

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Abberley at Abberley Village Hall

at 7pm on Wednesday 17th May 2023

1. Welcome & Introduction: Cllr. Knight

2. Abberley Reports:

2.a.i Abberley C of E Primary School – Joel Turvey

None Provided

2.a.ii Abberley Young Farmers Association- Sarah Coley

None Provided

2.a.iii Nora Parsons Day Centre – Ian Brown

At the centre the last 3 years has been very challenging as it has been for many charities. After the pain of Covid we started to make changes to the way we presented the centre, we needed to turn the clock back with the original concept of our founder Nora Parsons but also bringing the message into 2022/23.

Targets were set to extend the number of members, drivers and volunteers, also to maintain the fee we charge our members unfortunately we would extend the number of all areas but due to the age of members we sadly lost members some due to illness and to long term care home requirement. However, we have several new members which ensures we have 24 members on the books.

We also have been hit as everyone has had increased costs in all areas due to the costs of living rise. Our lunch suppliers asked us to pay an increase of £2 per lunch which we accepted then gave us 2 weeks notice 3 weeks later so we had to find a new supplier which was The New Inn Clifton.

Our heating oil increased by 300%, fortunately we have a contract with EDF till 2024.

At the beginning of the report, I stated we have wanted to maintain our fee at £10 per session to do that we have reviewed all our costs and where possible made savings and hope costs do come down, also we have increased our fund raising.

The 21 parishes have recognised the work we do and kindly donate to the Centre.

2.a.iv Abberley Green Trust- Sue Coley

None Provided

2.a.v Abberley Parochial Church Council – Marc Manning

New Vicar

We have been without a vicar since last July but we have now interviewed and appointed a new Vicar to start from the 22nd of August. His name is David Morris and he comes from another Worcestershire parish. He was highly recommended by Robert Jones one of the archdeacons. He will live in the area and will look after Shrawley the Witleys, Abberley and Teme Valley North. He will work closely with Sally Butcher and Julia in neighbouring areas. He is married and has two grown up daughters and loves cycling. He also specialises in rural matters. So, we are hopeful for the future.

Coffee and Cake

Claire Furness continues to hold coffee and cake mornings at St Mary's on a regular basis . They are usually well attended and very enjoyable.

WI

From June the WI will be using St Mary's for a craft workshop once a month on a three month trial period.

Clock Refurbishment

St Mary's clock requires repairing and Kate Andrews has been very helpful in applying for a grant for this from the Church of England. It looks as though it will cost about £13,500. If we are lucky we might get a grant of about £10,000.

Pews

We are applying to the diocese to remove some pews at the back of the church to make that space more user friendly.

Church Numbers

Although the churches can be full for a wedding or funeral, regular attendees (attending a service at least once a month) number about 20 at St Mary's and 10 at St Michaels. This is out of a village population which I believe to be over 800.

Parish News

The parish news continues to be delivered to 450 households in Abberley 10 times a year free of charge. We do charge for the adverts and also seek donations which some parishioners respond to.

Others

We continue to run the 100 club and Phil Congreve organises a quiz night at least once a year. We are trying to hold other events in St Mary's although we have had to cancel/postpone two recent events but will continue to hold more events in the future.

2.a.vi Abberley Village Hall – Sue Coley

Our bookings remain fairly steady, unfortunately we have had to significantly increase our hiring charges as well as not taking a booking for less than 2 hours, thankfully these changes have been positively received.

Our heating now runs at no higher than 19 degrees to help save on the cost of oil.

Our expenses this year have been particularly high, we now pay 2 cleaners and the booking secretary.

The cooker was replaced in November - £600.00 including fitting.

Annual electricity testing with 7 new emergency lights, pat testing and fitting the new projector - £650.00

Annual service of boilers and repairs - £490.00

Roof repairs - £2,300.00.

Abberley Village Hall received a grant from Abberley Parish Council of £1668.00 for the repairs to the car park, it was much appreciated.

We also need to replace the kitchen at a cost of approximately - £20,000.00 fitted, we only have 1 quote at the moment from Howdens but I'm sure they will all be much the same, even if we buy the units and pay someone to fit them, we intend to apply to the Lottery A4A for a grant but that will only be £10,000 if we're lucky enough to get it.

All the main hall curtains have to be repaired and cleaned and the stage curtains need replacing.

The white lines on the car park need to be repainted, hopefully we may be able to apply to the Parish Council for help with this.

What we need to remember is that the hall is now 28 years old so these things are to be expected.

I hope you have all read our article in the Parish News in the hope we may encourage more people to join the hall committee and help keep the hall at the centre of our community.

2.a.vii Hester Severne Trust – Bill Ballard

None Provided

2.a.viii District Councillor's Report- Cllr. Paul Cumming

None Provided

2.a. ix County Councillors Report – Cllr. David Chambers

The County Council is now halfway through its four year term, with County Council elections to be held in May 2025. This has been a very difficult two years for all councils in Worcestershire, the six District Councils and the County Council, not least because of Covid but also difficulties including inflation and the like.

Despite these difficulties, the County Council is on track to complete its agenda. Services are being maintained and investment promises are being kept. Worcestershire County Council continues to have one of the lowest council tax rates in the country, something it hopes to maintain for the remainder of this four year cycle.

The recent District Council elections in Worcestershire have seen changes in boundaries, Councillors and Administrations. The County Council will however, continue to work with all its partners, for the benefit of the residents we serve.

In May 2025 when the next County Council election will be held, the election will be held following boundary changes from a county perspective. Currently, the Boundary Commission is beginning consultations to determine what changes may be made. Their decision is independent and final but the consultation will include submissions from various councils within the county; County, District, Town and Parish councils; submissions from political parties, councillors, charities, companies, organisations and individual members of the public. The Review will determine any changes in the number of "Divisions", any boundary changes which will be necessary to create these new Divisions and the Commission will also determine any changes which may be necessary regarding the number of councillors.

As previously referred to, April and early May have been taken up with District Council elections which inevitably have an impact on the work of the County Council. I will give a more detailed report for your next meeting.

2. a. x Abberley Care Farm – Claire Furness

Abberley Care Farm has continued to thrive with a diverse cohort of children benefitting from their time at the farm. We have approximately 8 children visit each day. Many with Special Educational Needs, Autism, High Anxiety, or childhood trauma related difficulties which means they benefit from a break from their school demands, supporting their mental health and wellbeing. We work closely with our local schools and the local authority. While at the farm the children work with therapeutic animal intervention to gain confidence and overcome barriers, learning valuable life skills, enjoy forest school activities, gardening and Art based projects.

We have a healthy interest in supporting our local community and the children volunteer to clean St Mary's church in January & June and regularly sweep the foredraft. We are registered with Malvern Hills Adopt-a-Street and regularly litter pick Suffolk Lane, Village Green, School Road and Village Hall areas.

For the Queens Jubilee Celebration in the village the children and staff really enjoyed getting involved and entering the fancy dress competition along with organising the Dog Show in our Hill Field, which was really well supported and great fun for all. We were very pleased to welcome an ex-student Ed Powell, who now works at Forest Dog Rescue, to come and judge for us.

One of our children was delighted to open the event on the village green as "The Queen" on Marmite one of our therapy ponies, and we were very proud to find a photo made it into The Shuttle!

We also organised the Art show in St Mary's with all of our children submitting a masterpiece and were delighted to have lots of entries from Abberley pre-school, Abberley Primary School, Abberley

Hall School and some very detailed adult entries, all of which made a beautiful display in St Marys and gave our kind judge Tony Chance a very hard task, he certainly earned his bar of chocolate!

As the autumn term unfolded we liaised with the PCC and church wardens to hatch a plan to create a community pop-up teashop in St Marys. Many thanks to Bill Ballard for helping us to clear the back of the church and we then set to, to create a coffee shop area and a diary full of dates. It has been overwhelmingly popular and an absolute delight to see our children flourish and gain confidence. They are settled into the routine now of setting up and eagerly await the customers, showing them to their seats, taking orders and serving cakes and hot drinks, before clearing away and washing up and also squeeze in time for a chat and cuppa themselves. They have gained so much from this work experience, and it is giving them the life skills and confidence to enter the working world. We must say a massive thank you to the local community for supporting us by visiting, making cakes and being so kind and patient, it really is a most enjoyable couple of hours for all!

The tea-shop is not a profit-making enterprise but has a very healthy kitty thanks to the generous donations we receive each tea-shop and more than covers its running costs, at the end of the summer term we will be honoured to give the profits to the PCC for St Mary's upkeep.

We are pleased that the Orchard we planted last year in the Hill Field with MHDC grant money, supported by Councillor Cummings and The Tree Council hedging plants are doing really well and the children were delighted to enjoy homemade blackberry and apple jam on their toast 😊

We are currently busy in the Art department planning and constructing our Crowns for the Kings Coronation and look forward to the village events.

Many thanks for your continued support.

2. a. xi Abberley Hall Prep School – Jonnie Besley

None Provided

2. a. xii West Mercia Police Annual Report

There have been some significant changes to the Martley and Tenbury SNT and the leadership team in recent months. Inspector Alex Warner has left West Mercia Police, PCSO Ness Snape has taken retirement, PC Jack Sykes has secured his promotion to Sergeant and is now based in Worcester and Sergeant Sarah Kent has retired.

The new team consists of Inspector Dave Wise, Sergeant Jason Maiden, PC Paul Lawman, PCSO Teresa Howells-Brown, PCSO Nathan Drew and PCSO Deb Abbott.

Martley and Tenbury SNT are committed to addressing rural crime, thefts, speeding, and road traffic offences. Advice on how to protect your business or home can be found on the West Mercia Police website. The team are able to give general security advice, but for more specialist advice we can signpost to, Mike Simpson, Business and Crime Prevention Officer, P C Nigel Bolton, We don't Buy Crime Officer and Residential Security and Crime Prevention Officer, Jacqueline Godfrey Hunt.

Abberley highlighted speeding, ASB and thefts as priorities as part of the Parish Contract Contact Charter. As yet we have not received an updated contract with any priorities.

Speeding: This issue is now being dealt with the Road Safety Team, we do not have any further information to present.

ASB: We have received a number of reports in recent weeks regarding ASB in the village regarding an individual, this has been looked into and addressed. Regular patrols are taking place at Shavers End Quarry that can be accessed through Abberley, a Problem-Solving Plan has been reopened now that we are approaching the warmer weather and the visitors are likely to return, people in the area will be told to leave and parking tickets issues where parking on yellow lines occurs.

Thefts: The SNT do carry out patrols in the area on a regular basis and will continue to do so. There were a number of theft reports over the winter period on a building site in the village. Security has

been improved and security patrols have taken place which has caused alarm from some vigilant residents believing this was suspicious. The patrol vehicles are legitimate and there are no concerns regarding its presence.

Whilst the numbers for crime in this area remain relatively low, no crime is acceptable and we will continue to work to reduce numbers further.

We remain committed to engagement with the community with visits to the local coffee mornings, and Parish Meetings; Martley and Tenbury SNT are always available by email for questions, queries, etc.

We are available to give talks to groups or residents, advising on what scams are currently doing the rounds, and how to keep safe and avoid being taken in by the ever increasing and sophisticated measure criminal gangs are using against the unsuspecting and vulnerable people in our communities.

We are available via email: mt.snt@qwestmercia.police.uk, or mobile phones

PC Paul Lawman 07967 302038

PCSO Nathan Drew 0777 3054306

PCSO Deb Abbott 07890 535960

Teresa Howells Brown 07814 041496

You can also reach us via Tenbury Cops on Face book

We are increasingly using Neighbourhood Matters to send out alerts and messages etc., so if you haven't yet signed up, please head to either West Mercia Website to do so, or Neighbourhood Matters directly online.

2. a. xiii Abberley Women's Institute (Jan Hogan – President)

Thank you for the opportunity to tell you about Abberley WI. We started this year with a new President and a smaller committee and we continue to thrive. Abberley WI forms part of The Forest Group, which has a total of 10 other WI local groups, and we have the largest membership.

We have a monthly meeting at the Village Hall, when we have a variety of speakers and activities. There are numerous other group meetings during the month ie. Book Group, Walking Group, Bridge Group, and Knit and Natter and recently added a new group Craft Group. We plan to widen the Craft Group remit to try and promote a meeting place for those ladies who would welcome a regular opportunity to socialise. During the year there are opportunities for members to attend workshops on a variety of subjects and also day trips. We have been proactive in distributing a "Welcome To Abberley" leaflet to the new houses in the village, informing people of the WI. We contribute and participate as much as we are able to in any village event. We work together to enable elder members to attend WI and village events.

2. a. XIV Teme Valley Neighbourhood Watch Annual Report from Ning Kedwards.

Teme Valley Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has been running for over 20 years on a voluntary basis. We share information through two channels; i.e. emails (nwatchabberley@gmail.com) and the Teme Valley Neighbourhood Watch Face Book page ([Teme Valley Neighbourhood Watch | Facebook](#)). We currently have 435 residents signed up for email communications under the GDPR (UK General Data Protection Regulations) guidelines, of which 260 residents reside in Abberley. We also have over 1,300 people who have subscribed to the Face Book Page.

As more and more residents are moving into Abberley, this is a good opportunity to update what Teme Valley Neighbourhood watch covers. Neighbourhood Watch is about people getting together with their neighbours to take action to reduce crime.

It is all about community initiatives owned and run by our members which are supported by the police but not owned by them. Our local Tenbury and Martley Safe Neighbourhood Team (SNT) have a number of members, the key ones are Debra Abbott PCSO (Police Community Support Officer), Teresa Howells-Brown PCSO and Nathan Drew PCSO. They work by developing a close relationship

between community members and the local police. You can contact them via email, Martley&Tenbury@contact.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk
Neighbourhood Watch schemes can:
cut crime and the opportunities for crime
help and reassure those who live in the area
encourage neighbourliness and closer communities

As the warmer weather approaches, please be reminded that public access to the Shavers End Quarry is strictly prohibited. It is a dangerous place and definitely not for public swimming. If you would like more information about Teme Valley Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, please contact Ning Kedwards either via nwatchabberley@gmail.com or call 07732702380

2. a. XV 1st Abberley and Witley Guides Brownies and Rainbows Annual Report

Unfortunately, since before the pandemic there have been no Guides. But at Easter we now have 4 Girls and have enjoyed a party with our Rainbows, Brownies and were the 3rd Areley Kings Brownies joined us for the King's Coronation. We made Thrones out of newspaper, Crowns and Blindfold pin the Crown on the King. We then enjoyed Food and a Celebration Cake and Sang Songs around a Campfire.

The Brownies have been busy doing various badges and Challenges in the new programme. One being Make Change Skill Builder. This included up-cycling rubbish.
Last May we had a Fund-Raising Day at the Cob House with a dog show and different activities which is always fun. In June we Celebrated the Queens Platinum Jubilee with a party.
In the summer we had a fantastic trip to All Things Wild which was a very, very hot day.
In July we had an American evening with games and food.
In October we Joined with 3rd Areley Kings Brownies for a sleepover at Grimley Village Hall.
At Christmas our Christmas treat was going Ten Pin Bowling at St Johns in Worcester.
Throughout the year various crafts have been done. This included making Christmas cards, doing quizzes for St David and St Patrick day, made sugar flowers and decorated fairy cakes with them and now decorating glass with crowns for the Kings Coronation.

The Rainbows meet once a month.

In the summer they have had Outside sports play and walking around the grounds and listening to sounds.

The programme this term has been winter where they have made snowflakes and melted snowmen out of biscuits. In March they made Mothering Sunday cards and celebrated St Patrick's Day with Rainbows and pot of Gold.

They have also had some amazing parties with the Brownies and Guides.

We have lots of fun things planned for this next year. We are moving our meetings to the village hall in Great Witley from June 10th 2023.

It is with great sadness that we have lost Two members this year. Freda Lamb a member for many years in Girl Guiding and one of our Rainbow Leaders Maggie Lisseman. Both have been very supportive over the years with our units. They will be greatly missed. May they Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

We have places in all our units if anybody is interested please don't hesitate get in touch.

2. a. XVI Report of the Coronation Event at Abberley Vilage Green on Sunday 8th May 2023.

The theme of the reign of King Charles III involves service, volunteering and inclusion of the community and I hope that you will agree that the events over the weekend of the 6th to 8th May, 2023 demonstrated this.

Andrew & Sheila Mawby have promoted through the Parish News details of the Coronation events have reported on and photographed the Crowns, the screening at the Village Hall and attended the Concert on the Green for which many thanks.

The Village Hall Committee have provided us with the opportunity to hold the screening of the Coronation and share as a community the events which unfolded on the 6th May in Westminster Abbey. Thank you.

The Garden Club hosted the screening of the Coronation provided tea, coffee and a veritable “Bake off” of cakes – strangely they don’t want to see another for a while – maybe a carrot cake? Many thanks to both front of house and those washing and drying in the kitchen.

Carole Hirst, our Parish Clerk through her connections in the world of music sourced the appropriately named Sovereign Brass to play at the Concert on the Village Green on Sunday. They played a selection of music involving some audience participation and some march music to the delight of the children.

Many thanks to the Village Green Trust for allowing us to use the Green for the event which was suitably decorated with bunting by the WI.

The Hewitts masterminded the Crown Trail and organised a trail map and judges to visit the many Crowns around the Village. We shall look forward to the results in the upcoming Parish Magazine.

Finally many thanks to the Parish Council for co-ordinating and supporting the events. We hope this will encourage more in the Community of Abberley to get involved in Parish events.

Look out for the Teme Valley News – we may feature we did after the Jubilee.

3. Annual Report of Abberley Parish Council – Cllr Catherine Knight (Chairman)

This has been a year that has seen tumultuous change both at home and abroad; the world we know has become more complicated and requires strenuous thought on how to make what is wrong better and how to keep what is good intact. A mantra for the Parish Council, I think. Difficult to fulfil such directives but with time, cooperation, good sense and especially resolve not an impossible task.

Our year really started on a joyful note with the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee where the whole village had a chance to come together to celebrate the most successful monarch in modern history. After much planning and preparation, the day dawned wet and overcast but in true British style we soldiered on with a Picnic, Dog Show, Art Exhibition, a Fancy Dress Competition, Queencrow Trail and a Band Concert; and great fun was had by all.

As a Parish Council we agreed to the renovation of the telephone box and the purchase of an additional dogpoo bin.

We joined the 20’s Plenty for Worcestershire Campaign as well as continuing to promote our Climate Change and Dark Skies Policies. We also revised and adopted our grant application process, agreed to support the newly reformed Abberley Hills Preservation Society in their bid to have Abberley as an AONB and had a very successful defibrillator training day with 25 out of 30 places being taken up.

The recent changes to the ward boundaries mean that we now welcome two District Councillors, Paul and Pam Cumming, both successful in the recent local elections, to our meetings. We also welcome a newly co-opted Councillor, Sarah Field, to the Parish Council.

The expected but very sad news of the death of Queen Elizabeth threw the whole country into a period of genuine mourning for someone who had also been a stellar example of public service.

The normal business of the Parish Council continued apace, and we have had a degree of success with various planning application outcomes and are awaiting the public consultation regarding illegal and or dangerous parking (Abberley Parochial Primary School has been very supportive in this matter) and advisement from the Forestry Commission over felling on The Common.

The benefit to us as a result of development within the village has meant that we have acquired '106 Money' which has enabled us to consider buying land on behalf of the community, about which we are very excited.

The year ends on the note on which it began with the Coronation celebrations again providing the chance to bring the community together. This took the form of a Coronation Trail (crowns galore) through the village, a pop-up café and live screening in the Village Hall on Coronation Day culminating in a picnic and the Sovereign Band performing a medley of popular and rousing music on Sunday afternoon.

The list of people to thank for all their contributions over the past year is long – where to begin; the Village Hall Committee for continuing to provide such a wonderful venue not just for Abberley but those further afield; the Village Green Trust who maintain such a gorgeous environment for all to enjoy; the Garden Club which encourages our interest in all things horticultural and prettifies our village with all the beautiful flower boxes that you see dotted around and for their willingness to become involved in the activities of the village, they did a wonderful job of providing the tea, cake and screening on Coronation Day; Alison and Mike Hewitt for organising the Coronation Trial; and the WI for the bunting around the Village Green and Village Hall which created such a festive air; the Parochial Church Council and Claire Furness and Care Farm students for creating a meeting place at St Mary's for all the village to enjoy; Young Farmers for encouraging the youth of the village; Nora Parsons for their hospitality; and to the Abberley Hills Preservation Society for endeavouring to safeguard our beautiful environment.

District Councillor Paul Cumming, as usual, has provided much welcome advice and support over the preceding year as has County Councillor David Chambers and between them they make sure that we are well aware of matters beyond the confines of our Parish.

As Chair I must thank all Parish Councillors wholeheartedly for their willingness to take on various roles and tasks without thought of praise and without whom none of the above could have happened; and a particular big thanks to Carole Hirst, our clerk who, as usual, provides the scaffolding which holds everything up.

I also want to make mention this year of Abberley parishioners who have shown great perseverance and commitment to causes that they feel passionately about and to all those who have supported various endeavours whether it be dealing with a contentious issue or being involved in the many and varied community activities. This willingness to participate is of great encouragement to us all.

This report cannot finish without mentioning our loss of Councillor Richard Goodman. He was a fine man and a fine Councillor and the best example to us all.