

MINUTES OF SHERFIELD ENGLISH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Held on Wednesday 17th^h May 2023 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Parish Cllrs Dovey, Cook, R Noble, G Noble, Billett and Griffiths.
Also, in attendance were Borough Councillor Gordon Bailey, County Councillor Nick Adams King, John Hartley, Ursula Gooding, 2 members of the public and Clerk to the Council, Sue Holder.

Apologies received: None

Chairman's Report, read by Cllr Dovey

As outgoing chairman I thought it appropriate to write a brief report for 2022/23.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

The NDP is now close to completion and needs one last effort to “push it over the line”. Until this is formally accepted it carries very little weight in decisions reached by the local planners. On several occasions we have witnessed decisions being reached which appear contradictory to our NDP. Once however it is formally accepted it will be a major factor in the decision making process.

We owe a debt of gratitude to John Hartley and all the NDP team who have worked so diligently to advance our NDP to the position it is now and I would personally thank them all for their efforts

Village Hall

Following many years of excellent service by the previous management committee we now have new group of members who have stepped up to maintain this invaluable village asset. Again my thanks to Ursula and her team for all they do to ensure this facility is in place for use by the village.

SERP

The SERP committee and all the volunteers that support them continue to work to maintain and develop the recreation ground. In addition they have put in a lot of effort to organise various opportunities for the community to gather together. In the last year they have organised a Jubilee celebration, bonfire night and most recently a coronation party. These functions clearly help with fundraising but importantly they provide an opportunity for the whole community to gather and celebrate, which I believe, is a really important thing to achieve.

SEDCA

The newsletter is an important tool for communication within the village and is produced and distributed by volunteers who do such such an excellent job of routinely producing the publication

St Leonards Church

The churchwardens, Julia and Clare, are really such a driving force behind making the Church another focal point for the village to gather. The level of energy and commitment put in is evident and much to be admired and on behalf of the village I would like to thank them for all their efforts

Parish Council

The Parish council have been extremely active again this year both in terms of providing financial support to various village organisations whilst

actively opposing plans which they believe have a detrimental impact on the village. They are not always successful in objecting to certain proposals but they have worked diligently to try to obtain the best outcomes for Sherfield. In this they have had excellent support from Nick Adams-King.

A number of improvements have been made to footpaths and the lengthman scheme has been instrumental in improving maintenance around the village. The work of the council has been supported efficiently and professionally, as ever, by Sue Holder our Clerk.

It should be noted that all the people mentioned above, and many others, are all volunteers who give up their time for no reward other than to improve the quality and environment of our village. On behalf of the village I would offer my thanks.

It is with some disappointment that I have not be re-elected to serve on the parish Council but I have found my years as a councillor to be rewarding

and I would like to offer my best wishes to all those elected to the current Parish Council

Graham Leigh

Sherfield English Parish Council Chairman 2022/23

County Councillor, Gordon Bailey

Some of you may remember that in 2019 the council declared a climate emergency and an action plan was then established. Since then, a detailed study of all the council buildings and vehicles in order to reduce emissions and at the same time cut overheads. We agreed to various options these included electric vehicles and use of a different fuel. We currently have 11 electric vehicles out of a fleet of 119. Not many you may say however we do have a further 5 electric vans on order and have now replaced three road sweepers with electric ones. We are also changing all the diesel fleet to use hydrotreated vegetable oil which will reduce emissions by 95%. We have also installed energy efficient systems at Bourne House which is at Bellbins and also changed all the windows at the former magistrate's court, the old ones were only single pane. Up to 2022 we had planted nearly 20000 trees, during 22/23 planting season we are planting over 6000 more this includes 2450 trees that were planted previously which died due to the dry weather we experienced. Our target is 30000 over a three-year period. You may ask why we are not electrifying our refuse fleet; it is due to two problems; these being the significant cost of purchase and secondly more importantly is the operational limitations of the electric vehicles in a rural borough remembering the amount of actions that a refuse vehicle does.

Borough Councillor Report, Nick Adams King

Potholes were reported as the worst ever this winter due to the weather. Four years ago, 27,000 were fixed and in April of this year alone 15,000 were fixed; a total of 120,000 for the entire year in Hampshire.

Roadside recycling will include an additional service to collect plastic and food waste, with glass included by 2025.

In Romsey the Crossfield Hall site will become a new Aldi, with the Hall moving to the Rapids.

The Local Plan is at its first stage of consultation, with no major sites for development included.

Neighbourhood Plan – Report by John Hartley - waiting

Village Hall – Report by Ursula Gooding

Governance

Sherfield English Village Hall Trust was established as a registered charity, 301969, on 22nd August 1969 by the 1969 Conveyance (Trust Deed/Governing Document) and is responsible for the everyday running of the hall, maintenance of and insurance. The Trust is an unincorporated body and a 'legal entity'. Thus Sherfield English Parish Council acts as the Custodian Trustee, holding the legal title deed on behalf of the Village Hall Trust. This is the first full year of the new trustees being in post.

Principal Activities in pursuit of Objectives

The hall is regularly used for variety of activities including fitness classes, art classes, talks, business meetings, Community Whist, Parish Council meetings & Community Events. It is available for hire for private functions such as children's parties, wedding receptions, village social functions and fund raising fayres. It is promoted via the village newsletter, website & Facebook. All email and phone enquiries are replied to clearly, fairly and expediently. Community groups & anyone unable to afford standard hire rates are offered discounts to ensure open and fair access to all regardless of income.

2022/23 Summary

The Trustees work hard to make the hall attractive to users and measure their success by the range of users and the hall occupancy. Several regular user groups and ad hoc private & business use is increasing. A good understating of the needs of the building structure has now been achieved. An Asbestos survey was carried out & an Asbestos Management Plan put in place in August 2022

Flooring in Small Hall – bowing resolved, bounce to window edge being monitored.

Boundary Trees continue to cause increased maintenance issues.

Supported 'Community Draw' event for Parish/NDP, 'Big Help out' Coronation initiative – started on 8th May with team of volunteers preparing the outside for repainting & fed with local watercress soup – thank you Sunbeam! MORE volunteers welcomed.

Funding Strategy

Trustees carefully manage the revenue budget on a self-financing basis. The contributions made by users of the hall are set to achieve this. No increase in hire rates needed last year. Start-ups & community groups offered discounted rates.

Insurance Costs

In recent years the Parish council as paid directly for annual insurance policy but this should be purchased by the Trustees as they hold the liability. The Trust will now purchase the annual policy but the Parish council have kindly agreed to financially support the village hall via a grant.

Future Plans

Spare hall capacity promoted via website, Facebook, Google and village newsletter

Coronation redecoration in progress.

Community Partnership with a local care home

More volunteers always needed!

SERP 2000 – Report by Cllr Hoffman

This report covers the year from May 2022 since we last reported to the Parish Council and it has been a particularly busy year for SERP2000. I have first, however, to address some very sad news. In November of last year we were devastated to hear of the untimely passing of Marion Greig, a long term and highly valued member of the SERP committee. Her dedication to the SERP project and particularly to the children's play area, have contributed so very much to the playing fields and consequently to the community of Sherfield English as a whole. It was Marion whom my wife Julie and I first engaged with at a SERP event when we moved to Sherfield English and her bright greeting and cheerful nature provided a warm welcome which we have never forgotten.

Her energy, enthusiasm and unfailing good nature are sorely missed and we are sure the parish Council would join us in expressing our deepest sympathy to her family and friends. The committee have agreed to erect a commemorative bench near the children's play area as a lasting tribute to Marion.

2022 has been a year of some considerable change for SERP with our emergence from lock-down and changes to the Committee which have run the charity from its inception to November 2021 with such skill and dedication. As such it falls to the Chair to thank once more Stephen Dovey and Barbara Griffiths for their tireless work as Chair and Secretary respectively. Julie and I have discovered since moving into those roles just how much effort those two individuals put into SERP, and we have attempted to provide some continuity and stability. We have been helped so generously by the committee and other volunteers and would like to thank them all for their support.

A number of new projects have been initiated over the last year. SERP has continued to identify and complete necessary repairs and maintenance to the facilities provided at the playing field and improve the site in general. Storage has been improved with the addition of an additional container in which to house our increasing number of marquees and outside furniture for use at events. We have been very fortunate in being gifted a large marquee and additional chairs. We had identified significant improvements and repairs that are required for the continued provision of the children's play area and had hoped to progress them. We have been forced to come to the conclusion however, that addressing the drainage issues at the playing field must take priority as the continued waterlogging of the children's play area is a significant cause of the deterioration of the playground equipment. This work is likely to involve considerable cost and to that end we have commenced research into which grants and other subsidies may be available to help fund this large project. Naturally, improving this drainage should also lead to there being fewer occasions where sports events have to be cancelled or postponed, thus not only enhancing SERP's usefulness to the community but also the charity's cashflow. Other projects high on the priority list include improving lighting facilities and continuing to address increased requirements for parking and further equipment storage. Our thanks as a committee are extended to the Parish Council, various private individual contributors and local companies, the School Trustees, SEDCA and TVBC who have provided so much help.

We should also like to extend our thanks to Michael Eastwood for his continuing maintenance of the playing fields and the surrounds of the site. He took on this role in 2021 and we note with great satisfaction his excellent efforts which were also acknowledged by public attendees to the SERP AGM in January of this year.

It is sad to note that we have suffered numerous acts of vandalism throughout the year which have required investment in enhanced security and several repairs. This is most disappointing when one considers that the facilities SERP provides are for the use of the community as a whole and that some elements of that same community have taken it into their heads to behave in this way. Happily these incidents have not been repeated to any significant degree and we hope that they are now consigned to history.

In 2022 it was decided to forgo the usual August Fun Day in favour of hosting a jubilee celebration for Queen Elizabeth; afternoon tea and evening BBQ and bar being held in June. The Parish Council kindly gave great support for this village-wide event which was very much appreciated and the Team from the Village Hall generously provided some furniture and their earnest efforts. Many others in the village also contributed most generously and we were proud to play a key role in the celebrations. We also ran a fireworks display in November which was very well attended and provided some autumn

cheer as well as raising much needed funds.

In 2023 it was again decided to not hold the August Fun Day and instead host a celebration for the Coronation of King Charles. Events held on the day included the planting of a commemorative tree, a charity auction, music provided by local singer Lucy Gilbert, a youth football tournament, bar, BBQ and tea stall as well as a coconut shy, tombola etc. and the day seemed to be very well received and further raised funds for SERP. For this event it was also decided to use a local butcher for the provision of meat for the BBQ and we hope to expand on this notion at future events and continue to showcase local artisans where possible. We would like to thank all the volunteers who gave their time so generously to support these proceedings; as well as providing admission, food and drink services at the events themselves the amount of time given freely for organising, setting up and cleaning up after is very significant and they simply cannot be held without the efforts of so many. That said we note that these efforts are very often taken on by the same volunteers on each occasion and we would welcome support from the Parish Council in helping us attract more volunteer support from other village institutions to help us make these truly village-wide events.

There are a number of other fundraising activities that take place also and each of these makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing existence and functioning of SERP. The 100 club, the clothing bank and other efforts are supplemented by donations from companies, organisations and individuals locally and we thank them all for their wonderful support. Lastly, I should like to extend my own personal thanks to those on the SERP committee who work so hard and selflessly on every aspect of the maintenance and advancement of the site. We also wish to give our thanks to the Parish Council and to TVBC for their continuing support of the playing fields which enables us to continue to play an important role at the centre of the village.

St Leonard's Church Report – Read by Claire Durham

The benefice of Sherfield English with East and West Wellow remains in vacancy without an incumbent rector, but we hope that the scheme for the two parishes to join the existing benefice of Thorngate will come into effect on 1 st July. The vacancy for a part time vicar residing in Wellow can then be advertised to support the Reverend James Pitkin, who will be our new rector. We are very grateful to James for taking a monthly communion service for us for a year now, and for adding in a monthly family service since January. The second and fourth Sundays of each month continue to be Modern Morning Prayer services conducted by our BCM leaders. Fifth Sundays in a month are still joint services with Wellow Wood Chapel and we are pleased to continue this long-standing relationship between the two churches. Despite the ongoing upheaval at St Leonard's, we are pleased to report a slight increase in congregation numbers.

Musically, we are very grateful to a number of visiting organists who have supported us for special services across the past year, and to Margaret Hart who continues as our regular organist, ably supported by her family. The choir continues to sing during communion and family services, and when requested to at weddings, etc. We are especially proud of our bell-ringing team under the captaincy of Martin Daniels, who has swelled the number of ringers considerably and marked a number of important occasions (including the death of Elizabeth II and the Coronation of the King).

On International Women's Day, St Leonard's was one of just a handful of churches that were able to ring with a full female crew – no mean feat since we have eight bells.

The past year has been marked by a number of special services, which were attended by members of the wider community. These included marking the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II, a service to commemorate her passing, the Remembrance service on 13 th

November, and our usual Christmas services. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Reverend Nick Grew who supported us by taking some of these services.

The church continues to host a number of fundraising and community events across the year and we are grateful to everyone who supports these and works hard to make them happen. In November we were pleased to welcome Claire Gradidge for a book signing and talk about her murder mystery novels set in and around Romsey. Our monthly coffee mornings continue to be well attended and the most recent, which included a Coronation display by the Knit and Natter team, attracted international as well as regional media coverage. In March we joined in with the Community Lent Lunches organised by the Thorngate Benefice, serving soup, bread and cheese and raising over £500 for UNICEF.

We are pleased that we are still being asked to host a number of baptisms and weddings throughout the year, and in April it was a joy to welcome back many of the confirmation candidates to celebrate the anniversary of the service with Bishop Debbie.

In the interests of serving the larger community, St Leonard's is in the process of becoming a Dementia Friendly venue, and is looking at a number of new developments in technology. As always, we are grateful to other organisations who have helped us meet a number of significant invoices for repair and maintenance, especially the Parish Council and the School Trust.

Sherfield English School Trust – by Michael Tennant, read by Cllr Cook

The Trust as presently constituted was established by a Scheme sealed by the Charity Commission on 3 August 1992. The permanent endowment derives from Sherfield English Church of England School, and now comprises investments held by Cazenove as nominee.

The trustees. There are three ex-officio trustees, two Churchwardens, (Julia Noble, and Clare Durham) and the present Area Dean, Reverend James Pitkin. There is one co-opted trustee (Michael H Tennant, Chairman) and one trustee nominated by the Parish Council (Sheila Cook). A meeting of three trustees is quorate. The Trustees normally meet in May and November in each year, but this does not preclude decisions transacted by correspondence.

Objects

After defraying the cost of maintaining the property of the Charity, income is to be applied in furthering the religious and other charitable work of the Church in the Parish.

Subject to that, income may be applied for:

- a. the relief of the aged, impotent and poor;
- b. the relief of distress and sickness;
- c. the improvement of the conditions of life for inhabitants in the interests of social welfare of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupations;
- d. the support of educational facilities.

Administration

The trustees last met on 19th January 2023. The draft minutes note:

“-The Trustees had not met since 19th May 2022, but had dealt with trust matters in correspondence.

-There had been no applications for funding.

-The Nationwide had closed the Trust bank account on 20th July 2022. After much work by the Treasurer, a Community Account had been opened in October 2022 with Natwest

Bank and the balance of £4421.26 from Nationwide credited. Julia, Clare and Sheila were signatories and Julia has a debit card. £500 per month from Cazenove would be paid into the account

The Treasurer reported that:

- The opening balance on the Nationwide account (accumulated income now closed) as at 20th May 2022 was £4566.17. After interest, dividends and expenditure the closing balance with NatWest at 19th January 2023 was £7921.26.
- The value of the capital fund (Cazenove) as at December 2022 was £203,616.00.
- The accounts were approved. Details of the annual accounts to 31st December 2022 would be submitted to the Charity Commission on receipt of Cazenove's Q4 fees.

There was no correspondence.

The Trustees noted the objects of the Trust. The local community was sufficiently aware of the Trust. Applications for funding would be welcomed and considered on merit."

The Trustees welcome applications for funding that are within the objects of the Trust as set out above. Their present policy is to make a grant towards the total cost of a project

without underwriting the whole of it, the percentage of funding depending upon the circumstances. Since the Trustees met, they have approved the following grants:

-£283.46 towards the cost of repairing the Denon lectern sound system at St. Leonard's Church

£650 to Sherfield English Bowls Club towards the cost of replacing the sprayer.

The trustees are due to meet again on 9th November 2023.

Open Forum None

Meeting closed at 8.20pm