

# Annual Parish Meeting, Tuesday 18 May 2021, 7pm

## 4. Reports from village organisations

### a. Mileham Village Hall

By the end of 2019 the number of regular activities taking place in the hall meant that, for the first time in recent history, the hire income very slightly exceeded the costs of running the hall. In addition, due to a number of donations from various sources in the past, there were enough funds in reserve to cover most anticipated contingencies.

However, once the government locked down the country, all hiring activity had to cease. Consequently, for much of the year the hall has been closed, resulting in a loss of income. At the same time, heating costs have increased due to our insurance company's requirements to keep empty unused buildings safe. Additional costs were also incurred to make the hall Covid safe, replacing the door locks which were damaged by vandals, boiler repair, plumbing costs and pest control, as well as our usual ongoing running costs.

The hall reopened briefly for exercise and yoga classes when allowed, but it wasn't long before another lock down put paid to these activities. Fortunately, the government gave grants to village halls during the lock down periods, so the hall continues to be financially secure.

We will be looking at some capital expenditure shortly (e.g. replacing the hall sign) but continue to look for larger grants to improve facilities such as the car park. As this type of grant would require match funding, we will be reserving monies to meet this future cost.

We envisage a slow build back to normal activity, with many of our target groups perhaps unwilling to resume activities in 2021. However, exercise classes will be resuming from the 17<sup>th</sup> May and yoga classes from the 1<sup>st</sup> June, so we hope that we eventually see a return to normality – whatever the new normal happens to be. It is possible that some groups may find it difficult to resume their activities, despite our assistance.

### b. Women's Institute

Unfortunately, we have not met since February last year. We had a full programme of interesting speakers, many of whom will be invited again when we can safely meet in the Village Hall. Meanwhile we hope to get together for Tea or Coffee in a sunny garden in June or July.

### c. Men's Group

The group was thriving, with members from Mileham, Litcham Stanfield and Great Dunham until lockdown.

We were meeting on the last Thursday evening of every month; with a huge variety of activities such as:

- Carpet bowls
- Historical meetings

- Croquet tournaments
- Indoor archery
- Summer BBQ and Christmas Buffet with partners
- Countryside walk
- Air rifle shooting
- Ten pin bowling
- Games evenings at Fakenham Rugby Club
- Snooker evening
- Visit to RAF Marham
- Fly-fishing
- Model Aircraft flying

Clearly, we have not met during the pandemic but there will be a first (planning meeting) at the Longham White Horse on 24<sup>th</sup> May and thereafter the new programme will be announced.

#### **d. Mileham Strength and Conditioning**

No report available.

#### **e. Mileham Bowls Club**

Mileham Carpet Bowls club started in October 1985 here in the village hall and have played here ever since except for when the village hall was burnt down and then we used Litcham village hall, in October we will enter our 36 year an achievement in itself.

We meet on Wednesday afternoons in the village hall from 2pm to 4:30pm. We have a membership of 12 and have members from Beetley, Litcham and Tittleshall as well as from Mileham. We always have a very pleasant afternoon; we are a friendly club and welcome new members at any time. There is no need to have any experience or any sort of specialist equipment, to be able to play carpet bowls, just come along and join in the afternoon's activity, there are always members to explain the game and give encouragement. The cost for the afternoons games plus refreshments is £3 per session. Unfortunately, we have not been able to meet since the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 nor were we able to go out for her annual Christmas Sunday lunch. Nor were the Men's Group able to come along to try their hand at carpet bowls, all due to Covid. We are looking forward to returning to the hall when were allowed and members are ready to mix again.

#### **f. Mileham Patchwork**

No report available.

#### **g. St John the Baptist Church**

No report available.

#### **h. Mileham Charities**

I have prepared this account by way of report to Mileham Parish Council and to assist the Trustees with their deliberations.

Dealing with queries from the parish council as follows:

The 2019 meeting. I was there and prepared to report on the charities but I was probably late and time ran out and I was not as well prepared as I am now because I had not fully taken over from David Carter all the paperwork. Of course, the main function of the Accounts is to enable the trustees to properly manage the charities so I have now brought everything fully up to date. I have done the 2019 and 2020 accounts and 2021 provisionally and David did 2018 some time back and I will let the Clerk have this for the record in print.

Details have been requested for the following:

1. Detailed Accounts for each charity. I do not usually do this as Barnwells Fowells and Thurrolds charities are effectively defunct, leaving The Fuel Allotment (28 acres), Glovers Charity (3 ½ acres) and Neatherd's Charity (2 acres).
  1. Playing Field. Accounts now filed up to date. MBS is sole trustee.
  2. Free School Nothing known except that County Council has been sole trustee since 1960.
  3. Village Hall Up to date. I have not been a member for some years but have supported several fund applications from it in other committees.
  4. Fuel Allotment and other Charities also known as Mileham Charities. I have updated all the entries and accounts with the Charity Commission
  5. Church Lands. The Churchwardens are trustees and accounts are lodged with Mileham Church Council and Diocese of Norwich. I have updated most of the details on the charity commission site. Ironically, it does not own land. It holds investments that belong to Mileham Church.
  6. Pre-School. Nothing known about this. Long defunct.
  7. Poor Lands. Old terminology for charity trustees. We still get invoices addressed to Mileham Poor Trustees.
2. Current Trustees. 5 The Churchwardens, Mr Butler-Stoney and Mr Simpson. The 2 Trustees appointed by the Parish Council for a 4-year term. Currently Mr J Cason and Mrs M Beales. 2 cooptative Trustees to be appointed by the other trustees for a 5-year term. A way of appointing a person who has potential as a secretary or treasurer. Currently Mr M Goodrick and one vacancy following the retirement of David Carter. This will enable us to appoint a new treasurer. M. Goodrick's term is until 2025. Mr. Cason's term is until 2023. Mrs Beales term is now finishing and the Parish Council is invited to either reappoint her or to appoint a successor.
3. The common is not let, only the shooting rights. As there is no public access, we can arrange some guided walks, at the personal risk of those who attend, as soon as this is permitted. The shooting rights were let by tenders invited from neighbouring syndicates on conditions that require a conservation approach rather than the wild duck decoys or large pheasant releases of the past.

4. Other charity appointments that the parish council should be making. One or two members of the playing field committee. Also, we sometimes forget that the Parish Council members are trustees of the charity which owns The Beeston Road pond known as the Surveyor 's (of Roads) pit and the Gravel Pit (adjoining Gravel Pit Cottage half way to Litcham). The Surveyors pit charity is no longer registered with the charity commission which does not matter as it has an income of only £50, below the registration requirement. The parish council are reminded to send an invoice to R Ellis at Grenstein Farm for £50 per annum rent on the latter. However as far as I can recall the parish pit in the village was an overseers pit and is owned outright by the Parish Council. Effectively the parish council owns 3 freehold pits, one dry, one wet and one infilled with materials that are considered toxic but safe whilst the surface of the soil is undisturbed.
5. Charity documents – if anyone wants a copy of the playing field rules, I can provide one.
6. 2019 was the only time the accounts were not circulated to the parish council and this was due to David's illness. He will be remembered for securing the modern play equipment on the playing field and we came to rely on him enormously in many ways until his retirement last autumn when he was presented by the Church with a walking stick made by the Litcham walking stick maker as a retirement gift.
7. Mileham Charities are not required to appoint an External Examiner or Auditor.
8. Broadly speaking, income from Glovers Charity (the allotment field) is payable for Church Repairs and income from the other charities is available for relief in need. I usually discuss this in the annual meeting. In practice the state has provided such a safety net that there has been little call for relief in need in recent years and instead grants have been given to things which benefit as many villagers as possible such as the village hall and playing field. The playing field will be applying to the charity for a grant toward the annual insurance fees of about £865. The Church has some projects in mind which might merit consideration. Of course, an application for relief in mind can be directed to me on behalf of the trustees for consideration at any time.
9. An Easement of £25,000 I have previously been able to announce was negotiated with the builder of the sawmill development for a sewage pipe and of this £8,000 is due to the Church Lands Charity for investment and £18,000 to Glovers Charity (the allotment field). The £18,000 will have to be invested by Mileham Charity Trustees in a suitable long-term investment and I will be recommending the very well performing Church of England official investment fund for both of them which gives capital growth and income. The trustees will then be able to pay the income from the £18,000 over to the church repair fund every year, I hope. (The full sum of £25,000 is still sitting in the church deposit account where the church solicitors put it. It should soon be invested but the investment fund has informed me that it will need to see the trustees

bank statements and passports etc under their financial regulations before we can invest.

10. Mileham Allotment Association - I have no information about this.

#### MILEHAM CHARITIES – Additional

Allotment Rents have been set at £30 again. Numbers are up slightly at 4 paid up this year with land available for more. Unfortunately, much of this will go to pay water bills. Mr Sharpin rents the land not required for allotments. The net profit of Glovers should be paid for church repairs and over the 3-year period ending 6.4.21 this amounts to £567.50. Rundown allotments have been cleared, a bin provided for broken glass and a new tap will be fitted shortly.

Much time is spent talking to the tenants on whom we rely for rents, to the allotment holders and to neighbouring property owners. Supervision of the builders was prolonged and time consuming so it was good to get recognition in the form of a one-off easement payment.

Work will be carried out on the Common in the high and late summer after bird nesting is over to comply with our environmental agreement with the Rural Payments Agency, mainly in the form of topping and clearance of reed and scrub.

#### MILEHAM RECREATION GROUND REPORT

MBS 17.5.21

Mileham Recreation Ground is in good order and mowing has been arranged by the Parish Council as in previous years.

The hedges have been cut by Burwood Hall as in previous years.

I have maintained regular inspection of the equipment with help from local residents and the parish clerk to report and manage matters seen. One item, a bench, would benefit from repair and this will be arranged probably in conjunction with the suppliers, Norfolk Games and Frames of Gressenhall.

Third party insurance is held with Zurich Insurance An application will be made to Mileham Charities in respect of the £865 annual cost due every December.

At present Mark Butler-Stoney is the sole trustee of the playing field as he is appointed by Mileham Church and David Carter has very recently retired. The trust deed provides for the parish council to appoint up to two members and for the WI and Village Hall to appoint one member each with up to three further members to be elected at the annual meeting of the charity which should take place in or soon after the month of June. In practice 3 or 4 members would be ideal for management. The trust deed dates back to a time when the village had a school and had or hoped to revive outdoor sports clubs.

A meeting will be held in the summer at which further appointments to this trust can be made. Broadly speaking, I regard this trust as responsible for the legal

requirements of running the playing field in terms of the insurance, charity commission, regular inspection etc. Any village organisation is allowed to use the playing field free of charge.

The present financial circumstance of the charity is that it has funds of £264 in the National Westminster Bank. No expense has been incurred in the last four years other than the recurrent Zurich insurance premium.

Please let me know if you can assist with the management of the playing field or wish to make use of it.

#### **i. Yoga**

The Tuesday morning class has a committed group of participants so I hope to reopen in June. Last autumn the group number was 7.

During autumn 2020 I brought 3 other groups to the hall. The hall provides a peaceful setting for yoga and plenty of space for social distancing. If there are extra spaces to book, I would like to continue these.

I now hold a chair yoga class on Friday afternoons for those who no longer feel comfortable to attend a mat-based group. The class is small, most of the participants come from the surrounding area and I hope the class will attract some interest from the village this year.

With thanks for the use of this great space for yoga and the kind support of the village hall committee members and participants.

#### **j. Mileham Village Shop**

No report available.