

BEAUDESERT & HENLEY IN ARDEN JOINT PARISH COUNCIL



Here are the Minutes for the Annual Parish Assembly, held online on **Monday the 12th of April 2021**. Please note that these are COMBINED Minutes applicable to both Parishes and differentiated appropriately in the following.

1. Welcome by the Chair.

2. Apologies for absence Beaudesert & Henley

Cllr Bainbridge passed Mr Duncan Bainbridge's apologies for absence to the Chair. The Clerk noted the apology. No other apologies were received.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting – 22nd March 2021

Resolved: Chair reported that these were in order, the motion to adopt them as a true and accurate record of the proceedings, was proposed by Cllr Kingsnorth and seconded by Cllr White, the motion carried in favour by all members present.

4. Discussion of business specific to the Parish of Beaudesert.

Beaudesert: Mr Peter Crathorne asked if the grass cutting contact covered the same territory as that tended to by Mr Jon Vale. The Clerk confirmed that was the case and that it followed an invitation to THREE contractors to tender for the work.

Henley: No comments raised.

COMBINED MEETING WITH THE HENLEY-IN ARDEN PARISH

5. Beaudesert & Henley in Arden Joint Parish Council

Report by Cllr E Field – Chair JPC follows:

Chairs Report – Monday 12th April 2021

Well, what a historic year it has been! A pandemic like none of us have ever experienced before:

3 lock-downs in March and November 2020 and more recently from January – March of this year, multiple Covid-testing facilities locally where testing has become a way of life, wearing masks to visit the shops, sanitising our hands each time we leave the house and now a mass vaccination programme, which will hopefully lead us out of this.

Whilst all this has been unfolding around us, your Parish Council has been doing its best to conduct business as usual, striving to keep Henley safe and working on all the projects we set ourselves this time last year.

The Parish Council began its new year in May 2020 whilst in lock-down 1; meetings transferring to this virtual platform, which I'm sure you agree, we love and despise in equal measures! By this time, we had already set up the volunteer system, with a named volunteer in each street to help residents. We were also in close liaison with the pharmacy and the surgery to aid those most in need.

I was truly humbled by the sheer volume of residents that stepped up to help others at this time. Some of this volunteer work continues 12 months on, with new relationships formed between residents that might otherwise never have met. This is the one achievement by this Parish Council that I am most proud of and I would like to thank once again anyone in our town that has reached out to others and helped.

One of my first jobs as Chair was to put together a plan for the year of projects the Council wanted to develop. The Council has been highly visible over this time, working on a range of things to improve the town. You will hear about these successes from our leaders of the sub-committees driving these projects shortly. Alongside these exciting projects, we have also conducted all our usual business. Whilst some may say these are not exciting, unless you love procedural issues like me, they are of the utmost importance. These include:

Planning matters in the town, led so skilfully by Marijana and her team – this is never an easy job, often emotive but always important – thank you for all your hard work in this area.

Other important business includes the tendering process for our grass cutting contract, a new online mapping tool so we can plot all our assets, new software to make financial reporting easier, a new website and more recently a tree survey to ensure we can plan much needed work in this area alongside our budget.

As you can see, even with all the outside influences and negative national headlines, Beaudesert and Henley Parish Council has been business as usual. I thank each and every councillor and our clerk for the difference they have made to our town, working tirelessly on your behalf to make Henley an even greater place to live.

I now hand over to my Vice Chair and Chair of the Town Welfare Committee Angela Okey to report on all the great work achieved over the last 12 months.

6. Town Welfare Sub-Committee

Report by Cllr Okey – Chair

Successes

Successful Calor gas and sport England grant which has funded over 50% of the cost of outdoor gym. to be installed this month in jubilee gardens

Adoption of the train station platforms, along with recruitment of dedicated bank of volunteers to maintain all planting areas, not only at the station but also around town, i.e. prince harry carpark. Also successful grant applications totaling £15000 which has paid for the artwork on the station building and will also fund the new Shakespeare garden. ongoing discussions with network rail board of directors re adoption & renovation of the station building for a community hub, funded from grants.

Riverlands new play area and picnic area, a tremendous success and funded from pc reserves.

unique artwork and tourist information boards now completed and almost installed around town, part funded by WCC & the Heritage Centre

Forward Plans

New welcome to henley boards have been designed. application to be forwarded to highways England for approval, to include brown & white tourist information boards directing to heritage centre & henley ice cream, along with more visible visitor car parking signage.

Renovation of jubilee park, to include refresh of play area, replacement basketball mini court, refreshed goal posts, outdoor gym, boules area (funded from national lottery grant) along with new signage & bins.

Working party to establish a new 3g pitch and potentially a gym within the town. responsibility to develop business plans and source grant / funding opportunities.

7. Communications Sub Committee

Report by Cllr Woods – Chair

Report for Parish Assembly Communications Sub-Committee

Date: 10 April 2021

Three Things that have gone well

1. We now have a Communication group, which is an achievement in itself, and we have people who are focused on communicating all areas that the JPC are working on and engaging with the local community, via a number of different channels.
2. The Buy, Eat, Shop local campaign had a really positive response both from those businesses that were involved and in terms of views and publicity. This was the campaign that we funded as a JPC as part of a wider Warwickshire campaign to support local business during this time and raise awareness of the different establishments we have locally. I also now have all the raw footage for any businesses that would like this.
3. We setup a Facebook and Instagram account from scratch and have 570 followers on Facebook and 1,005 followers on Instagram (to date) which is a fantastic achievement from a standing start and gives us a great opportunity to continue to communicate with everyone.
4. Volunteer of the month recognition through social media has been really popular and widely engaged with in the local community. We need to continue with this section and build upon this, please see below.

Focus for the future

1. Tourism website for Henley in Arden – Majority of businesses with shop fronts have been sketched, ability to promote the local area, businesses, services, events and attract people to Henley in Arden.
2. Pride of Henley Awards – We really do have some fantastic people in our local community and as a JPC we want to ensure we can recognise these individuals and thank them for everything they do. Hopefully with Covid restrictions lifting we can begin planning an awards event.
3. Utilise the communication channels now available to produce a monthly section for community groups to promote the work they do.

8. Town Maintenance Sub-Committee

Report by Cllr Jones – Chair

The 3 'P's'

1. Cllr Jones reported on the successful newspaper delivery campaign during the pandemic.
2. Successful association with the PayBack team shown to be improving areas of Henley, not least the work at St Nicholas.
3. Pathways, wonderful feature in the Churchyard and other pathway under the railway bridge off Brook End Drive

9. Stratford upon Avon District Council

Report by Cllr Matt Jennings.

District Councillor Annual Report (12/04/2021) – Matt Jennings

Cabinet

I was asked to join the Stratford District Council Cabinet in August as Portfolio holder for Economic Development & Tourism. Not the easiest role at the best of times let alone during a Pandemic.

As Portfolio Holder I represent SDC on the weekly West Midlands Combined Authority Economic Impact Group and Monthly Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub. I also deputise for the Council Leader on other WMCA Investment Board meetings. I attend the Market Forums, and I represent SDC on the Board of Stratford BID (Business Improvement District) and Shakespeare's England, The Destination Management company for South Warwickshire.

As a Councillor I am also on the Fortnightly Planning Committee, as well as several others including the Town Recovery Plan, Joint Consultation & Negotiation Group... the list goes on..

So my plate is quite full....

Business Grants to the District

So far SDC have paid out over £50 million / to be £ 61 m soon, in Grants to District businesses – we have been highly efficient and successful at getting grant money out. Speaking to other businesses in other geographical areas their councils lag well behind us.

Pop Up Business

I investigated and gave the green light on a Pop Up online Business course. This was fully funded by SDC and completed by over 100 people looking to start up new businesses – I know of a number in this Ward who attended the course.

What does next year hold ?

Economy & Regeneration

Covid has put a £4m shortfall in our revenue and will wipe out our reserve, we currently have 23,000 on Furlough – it is going to be a testing time.

We therefore have to make the District an attractive place where people want to live, work and set up new or move existing businesses.

With this in mind we aim to move forward with our Stratford Riverside Project, Canal Quarter Regeneration Project, Gateway Project and Wellesbourne Innovation Hub & further possibilities with Wellesbourne Airfield.

A number of multinational organisations, especially those linked into the electric motorcar sector are interested in moving into the District. If they come it will generate long term jobs and opportunities.

I am currently organising a second Pop up Business course for the whole of South Warwickshire and a talk by the Institute of Place Management on High Street Recovery.

We are re-writing the Core Strategy with an emphasis on creating areas for rural business opportunities.

Working with Warwick District Council

SDC & WDC have many synergies. We are already working very closely with Warwick District Council – we share a number of Officers and have a number of joint projects which will save us many millions over the next few years. There are more to come over the next year.

Hopefully, this year will be a year of recovery.

Thank you for your time

10. Warwickshire County Council

Report by Cllr John Horner

County Councillor Report May 2021

The County Council election and the Police and Crime Commissioner elections are to be held on May 6th next.

In *Arden Division* there are four candidates for election as the County Councillor. These are: John HORNER, Conservative; Karyl REES, Liberal Democrat; Penny STOTT, Green; and Bryn TURNER, Labour.

For *Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner* there are four candidates. These are: Louis ADAM, Liberal Democrat; Henry LU, Reform UK; Philip SECCOMBE, Conservative; Ben TWOMEY, Labour .

I hope everyone will vote on May 6 as it is our democratic right. Many people have given their lives over the years ensuring we can vote and there are many people across the word today who are fighting to achieve what we often take for granted.

The death of HRH Prince Philip has overshadowed events this month and until I read and watched the tributes to him I was unaware of just how gifted and remarkable he was; he was so modest of his many achievements. His work behind the scenes for many charitable organisations will be missed.

Although we suffered some frustrations at the start over the lumpy rollout of the Covid-19 vaccination programme the Health Minister placed Warwickshire as running the most successful inoculation programme in the country. GPs and other NHS workers administering the vaccinations should be congratulated. Although progress is good on inoculation the Government wants anyone who regularly mixes with other people socially or at work to take two rapid Covid tests each week. I have asked the Public Health team to find out where the nearest testing centre would be for each of our parishes, and I will advise each Parish Council when I get the information.

Congratulations should also be extended to Henley in Arden Fire and Rescue as the station achieved 100% availability for emergency response for the last two years. This achievement makes the team one of the highest, if not the highest, performing fire station in the country.

There have been some changes to personnel in the Alcester North Police area serving Arden Division. Ben Hembry is the new Inspector who has taken over Stratford District, the new Arden SNT Sergeant is David Ebbs, and our new Police Constable is Caz Wright. Aadila Hussain, Sanjay Singh and Brooke Taylor remain in post as our PCSOs. The new officers gave the Police briefing at the April Arden Division Clerks and Chairs and we were able to welcome them. I have also written, at the request of Arden Clerks and Chairs, to the Chief Constable asking him to note our appreciation of the excellent job Sgt Eagles did during his time as our SNT Sergeant.

11. Henley Court Leet

Report by Tom Mangan – High Bailiff

Henley in Arden Court Leet Achievements last year the Court continued to play its part in the maintenance of the Guild Hall and with the assistance of JPC grant to the Guild Hall Trust, also in the reopening of the Jubilee Garden.

In conjunction with JPC Elaine Field with Ade on the camera and the Church in the person of our Rector John Ganjavi, our Court Leet also conducted the Grand “Hopeful” Re-opening rally on 4th July 2020. ... Well, it did last for a while!!

In our traditional role we also added some pageantry and tradition to other Town events such as the Railway station kids planting, the national Tree Planting event and the Church Tapestry/ plaque unveiling.

And the opening of our new butchers, Henley Butchers and Deli”

Also Annual Christmas Shop Window Competition

However, compared to the brilliant work of others in these parishes, we have NO achievements to report.

As we all know The Court Leet is a now a largely Traditional Organisation, but we have a very real and powerful History dating right back to the 11th Century.

Prior to new legislation in the 1970s there were many Courts Leet in England and Wales but now there are only 33, our nearest neighbours being Bromsgrove Warwick and Alcester.

Henley in Arden Court Leet is unusual in that in 1957 it was bequeathed the Guild Hall and charged with maintaining it for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish (es) of Henley in Arden and Beaudesert.

And this year our main practical task is the re-roofing of the Guild Hall.

Of course, we also particularly look forward to some of our usual annual events; Henley Ale taste date; Was 13th May 2021 so we will set a new date for this annual event

Saturday 17th July ?? Revised Court leet Day ?? change from 5th June 2021 Court leet day.

Saturday 28th August 2021, Music Festival or if no Festival this year Band in the Garden is provisionally booked.

Sunday 29th August 2021, Music Festival/ Kids disco day??

Saturday 25th September 2021, Town Dinner in Memorial Hall

These are our principal Traditional Henley events that hopefully not only enliven our community but also SUPPORT the JPC's GREAT INITIATIVE to advance appreciation and understanding of our wonderful Heritage and History and hence promote Tourism to the benefit of us all.

Congratulations to the JPC for your excellent work, especially during the pandemic.

12. Henley Christmas Lights

Report by Mrs S Westmacott

Brian as Chairman of the Christmas Lights Committee sends his apologies, and he has asked me to give his report.

We had five new committee members, and all were prepared to roll up their sleeves and work - perfect committee members you may say. During Lockdown One, the Committee were overly concerned that we wouldn't be able to runner usual Switch On. We had no way of proceeding with our usual fund-raising activities, so before us loomed a deficit budget. We managed to meet between Lockdowns, and the decision was taken, that for the wellbeing of the Townspeople we would do our utmost to make it happen. We had to find a way of raising the much-needed money outside the box, and The Walk to Bethlehem idea was borne. Our youngest walker was 7 and our oldest was 88. What an absolute success this was and roughly seven and a half thousand pounds was raised. Also, the JPC's contribution, Madam Chair's Sleigh contribution, and the generous contributions of the Businesses and Townspeople helped save the day. We moved Switch On to the 1st of December, it being mid-week to discourage people congregating at the Market Cross.

So, this committee responded to the Covid Christmas Lights Challenge and we were able to provide the Town with their Lights!

So, that is positive One

Positive Two

This year for the first time we made a Nativity scene outside the Baptist Church and it was very heartwarming to see families taking pictures and enjoying it.

Positive Three

Brian and I made contact with the Stratford Christmas Lights Committee and the Alcester Christmas Lights Committee with a view to finding out how they ran their Lights and how could we improve our Lights.

Stratford were able to give us some valuable information about the quality and durability of the lights that they use - which we hope to use ourselves.

Our existing lights have been in use for 23+ years and it is our wish to replace sections of these annually with this new specification lighting.

We now enter this year with a respectable Bank Balance, some ideas to tweak and improve our Lights, and hope to continue to give the Townspeople their usual Switch On! 7

Sue raised a point regarding her involvement

13. The HUB at Henley

Report by Mr Peter Crathorne

REPORT FOR THE PARISH ASSEMBLY 12.04.21.

UPDATE REPORT ON COVID 19 SUPPORT SINCE 04.11.20.

Set out below are the statistics of our activities supporting our fellow residents in Henley and the surrounding district. As this long drawn out isolation continues we are discovering more and more of our neighbours requiring increasing amounts of resources. The phone calls get longer more and more direct help is requested, and often Covid Secure personal visits are the only way to meet the need. The Hub, its volunteers and staff are doing all they can to help.

ACTIVITY	PERSONS BENEFITTING	DEVELOPMENT PLAN	ESTIMATED COSTS
1. PHONE SUPPORT SERVICE OVER 1000 PHONE CALLS MADE	70	RECRUIT 2 MORE VOLUNTEERS TO SHARE THE WORK	PHONE COSTS £20 PER MONTH
2. WEEKLY NEWSLETTER 33 EDITIONS	80 SENT OUT EVERY WEEK BY EMAIL EXCEPT 15 PRINTED EDITIONS	PLAN A REDESIGN TRY TO INVOLVE MORE CONTRIBUTORS	PRINTING £22.50 PER EDITION.
3. INTERMITTENT SPECIAL SURPRISE GIFTS	DAFFODILS AND A CARD FOR EASTER	PLANS FOR SURPRISES ONCE EVERY MONTH	AVERAGE COST £200 PER MONTH
4. THREE ZOOM MEETINGS EACH WEEK PLUS SOME INDIVIDUAL ONES AT OTHER TIMES IN TOUCH WITH 40 PEOPLE	45 FULL SESSIONS COMPLETED	CONTINUALLY REVIEW THESE TO RESPOND TO PERCEIVED REQUIREMENTS	£15 PER MONTH ZOOM FEES
5. IT SUPPORT SOLVING SIMPLE ISSUES, CONTACT WITH ABILITY NET FOR MORE COMPLICATED ONES FIRST ATTEMPTS OVER THE PHONE, THEN BY ZOOM AND FACETIME, IF ALL ELSE FAILS THEN COVID SECURE HOME VISITS	40 OVER THE PHONE, 5 BY ZOOM AND THREE HOME VISITS	SERVICE NOT WIDELY KNOWN MORE ADVERTS?	£5 PER MONTH COST OF FUEL FOR HOME VISITS.
6. ARRANGING COLLECTION OF SHOPPING AND MEDICINES COVID SECURE SYSTEMS IN PLACE	36 SEPARATE EVENTS	NEED BETTER CO-ORDINATION WITH OTHER VOLUNTARY SERVICES	FUEL COSTS £5 PER MONTH
7. LIFTS TO MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS COVID SECURE SYSTEM IN PLACE	13	LINKS WITH LOCAL TAXI FIRMS WHERE CLIENTS CAN AFFORD AND THE VOLUNTARY DRIVING SERVICE	FUEL COSTS £5 PER MONTH
8. VIRTUAL EASTER EGG HUNT	100 AVAILABLE TO ALL BUT AIMED AT YOUNGER PEOPLE	MAKING CONTACT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN PREPARATION FOR A RETURN OF ON SITE YOUTH WORK.	£30
9. DONATIONS FROM CLIENTS	£450 RECEIVED DIRECTLY FROM BENEFICIARIES	USE NORMAL SYSTEM FOR DONATIONS	NONE

As we open up the community aspect of the centre the phone call system will be reduced and the Zoom Calls will end. The Natter will be amended to a news item on the Hub's Website. Check out the Web site www.thehubathenley.co.uk

14. Henley Women's Institute

Report by Mrs S Pahl – Chair

Achievements:

Well what a year it has been!

The ongoing pandemic has brought with it the opportunities for members of our wonderful community to shine and shine the have!!

To be asked to share 3 achievements is quite a task when I've had the pleasure to witness so many moments of inspirational kindness and charitable acts.. so here goes..

1) Knowing our Community.

From the beginning of the pandemic to this day. The first Tuesday of each month we have stood on the door steps of some of the most vulnerable members of our community with a warm smile (and often very cold hands) we have shared positive words of friendship as we delivered activities for those who may be needing some things to do.

2) Community connections.

We have linked up with organisations including Henley Medical centre as we continue to highlight the magnitude of loss and loneliness right here within our town. To break down the idealistic view that so many are happy at home all day with nothing to do and no one to see.

Difficult times happen to us all but not all of us have the good times along with it.

3) Community Support.

Unbelievable support for our community allotment project highlights the importance of providing opportunities for uniting people who we walk past every day. The opportunities are endless only limited by the facilities we can offer. Our puzzle & book swap are examples of how we can offer community connections. We have united different craft leaders to come together to share their skills and with continued support we can extend this to other areas like woodwork projects which in turn can support other town initiatives like wild life projects.

3 Things for the Year Ahead:

1) Knowledge:

As we begin our new membership year with visions of a community with its charities at its core. We ask for continued support from our JPC, local groups, residents, and businesses. We continue to reach out and connect people with the incredible work already being done for example by our Hub @ Henley and spreading the knowledge of businesses supporting those initiatives shall in turn encourage other businesses to follow.

So we ask for continued awareness of the work being done by not only the Women's Institute but all local organisations.

2) Resources:

As we navigate endless opportunities out there we ask for any guidance, information, signposting in the right direction and of course funding when needed. Hard work & good intentions shall only get us so far.

3) Education, Education, Education:

Mental health awareness in our older population. Educate our community on the importance of promoting and supporting our towns hard work, including a direct information network to connect those not on social media. There shall come a day when we ourselves are in need of this support.

15. Henley Community Library

Report by Katy Steele

Been a challenging year as for everyone. We are all of use grateful to have got to where we are now and looking forward to re-opening and the day when we will be fully re-open without mitigating measures in place.

The Library had to close its doors during the first lockdown and could not even open for click and collect. Despite this library volunteers, special mention to Judith Lindley for facilitating this, were able to operate a home delivery service and keep in touch with some of our more vulnerable customers. Over the summer we got ourselves ready for re-opening with support from Wootton Wawen Parish Council who provided a grant to cover the additional costs involved in ensuring we had covid secure measures in place. It was a relief to all of use when we could re-open and some sense of 'normality' returned although we opened for shorter hours to start with this. We remained open until November when we could only be open for click and collect service. But this has been well supported and volunteers have adapted quickly to all the changes and guidance we are having to follow.

Welcomed new volunteers during the last year which is encouraging. And the passing of Duke of Edinburgh reminds us of how our community library has benefited from hosting young volunteers through the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme who have helped us in many practical ways and we look forward to when we can support them again.

We are among a minority of community managed libraries across the county to remain open and this has only been possible with the support of volunteers who have adapted to different circumstances. For our customers without internet we have been able to continue to support them with book searches and online reservations and home delivery where possible.

We are very much looking forward to allowing customers back into the library from tomorrow albeit with restricted numbers and social distancing measures in place. We will be expanding our hours in the next few months and look forward to being back where we were before the pandemic.

Remain grateful to the Parish Council and Methodist Church for their support this year.

16. Henley in Bloom

Report by Mrs Sheila Davis

Sheila reminded all what a wonderful place Henley was. She hoped, fingers crossed, that the risk they took in ordering plants in February would pay off as there were many fears around the Covid crisis. The plants were delivered at end of May and carefully stored for planting, and at all times the team observed pandemic protocols. The team were unable to judge baskets, and shop frontages for obvious reasons, but Sheila took photographs on her phone to pop on the HM & HIB websites and was reported for suspicious behaviour by an observer. Sheila is reasonably hopeful that the season will not be too disrupted going ahead. Finally she delivered a plea that all associated websites would not forget the High Street flowers and make sure they are featured wherever possible, she closed by saying her team would be assisting in planting the troughs in the churchyard

17. OPEN FORUM

17.1

Peter Crathorne raised the question of surplus in JPC funds at year end. The Clerk reported that the expenditure was roughly the same as the year previous showing no obvious surplus.

17.2

Sue Westmacott raised the matter of a memorial plaque being stuck and mounted in town for the citing the wonderful work the Women's Land Army contributed to the community during WW2. She asked if the JPC had any objections which the Chair responded to by stating that she thought it was a wonderful gesture and wished Sue luck with the project.

18. Vote of Thanks & Formal Closure

Chair brought the proceedings to a close, thanked all for their support and promised that it was the intention of the JPC to mount a summer parish get together, hopefully in July all things being equal and that further news would be provided in good time for people to partake.

Meeting ended at 8.18pm