to acquire permanent SIDs in the village but in the meantime, we have secured from Dorset Police the long-term loan of a portable SID. Also, in the last year, the local team was able to purchase its own Bushnell speed gun, with the financial support of the Parish Council.

Speeding in this community is nowadays a considerable concern to an increasing number of residents and the quality-of-life issue is as important as that of feeling safe when using the roads recreationally. To maintain our work, more volunteers are needed. We monitor only in daylight hours and when weather conditions make it safe to do so and the support we receive from the local community is considerable. The feedback we get is almost entirely positive and we are grateful for that support. If you are interested in knowing more, please speak to any of us when you see us out monitoring.

Tony Hill

Community Speed Watch Co-Ordinator

Corscombe & Halstock

Halstock Community Theatre

Chairman's Report for 2023

We started the 2023 Artsreach season with a wonderful piece of dance theatre called "Fragments" by a local company Project Dance. This poignant piece of theatre beautifully portrayed the vulnerability, anxiety, and helplessness of falling in love and delighted our audience of 61.

During the school holidays we were lucky enough to welcome a return visit from James Bamford, artistic director of Project Dance, this time for a children's workshop called "Lights, camera, Action". The fifteen children who attended the workshop had a wonderful experience in his capable hands learning simple but graceful dance routines which they put together into a 3-minute performance which James filmed. After a short lesson on film making and with much participation from the children, they put together a short but memorable video.

Our summer outdoor show was "Lucky Pigeons" performed by Brainfools Circus Company who use skilled aerial acrobatics and circus arts to explore social themes. Theo Slight local artist entertained us with pre-show poetry and music and the audience of 119 enjoyed hog roast supplied by Adge Diment, and delicious vegetarian food prepared by committee members.

In October we welcomed an audience of 44 to "Hags" by Scratchworks Theatre. Using physical comedy, magic tricks, and music the three performers explored the mania of 17th century witch trials, in particular the last trial in Britain which took place in Bideford in 1682. Three women were accused of witchcraft, tried, and hanged.

The show was entertaining and very well received by the audience.

Our December show was “Twisted Christmas” by Owdyado a company well known to us and always a delight to host and enjoyed by an audience of 80. The two performers gave us a hilarious, darkly comic evening with ten silly tales of the worst of Christmas. Lots of action, surprises, a game involving audience participation and the actresses sang beautifully.

At our last AGM June 2023, the committee decided to offer two bursaries of £400 to local artists. Choosing between the five excellent applications that we received was difficult but after much consideration we offered the awards to Sinistra Theatre group and OffPiste Theatre.

Sinistra was formed in 2007 by a group of mature students and now consist of a core group of 5 plus various artists and musicians. They have made some exciting theatre performed in local halls supported by local sponsors. We hope the £400 bursary will help them to be able to purchase vital technical equipment.

The company OffPiste was formed in 2019 by local artist Archie Rowell and through film theatre and hybrids of the two makes striking and dynamic work that really engages with the community and audiences.

We look forward to continuing the bursary scheme in the years to come and have invited the unlucky applicants to re-apply in 2024.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all committee members for their continued hard work with especial thanks to Sally Burnett and Julie Dearden for their support and encouragement and to you the audience for supporting HCT and Artsreach.

Deborah Childs

23/04/24

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

HALSTOCK AREA

REPORT TO PARISH MEETING 15th MAY 2024

Last year I reported that the Branch was struggling and asked for new members to join in order that the branch could avoid having to close. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in getting more members and so the branch closed on December 2nd 2023. A service was held at St. Juthware and St Mary's church and members from other branches and the County Office attended for the laying-up ceremony.

The remaining members have now joined the Beaminster Branch and have attended several of their meetings and social evenings held at the Fleet Club and the Greyhound pub and will be joining in with the events they have planned for the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

I will still be organising the biggest fund raising event of the year, The Poppy Appeal, for the Halstock area and I will be looking for helpers at the end of October.

Peter Brinck, Poppy Appeal Organiser, Halstock area.

HALSTOCK COMMUNITY HALL

CHAIRMANS REPORT TO THE PARISH MEETING 2024

The hall management committee continues to meet on six Monday evenings during the year.

The hall continues to be well used with the regular events still taking place. Coffee Morning with Craft and Chat on Tuesday Mornings, badminton Tuesday evenings, art classes on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month and

Film nights continue to be a very successful, with the April film 'One Life' being very well attended. Halstock Film Nights are not only a matter of going to see a film they are also a social event where you meet friends for a chat whilst enjoying a drink and maybe an ice cream in the interval.

In late November we started negotiating with BT to get broadband installed in the hall and I had hoped to be reporting that this work had now been completed. However after many 50 minute phone calls to India and many emails later we are still no further forward. If you would like more detail, I will be happy to spend an hour or so telling you all about it.

At recent meetings we have been discussing the future of the hall. Whilst I am happy to continue as chairman it would be wise to be looking for a younger person to take over at some point. It would be a great help if this person was on the committee for at

least a year before taking over to see what is involved. Do you see yourself as a future chairperson for the hall?

Finally, I would like to thank all the committee members for their help during the year and also a big thank you to people who are not on the committee but continue to help in so many ways.

Friends of St Juthware and St Mary's Church

There is very little to report for the Friends of St Juthware and St Mary's Church other than we continue to run the 100 Club (my thanks to Liz Dowding for all the work she puts in to this) to top up funds but all other fund raising activities have been suspended until we find someone to volunteer to take on the role of Secretary to The Friends. It isn't a difficult or time-consuming role but a necessary one to keep the organisation in good functioning order. I certainly don't have time to add it to my role as Chairman in current circumstances, so if you can identify someone willing to give it a go at the meeting, please ask them to contact me on 01935 891331.

Halstock Village Shop Limited

Report to Halstock Village Meeting – 15 May 2024

Finances

The accounts for the year ended 31 May 2023 are available on the village website. Shop sales in that year totalled £390,576. However, principally due to a reduction in the gross profit margin from 21.7% to 18.9% and exceptional costs of approximately £6,000 incurred in the year, the company made a pre-tax loss of £896, although its overall financial position remains sound.

Sales in the current year to 31 May 2024 are expected to be between £415,000 and £417,000, which represents an increase of between 6.25% and 6.75% over last year.

Huge thanks are due to our employed staff, our many volunteers and our loyal customers for the shop's continuing success.

Volunteers On the subject of volunteers, we would like to repeat the appeal made by Diana Staines in her article in the May edition of the Chimes. Volunteers are an essential part of the operation, whether serving at the counter or shelf filling and checking stock. While we have just enough volunteers to

cover our normal rota, we struggle to fill gaps when someone goes on holiday or is sick.
Many people we approach say they can't spare the time or don't want to make the commitment. However, we are looking for just two hours a week and recognise that people need to take time off from time to time, so if you think you or someone you know may be able to help, please speak to Graham in the shop or contact Diana.
Shop extension At last year's Village Meeting, we reported on our plans to build an extension to the south side of the existing shop premises. However, as we were unable to obtain a quotation for building the extension that fell within our budget, it was decided not to proceed with the project at the present time.

Instead, we have agreed with the Halstock Village Trust to extend the shop into the front part of the Community Room which will be converted into additional selling space while leaving a Community Room that is large enough to accommodate all the events that are currently held there. Those works will include the removal of the existing cupboard in the rear corner of the CR to create more space and reconfiguring the layout and the entrance of
the kitchen.
This solution provides the shop with most of the additional space that would have been provided by the original plan but at a much lower cost and it will be possible to fund these works from our own resources, a grant from the Trust and possibly grants from other sources.

HALSTOCK VILLAGE TRUST

15 May 24

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE HALSTOCK VILLAGE MEETING 2024

The Halstock Village Trust holds village money to help fund village projects and amenities for the Village - as determined by the Trustees.
HVSL profits are covenanted to the Village Trust. Last year they decided not to pay anything but we do receive interest on our loan to the shop of £59,500.
The Trust is the major shareholder in HVSL

The Trust is accountable to villagers and this is the forum for you to give your views; it is our AGM.

Our usable reserve stands at a healthy £98000. Although little business was done during the pandemic, things have picked up somewhat and during the last year our payouts have been:

2023	Defibrillator at Village Hall	600
	Coronation lunch insurance	93
	Village website	156
	Village Green posts	23
	Layby repairs by the shop	500
	Village Hall outside electrics	414
	HVT expenses	42
2024	Fingerpost by Village Hall	50 agreed
	BT landline in VH	575 agreed
	Footpath gate	240 agreed

The main item for the Trust for the next 12 months is help with the planned internal changes to the village shop. This will reduce the size of the Community Room.

The Trustees will seriously consider all requests for funding. At the same time, we are mindful that funds may be required in the future for a large project such as a children's' playground or an extension to the shop or hall so a healthy reserve, which may increase in coming years, is a good thing. We are also likely to have reduced receipts for the next few years as the shop extension is funded.

If anyone has any questions about Trust activity, then please do contact me or a Trustee. If you need funds, which benefit the <u>whole</u> community, not just personal or small-group events, then please contact one of the Trustees who are now Chris Milton, Allison Rees, Sheila Sanger, David Wright, and Martin Manning (as Chairman and Treasurer). Chris and Sheila are new this year.

Do you have any questions? MGB Manning, Chairman