

Wretton Parish Council
Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly
Held on Monday 20th May 2024 at 7.30pm
At All Saints Church

1. Present

Cllr G Atling – Chair, Cllr K Smith – Vice Chair, Cllr D Lister, Cllr M Cann and Cllr P Garnett.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr H Hogan.

3. To receive declarations of interest on any item to be discussed

There were no declarations of interest.

4. To approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly held in May 2023

No minutes of the last meeting have been found.

5. Matters arising

None

6. To receive a report from the Chair of the Parish Council

As we reflect on the past year, allow me to take a moment to celebrate our collective achievements.

In August, we entered the digital age, launching our informative newsletter which was very well received. Our website received a makeover sprucing up our online presence and we ventured into the realm of social media.

Our playground received a much-needed tidy up as we took on the task of cleaning and revitalising the play equipment and cutting back several overgrown trees. We also replaced two swing seats that had seen better days and plans are underway to replace the two remaining infant swing seats later this year. We will also be addressing the worn areas underneath the swings.

However, it's evident that our playground requires more than just a cosmetic touch-up. We recognise the need for substantial improvements to ensure its continued enjoyment and safety for all. Fortunately, grants are available to us for this purpose. Yet, despite our eagerness to pursue these opportunities, we face a significant hurdle: the finalisation of the lease agreement for the area in which the playground stands.

Until this crucial administrative step is completed, we are regrettably unable to progress further with our plans to secure funding for much-needed enhancements. However, we are actively working towards resolving this issue so that we can begin improvements to our playground.

In September, we welcomed Gail Robinson to the Parish Council as our new clerk. We are grateful for her hard work, guidance and administrative support.

On a cold winter's day back in November, we organised a community-driven litter pick in and around the village. The event was a resounding success, drawing community members together to address the issue of litter in our local environment.

We spread a little festive cheer in December with our giant Christmas Card on the green, lovingly crafted by the ladies of the Parish Council.

In January, we planted some spring bulbs on the village green which were kindly donated by a resident. Planting was perhaps a little later than Monty Don would have prescribed but the bulbs soon emerged giving a wonderful display in Spring. Alongside these newcomers, stood the glorious daffodils planted many years ago by an equally enthusiastic group of volunteers from the village. However, it seems we weren't the only ones admiring the display. Our local deer population took a particular shine to the tulips, much to the dismay of some and the amusement of others. Hopefully some of you were able to see them before they were devoured!

February saw a decisive victory for our community. We successfully halted the installation of a replacement bus stop on Low Road in an unsuitable location. This achievement underscores our commitment to preserving the character and integrity of our village. At a meeting during March with Highways, we addressed pressing issues such as flooding, potholes, and speed limits along Low Road. While it's regrettable that many matters are beyond our direct influence as a Parish Council, we remain steadfast and await the outcomes from Highways.

In April, our Parish Council received a generous grant from the Borough Council, marking a significant step forward in our efforts to enhance our community. We are very grateful to Sue Lintern for her role in securing this funding. Following this welcome boost, a proactive resident of Wretton, took the initiative to organise a meeting on the village green. The purpose was to gather ideas and perspectives on how best to allocate the grant money for the collective benefit of our community.

While the turnout for the meeting unfortunately fell short of expectations, we are immensely grateful to those who expressed their support and contributed valuable input via email. Your engagement and enthusiasm are truly appreciated.

It has been decided to utilise the grant funds to build a gabion seating bench. Additionally, we will be installing bird boxes in the hollow and hedgehog housing in sheltered areas around the green, fostering biodiversity and creating habitats for our local wildlife.

As we reflect on a year filled with fruitful endeavours, one standout achievement shines brightly - the successful bid for the Household Support Fund grant. Spearheaded by Councillors Holly Hogan, Karen Smith, Debbie Lister, and myself.

The impact of the Household Support Fund was profound, with supermarket vouchers providing much-needed assistance to many in our village. We extend our gratitude to Sue Lintern, Elaine Taylor, and Rev Dr Ian Mack for their invaluable support and guidance throughout the process and we hope to bring further support in the near future.

As I step into the role of Chair of Wretton Parish Council, I am looking forward to the next twelve months. I would like to thank Councillor Martyn Cann, who has admirably led our council over the past twelve months. Likewise, I extend my appreciation to Councillor Mick Peake as Vice Chair during the preceding year.

I will be joined on the 'top table' by Councillor Karen Smith as our new Vice Chair. Together, with the support of our fellow councillors, I am confident that we will make a real difference for Wretton.

Here's to a productive and fulfilling twelve months ahead!

Cllr Gabby Atling

7. To receive reports from clubs and organisations in the village

Rev Dr Ian Mack, Priest of All Saints Church reported:

He is aware that the Church is the only community building in the village therefore feels that everyone should feel very welcomed into the space and the monthly coffee mornings have proven to be well received. As well as the usual Sunday services, parishioners were invited to bring their pets to a special service for a blessing to commemorate the feast of St. Francis of Assisi which was very popular. The Christmas Carol service was the largest held for a while and Father Christmas distributed presents to the children who were able to have their photo taken with him.

The Church was pleased to be able to work with the Parish Council in coordinating the Household Support Fund and will be happy to support the Parish Council again in the future.

This is the last year Rev Dr Ian Mack will be the interim priest at All Saints' Church. The new priest will have 8 parishes and will join with another 4 parishes.

8. To receive comments from those in attendance

Cllr Atling thanked Rev Dr Ian Mack for joining the assembly and for his presentation.

9. To note date of next meeting – Monday 12th May 2025 at 7.30pm

Cllrs noted the date of the next meeting.