

BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY OF BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00pm on THURSDAY 25 MARCH 2021 VIA ZOOM

001/20 **PRESENT**

Cllr S Patel (Chair)
Cllr G Reynolds (Vice Chair)
Cllr J Barkham
Cllr S Clark
Cllr J Forker Clark
Cllr N Wright
Cllr B Nagpal
Cllr S Neville
Cllr Miss S Watson
Cllr Mr K Williamson
Cllr N Wright
Mr T Oliva (BHCA)
Mr T Ward (BHLGCIC)
Mrs J Page (BHRS and BHCA)
Mr P Foxtan (BHRS)
Mrs J Jones (Community Playgroup)
Mr J Pye (EF Foodbank)

In attendance:

Mrs E P Petyt-Start (Parish Clerk)
Mrs K Lumb (RFO and Deputy Parish Clerk)
Mrs L Tettmar (Finance and Admin Asst.)

002/20 **WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

003/20 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from –

Cllr J Share-Bernia
Mr A Young (BH U3A and BHRS)
Mr S Payne (Trodai)
Mr D Freeman (BHRS)
Mrs M Sinfield (BHRS)
Cllr P Davey (EALC)
Mrs A Ross (Epping Forest Scottish Association)
PCSO Dixon-Peters
Mr A Parker (BH Social Club)
Mrs J Curd (Golden Years Club)

004/20 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 16 May 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

005/20 UPDATES FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

There were updates from representatives of local community organisations:-

Tim Ward – Chair, Buckhurst Hill Leisure Gardens CIC

Buckhurst Hill Leisure Gardens CIC (BHLGCIC) manages five allotment sites in Buckhurst Hill on behalf of the Parish Council. There are in total 185 plots across the sites which are located on Lower Queens Road, Hornbeam Road, Rous Road, Forest Edge and Palace Gardens.

Key developments over 2019/ 2021 are:

- During the pandemic all the five allotment sites could remain open allowing our members to continue cultivating their crops during this difficult year. This has provided a good positive activity important for both physical and mental wellbeing of our members. We have also seen a huge interest in people wanting to take on plots with more local people than ever being inspired to grow their own fruit and vegetables and joined the allotment community. The sites are now completely full with 25+ on the waiting list for the next available plots.
- We thank the Parish Council for the continuing support to the allotments by providing extra funds for on-going maintenance, including gates and perimeter repairs and other allotment initiatives. The Parish has now entered into a new agreement with the BHLGCIC that allows plot holders to have their own polytunnels and sheds on the allotments. This is much welcomed by our members, in particular the introduction of polytunnels will enable the growing of crops all year round.
- We have been successful in raising monies from the Essex CC Community Initiatives Fund, which the Parish has matched, to create an 'Easy-Access Zone' so that those with mobility and other constraints can share in allotment life. This consists of purpose-built raised beds with access surfacing and paths for wheelchair users. The first zone is to be built on the Lower Queens Road Site in 2021 and, if successful, we aim to seek further funding to create a number of these easy-access zones across the allotment sites. We will be making bids to Awards for All and other charitable trusts, plus we did obtain £300 from the Waitrose Community Matters Scheme.
- Other works we hope to carry out this year, is to install land drains to help combat the now annual flooding of the River Housing Allotment Site, off Rous Road. We have drawn up plans which are now with the Parish and we will be consulting with the Epping Forest DC Drainage Engineer for their comments and support. We understand that it will be impossible to stop the flooding given the allotments are on a flood plain, however we believe we can reduce the amount of time the site is under flood water by introducing land drains to aid the waters to drain away more quickly from the allotment site.
- On our Monkams Allotment Site, off Hornbeam Road, we have a huge amount of building work happen alongside our eastern perimeter edge where garage walls that abutted the allotments have been demolished and new housing is being built. The contractors are to replace the garage walls with high timber fencing, so that the allotments will be secure. They are also erected five new sheds to replace ones that were attached to the walls.
- Finally, we hope to have our AGM, which was missed last year, in June/July plus hold another Buckhurst Hill Allotments Open Day which will be held on Saturday

14th August '21 from 12noon to 3pm at our Lower Queens Road Allotment Site. This event is part of the National Allotments Week and the theme for 2021 is "Plotting for the Future" celebrating the contribution that allotments make to a sustainable future.

Cllr Williamson gave thanks to the BHLGCIC for all they have done and for all they've contributed to the community.

Buckhurst Hill Residents Society – Jenn Page

The BHRS has held its talks over zoom over the past year when it hasn't been able to meet face to face and this has led to more members joining. There was a very successful quiz in February raising over £400 for the Rose Walton Charity. The Facebook and Membership editor has been very active, keeping members and the community up to date with all that is happening, changing and improving especially around Queens Road. Several new members have joined. It's felt that considering the past difficult year, it's still been a good year for the BHRS and members have remained connected, we shall see if zoom continues.

Bedford House Community Association – Tony Oliva

This is the 75th anniversary year of the BHCA. There was a lost term in spring because of the first lockdown; the association has received grants through EFDC which made up for some financial losses.

Because of COVID it ran a summer school for over 100 people in August for the first time ever. Increased costs because of COVID due to cleaning and increase of equipment purchase. Usually the premises would cater for 300-400 people per term but this hasn't been possible. There was a successful re-opening in September 2020 then it had to close again December 2020.

January 2021 went online with over 100 people and recruited new members. Now preparing to open 12th April. This past year has had a negative impact on the reserves. Plans to keep some online courses going.

ECC has refurbished the pottery area and upgrading the alarm system as well. Art appreciation lessons on zoom have enabled more people on zoom, this has worked extremely well.

Cllr Watson complimented the Bedford House Manager and gave thanks and special note to Robert Levine who represents the BHCA and community so well. She gave thanks for his work with the Corporation of London and community walks.

Jocasta Jones – Community Playgroup

The stay and play group is in its fourth year of sessions. The past year has been quite different and so events have been run such as Christmas Light trail, Easter and jumble trail. The aim of the group is to try and keep the community together. It's run by volunteers as a not for profit organisation. During lockdown play hubs have been started. They are hoping to use the Bancroft Rugby Club going forward. The lost income from the sessions have been subsidised by the income from the community trails.

Cllrs Neville and Wright congratulated the group on their work and thanked Casta for all that she has done for the community.

Peter Foxtan BHRS

A question was raised regarding enforcement progression of 72 Russell Road, Forest Place and 46 Russell Road. Cllr Nagpal offered to respond to BHRS directly after the meeting.

006/20 PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

The Chairman invited the Committee Chairman to provide review of the work of their committee over the past year
(all reports attached)

Accommodation Committee – Cllr Nagpal (report attached)

Finance & Establishment Committee - Cllr Reynolds (report attached)

Planning & Environment Committee – Cllr Nagpal (report attached)

Recreation & Community Committee – Cllr Wright and Cllr Forker Clark

This year has been curtailed due to Covid 19 and we've been considering the losses to people in our area. There's been success with the bus shelter and notice board repairs. Armistice Day commemoration was successful with private wreath laying and display of lamp post poppies. Queens Road illuminations once again with the focus of keeping people's spirit up. Community events unfortunately cancelled but we hope to put them back together again next year. International Women's Day held virtually. Christmas parcels delivered to older people. Village green grass cutting continues so keeping up basics and looking to complete more community activities going forward to ensure a vital and vibrant committee contribution. Increased number of salt bins. Trying to brighten up lower Queens Road and Station Way as had success with resident volunteering to water a new planter there. Looking to reinstate Hornbeam Road Playground. Zip wire agreed for RVRA. Nature Reserve is having to complete repairs. Hoping to deliver play in the park sessions again in the summer. The committee is looking forward to community events gain such as the Fish and Chip lunch. Covid memorial planned with working party agreed who will meet to progress the idea(s) Bikeability courses funded. Planning a Buckhurst Hill in Bloom event virtually for 2021 then face to face next year when we can all meet again

Climate Change working party – Cllr Neville (report attached)

Chairman's Report – Cllr Patel

Council business has been fully transacted on zoom this past year, we were the first Council to start this locally. Poppies displayed on lamp posts. Introduced a marigold wreath to commemorate Indian soldiers. New comedy night event introduced in 2019.

Collaborating with local businesses. Continue to fund the PCSO.

Chair and Cllr Neville have been part of the COVID Mutual Group. There was also street parties for VE75 DAY

Locality Find from ECC has funded confidence mastery course and resilience training for years 5, 6 and 7; St Johns school gardening project and benches in the RVRG.

The PC has given a grant to Club KO to fund training with young people and facilitated a new storage location for the UK Homeless Hub

007/20 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

- 1) Who is responsible for the footway repairs after damage has been caused following property development?

Cllr Williamson gave advice that there is nothing within building regulations but once reported to Essex County Council there should be process for the cost of repair to be given to the contractor causing the damage.

- 2) The Council has done extremely well over the past year and there should be more publicity around this with more eye catching press releases

There being no further business the Chairman thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 20.29pm.

Chairman

Date

DRAFT