

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th April 2023

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7.00pm on 20th April 2023

APM123 Appointment of a Clerk to the meeting

G Soudah was appointed as Clerk to the meeting

APM223 Apologies received

S Clarke (2nd Swanwick Scouts), T Dening and A Veale (ST. Andrews), Cllrs Barnett, Chidlow, King & Clerk C Miles

APM323 Minutes

Minutes of Meeting held on 19th May 2022 were deemed to have been received. These are available in the Archived folders on the Parish Council website.

APM423 Chair's Report

The Chair presented his report. Copy is appended (page 1).

APM523 Matters for the attention of the Police

There was no Police representation at the meeting and no issues raised.

APM623 Reports from the community

Reports on activities, achievements and aspirations from the Chair and community groups were read out at the meeting and a copy of each of the reports is appended:

Amber Valley Voices (page 3)
Scouts 2nd Swanwick (page 3)
Swanwick Men's Shed (page 4)
Swanwick Primary School (page 5)
Swanwick Residents Association (page 5)
Swanwick Wildlife Group (page 6)
St Andrew's Parish Church (page 7)

APM723 Open forum - question and answer session

No further questions.

Closure

Meeting closed at 8.00pm

Chair's Report – 20 April 2023

Chair's Report is to the Parish Meeting of the Swanwick Electorate held 20 April 2023.

Just to remind ourselves, the Annual Parish Meeting is not a council meeting and tends to be more informal but we do have an Agenda to guide us through the meeting. It is a meeting of the parish electors and organisations and usually takes place between 1 March and 1 June but cannot be held before 6.00pm. Notice of the Statutory Annual Parish Meeting was given by posting details on the Parish Council website, Facebook and the notice boards in the village.

Electors can contribute to the agenda. As we have not received any specific requests for items to be added to the agenda before publication, I am quite happy to receive any suggestions at this late stage.

It is a further opportunity for the electorate to bring issues to the attention of the Parish Council at the beginning of the administrative year so that we can consider these matters in preparing our future plans for the next administrative cycle.

In practice the meeting often -

1. Celebrates local activities and
2. Debates current issues in the community.

The Chair's report is intended to review the past year, celebrate the achievements of the Parish Council and thank those who actively contributed whether by giving their time or in other ways. The Clerk to the Parish Council returned from long term sick leave and has taken some of the pressure off me. I have acted as unpaid clerk during the Clerk's absence and was glad to pass back duties of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer; however I am still dealing with some issues personally.

I have once again learned the importance of keeping a running, contemporaneous record in preference to relying on memory at the year end. So if I miss anything or miss thanking anyone, I am sure you will bring it to my attention.

Well Dressing

One of the first events in the Parish Calendar is the Well Dressing week which usually starts in second week in May. Unfortunately due to the pandemic and the restrictions we have missed two years of well dressing and fayre. This year being an election year combined with the Coronation of King Charles III has meant that it is too late to organise this year's Well Dressing Week. It takes a lot of work to organise and co-ordinating all the activities necessary to make the event another success. This year's Well Dressing will be muted. There will a Churches Together Well Dressing. There will not be the traditional fayre.

Village Hall Working Group

The group has not held any meetings during the last year. Acrimonious disagreement expressed by some members about the project resulted in virtually all the professional advisers withdrawing their help. The Parish Council has the offer of architectural services on a pro-bono basis when the project is revived. It is important to note that the Parish has earmarked reserves for the development and future effort will need to concentrate on raising the remaining capital for the project.

Swanwick Recreation Grounds Trust

Swanwick Parish Council has taken over as the sole Trustee of the Charity. The Parish Council meetings have an agenda item at each of the meetings to deal with and decide matters as sole trustee. There were some issues about the transfer of land from Amber Valley Borough Council to Swanwick. Once these have been resolved, the Trustees will apply for grant funding from various bodies such as the Football Foundation, to develop the facilities. New goal posts have already been erected to replace the rusty ones. CCTV cameras have also been installed on the Changing Rooms to reduce the vandalism. Ball stop netting also needs to be replaced and the changing rooms need refurbishment.

During the year, a community garden was created in an area of ground that has recently been cleared. This is funded by a grant. There are a number of raised beds planted with native flora and a wild flower area that is gradually getting established. Thanks to all the community volunteers who assisted.

Queen Elizabeth II (Crays Hill) Park Community Group Meeting

During the last year there have not been any meetings of the Queen Elizabeth II (Crays Hill) Park Community Group.

Neighbouring Civic Services

Needless to say, I have not attended any neighbouring Civic Services held since the height of the pandemic but wherever possible some were covered by representation from the Parish.

Civic Service

The joint Swanwick Parish Civic and Carol Service was held on 7 December 2022 followed by light refreshments at the Steam Packet. Thanks to all who organised the event.

Anti-Social Behaviour on Play Area Chapel Street

Anti-social behaviour continues to be reported to the Parish Council. The advice continues to please report these to the Police on the non-emergency number 101. This will bring hot-spots to the attention of the Police who are responsible for enforcing the newly revised Public Spaces Prohibition Orders (PSPOs) that now cover the whole of the Recreation Grounds.

The fencing around the area has been reinstated with additional fencing being planned. The play area soft surfaces have also been refurbished and a low lever barrier has been removed from near the swings following safety inspections and needless vandalism.

Swanwick Allotments

The Parish Council has started legal proceedings against a resident of an adjoining property for misappropriation of council land. This is an ongoing claim registered at Derby County Court for disposal. The full attended hearing is scheduled for 4 May 2023.

Public Participation

I have been encouraged by the level of public participation when big issues are being discussed. We must still strive to encourage a wider level of participation.

Finally, as most of you may be aware there are elections this year for councillors to sit on Swanwick Parish Council. As only 7 people have been nominated to stand for the 11 seats the election is uncontested. Long serving Councillors King, Barnett and Payne and I have decided not to stand.

Councillors King and Barnett have not sought nomination on grounds of ill health. I must thank them and in particular Councillor Payne for the long service she has given over the last 20 years plus.

George Soudah, Cllr
Swanwick Parish Council

Amber Valley Voices Report

Amber Valley Voices is a community choir based in Swanwick. We currently hold our practices at St Andrew's Church in the village. From our modest beginnings nine years ago, we now have 100 active members on roll. This year we have become a registered charity and the choir is managed by a board of trustees.

We do not hold auditions and membership is only restricted by a practical regard to the numbers we can accommodate in our venues. We sing a wide variety of music in 4 part harmony and we are fortunate to be led by a talented, enthusiastic and committed choir leader and a very skilled accompanist.

Amber Valley Voices is also a performance choir. We hold two formal concerts each year, usually around Christmas and early summer. These may also include guest orchestras or soloists which enrich the musical experience for our audiences. Our concerts have recently taken place at David Nieper Academy but we also sing at other local venues such as Alfreton Golf Club, Riddings Flower Festival and Slimming World. Smaller groups may sing at care homes, weddings and funerals, for example.

We have a strong ethos of friendship and fun and so we also come together for social events such as pie and pea suppers, cream teas, guided walks, quizzes and BBQs. Each year we have two nominated charities for which we fund raise separately through raffles and collections and this year we have been able to support a food bank in Riddings and the Derbyshire Children's Home in Skegness.

Our next concert, 'Bread and Roses' will be held on May 13th at David Nieper Academy and will be themed around music which uplifts and inspires. Come along!

Presented by A Trenear

Scouts 2nd Swanwick Report

This report covers the period 1/1/22 to 31/12/22.

We started the year in (hopefully) the final lockdown of the COVID crisis, where we were unable to hold face to face meetings for a short while. Since then the leaders have been busy restoring a full programme of activities for our young people and catching up on areas of the award scheme that we have been unable to carry out properly over the last few years.

Our overall numbers have increased slightly throughout the year. Beaver age numbers have been at 24 throughout the year, Cubs have increased from 21 to 28 and Scouts have dipped slightly from 33 to 32. This represents the age ranges 6 to 14. Beauchief Explorer Scout Unit (ages 14-18) and Quantum Scout Network (ages 18-25) also meet at the Centenary centre in Swanwick but are managed by Ripley and Heanor Scout District, rather than 2nd Swanwick. Adult volunteer numbers increased throughout the year from 21 to 34 which is a huge success story and partly reflects the time investment in the Young Leaders scheme and the Scout Network are having on our Group, as well as other adults coming forward to volunteer with us. A recent survey has shown that volunteering improves wellbeing, gives people career-boosting skills and helps people make connections with friends, family and their local community. I firmly believe that 2nd Swanwick has the capacity to grow further and with more volunteers we can take this to another level.

Beavers throughout the year activities have included a Police drone unit visit, space badge, cooking on fires, archaeologist badge, money skills, photography, navigator badge, climbing at altar rock and a sleepover at Drum Hill. 10 young people have achieved their top award (Chief Scouts Bronze Award) throughout the year. My thanks to Kate, Lucy, Lynda, Fergus, Ellie B, Catherine and Ellie H for their volunteering throughout the year.

Cubs have had a slight change of leadership; Katherine took on the role as Section Leader at the start of the year, supported by the existing leadership team. As always when there is a change at the top, things can take a slightly different direction and my personal view is that this can and should be refreshing for a Section- as a chance to take stock, see the programme with fresh eyes and 'shake the tree'. Activities have included Burns night, Chinese New Year, communicators badge, DIY badge, an activity day at Drum hill, athletics badge, road safety, puppet making and a sleepover at the Scout

hall. 6 Top awards (Chief Scouts Silver Award) were awarded throughout the year. My thanks to Katherine, Sandra, Pete, Chris, Ellie, Olly, Harry and John for their leadership throughout the year. Scouts programme has included visits to the fire station, National Space Centre, Roller world, laser tag and a Lea Green activity day. Camps have been held for Chilly Challenge, patrol camp and Gold Chief Scouts Award expedition. Badge work has included archaeology, emergency aid, astronomy, aerospace, survival skills, team leader and team building challenge, international challenge, and athletics. 2 top awards (Chief Scouts Gold Award) were awarded throughout the year- a low number due to the impact of COVID on running the required programme elements to achieve these awards. My thanks to Kevin, Julian, Abi, David, Mick, Martyn, James, Joe, Jack, Josh and Sam for their help through the year.

In order to support the Group, the Group Exec is active in maintaining the Centenary centre and fund raising for the Group. Early in the year new shelving was installed in the store room and this has enabled us to tidy that area and rationalise our camping gear. Grants have been gratefully received from Swanwick Parish Council (used for replacement high viz jerkins, Beavers sleepover, a new flag for Cub section and transport for Scout section trip to National Space Centre), and Derbyshire County Council for assistance in upgrading our PA system. We have been able to resume our main fund raising event- Santa's Sleigh- in its full form this year and based on feedback this continues to spread good cheer throughout the community at a special time of year. Many thanks to Ady, Sue, Deb, Greg, Jo and Nigel in addition to the other members of the Exec previously mentioned. A special thanks this year to Rebecca, our treasurer throughout the last few years. Rebecca has recently had some major health issues which have forced her to take a back seat in that role. However, she is continuing to support the Group and assisting Greg in transitioning the treasurer's role on the Group. We wish her all the best for a quick recovery.

The Group continues to play a role in the community, helping to plan and coordinate the Remembrance Day parade in Swanwick, in conjunction with Girl Guiding, the churches in Swanwick and the Parish Council. We are slightly disappointed that the Swanwick well dressing is no longer going ahead as it provides a further opportunity for the local community to get together. We will continue to look for areas where we can support our community as part of Scouting's ethos is to empower young people to make a positive contribution to society.

As we look to the future, we note the growth of the community, particularly with the new development of Lily Street Farm. We anticipate a growth in demand for Scouting in Swanwick, which we have the facilities to provide but not yet the adult leadership with the confidence to run new sections. The Scout Association is currently undergoing a series of changes which may make this easier- particularly the demands on volunteer's time beyond the meeting nights, so we are optimistic this can be addressed. In the short term, the Scout Association has in the last 18 months introduced a new section for 4-6 year olds, Squirrel Scouts. We currently have 12 potential members on our waiting list and hope to find the adult volunteers to form our own Squirrel Drey at 2nd Swanwick.

To sum it all up, we've got a great Group here at 2nd Swanwick. Our future looks bright, with more adult volunteers we can provide Scouting for the community as it grows. 2024 is the 75th anniversary of the Group's founding and we are looking to celebrate this by growing the Group and laying down the foundations for its future success.

Prepared by Steve Clarke

Swanwick Men's Shed Report

The shed has had another successful year attracting more members from Swanwick and the surrounding areas. The membership is now quite diverse and representative of the community. The shed managed to continue throughout most of Covid by opening small work units around the farm.

We used the Parish Council Grant towards the purchase of new power tools upgrading to professional quality. From our own income we have purchased sets of power drills and impact drivers to equip the work areas around the farm.

Space in the shed remains an issue but following a DCC grant we purchased a new planer/thicknesser and pedestal drill. We were able to re-structure the shed layout around this new machine, building new workbenches.

Our catering facilities were moved out into a refurbished trailer unit. The tea garden has been drained with land drain and surfaced with a layer of hardcore.

An old lorry container was donated which has eased our storage problems.

We obtained a grant from a local mental health group to replace our aging chop saw. All the new machinery has improved noise and dust pollution.

We have new members of all ages and needs. Two particular young successes came to us via Reed UK to undertake a planned program of training in work and social skills. This has been a tremendous success as they are now in full time employment. We hope to obtain a second lorry office container unit that will be connected to the internet and used for computer training, CAD drawing and softer cleaner skills like upholstery, pyrography.

Presented by Kevin Parkin

Swanwick Primary School

Thank you for inviting the school to the Annual Parish Meeting – it is both a pleasure and a privilege to be able to share information about the school. The school currently has 399 pupils on role and serves Swanwick and Pentrich; we also have children attending from outside the catchment area as well.

Jo Jilavu was appointed at the deputy head teacher of Swanwick Primary School last year and began at the school in July 2022. However, due to Mandy Fogg being off, Jo became the acting head of the school and has continued in this role since then. She is supported by the Local Authority, a committed staff team and also by the governors of the school. The school was inspected by Ofsted in December 2022 and despite the overall effectiveness being 'Requires Improvement', the school scored good in four out of five areas. The staff team are working hard to implement the necessary changes in order to for the school to be deemed good in subsequent inspections.

The school has opened up again this year following the restrictions brought about by Covid-19 and it has been great to welcome visitors in to school as well as visiting places in the local community and further afield. A highlight of the school calendar was our Christmas Carol Concert at St Andrew's Church. Nearly 400 children, approximately 40 staff and an Ofsted inspector walked through the cold streets to St Andrew's church where they were warmly welcomed by church volunteers and a multitude of parents – this was a fantastic community event.

The Swanwick Friends are a group of parent volunteers who meet monthly in order to plan a range of fundraising events. So far this year, they have raised money by supporting the school in a variety of events including: Halloween Stalls, Christmas Family Disco, Christmas Stalls, serving refreshments for Christmas concerts, Mother's Day stalls and most recently at our Swanwick Stars music evenings. Money raised so far this year is just over £3500 including a profit so far of about £2000. All of the money raised goes back directly to the children. Further planned events include serving refreshments at our Celebration afternoon for King Charles' III coronation, Father's Day stalls and our Summer BBQ. We are really grateful for all of their hard work and dedication.

We would like to that the Parish Council for the mugs that have been provided for the whole school in commemoration of the coronation of King Charles III.

Swanwick Primary School is set in vast grounds however some of this space is unusable during much of the year due to water logging so we are in desperate need of changing some of the grassed areas to hard standing multi-purpose all weather games areas (MUGA) and would appreciate any support that the Parish Council could offer with the funding of this.

We are also limited to space inside for break out rooms and intervention spaces so we have to work creatively in order to utilise all the space available to us. The school is also in need of modernisation and we have begun this journey by investing money in IT. The 14 new screens have gone down a treat with staff and children and have really enhanced the quality of teaching and learning.

Presented by Jo Jilavu (Acting Head teacher)

Swanwick Residents Association Report

The Resident's Association continues in its steadfast and challenging pursuit of upholding the four main aims and objectives of its Constitution. Since preparing my first written report to this meeting back in 2016 there have been two important issues that have always remained dominant and you will not be surprised to hear that seven years later this has still not changed.

The two main issues are the ongoing formulation of a Local Plan for Amber Valley and another related issue, that of the Green Belt. These remain very much at the top of the agenda still.

Amber Valley Borough Council continue to progress the formulation of their third attempt at a Local Plan, albeit very slowly and with a further delayed timetable.

Following the consultation concerning the 'Alternative Spatial Strategy Options for Housing and Economic Growth' ending in September, 2021 which I reported on last year, to which I submitted a response, there were 721 representations which were received. The Borough Council then considered all the representations alongside completing a range of other work relating to the preparation of the new Local Plan to enable policies and proposals to be included in the 'Pre-submission Local Plan', which was eventually agreed by the Full Council in June 2022 and published in June/July 2022. I attended the Full Council meeting on 9th June which debated and agreed by majority the 'Preferred Spatial Strategy for Housing and Economic Growth and Draft Policies'. Following which, a further three month consultation period was required, ending on 2nd September, 2022 and which I also submitted a further representation.

It is important to note at this point, following the previous consultation and representations made that NO Green Belt sites have been identified for inclusion in the 'Preferred Spatial Strategy, which had been the case previously some years earlier. So another battle won, but of course the war is never over.

On the 28th July, 2022 I attended a consultation event at Somercotes Parish Hall, with the purpose of further enforcing protection for the Green Belt in Swanwick and the wider Borough from potential future development and was able to speak at length to the Assistant Director (Planning) at the Borough Council, who after 12 years have developed a very good relationship and he knows that in all that length of time I have never missed any meeting or failed to respond/attend to a consultation/event concerning the Local Plan, always putting protection for the Green Belt at the centre of attention.

The timetable for the Local Plan continues to be further delayed. Publication of the 'Pre-submission Plan' is now December 2022/January 2023, Examination in Public is now May 2023 with adoption of the Local Plan being in December 2023.

I did advise last year of a Central Government 'White Paper' on Planning for the Future, but with the total chaos that has engulfed the Government over the past 12 months, I confess I do not know the current state with this as probably they do not either. With the constant merry-go-round of Ministerial changes that have taken place.

Michael Gove was the Secretary of State for Housing and Communities (now re-branded Levelling-Up), but was replaced shortly afterwards and there have been three further changes since with him returning recently and being re-appointed, which just highlights the Government chaos over the past year. A positive point I can confirm however, is that the mandatory housing targets that were being imposed on Local Authorities is to be abolished. That is of course if there are no further U-turns on U-turns.

In conclusion, returning to the Local Plan, Amber Valley, Derby City and South Derbyshire are all members of the Derby Area Housing Market and as such have a formal duty to co-operate to consider all requests from other authorities to contribute towards meeting their unmet need, as well as neighbouring authorities also, such as Erewash and Ashfield, which lie outside the Derby Area Housing Market. In fact when Derby City Council completed their own Local Plan a few years ago Amber Valley and South Derbyshire were both faced with an unmet need which still exists, Amber Valley being 2,375 dwellings.

We must be more than vigilant in the future and continue to monitor constant changes in laws and established guidance in a number of ways that Central Government are making to facilitate their ever changing policy agenda.

Presented by John G Briggs
Vice-Chairman

Swanwick Wildlife Group

Swanwick Wildlife Group was founded in September 2021 and has been steadily growing and gaining momentum since. Last year, we were very grateful to Swanwick Parish Council for setting aside an area of land at the recreational ground to be seeded as a wildlife garden, and to the Parish and Borough for funding such a project. Over this reporting year, the first year of the garden saw a meadow of corn marigolds, corn flowers, poppies, corn cockle and fiddleneck. Towards the end of the summer, planters were built, involving a team of volunteers, and special heroic help from the Man Shed. A selection of native species were planted including scabious, wild carrot, toadflax and meadow's crane's-bill, and Cathy planted daffodils. As we were planting the flowers, hoverflies and bees came to feast on them! In July, we held a bat walk at Butterley Reservoir. This provided

interesting information on the feeding habits of bats over the reservoir, but more importantly, engaged the public, who seemed to very much appreciate the opportunity to see and hear the elusive creatures. We were thrilled that after speaking with St Andrew's Church, they left an area of the church yard to grow as a meadow. Of great delight, it was found that the sward already possessed a diverse seed bank, including harebells. In November 2022, we became a registered CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation). We undertook this painstaking process so to allow us to access a greater diversity of funding streams (We have big dreams). In January we held a wildlife photography and art exhibition at The Old School House. This was very well attended and we were overjoyed with the wonderful pieces which were shown, including paintings and photos from local residents, and an excellent display by Swanwick Primary School. A lot of socialising took place over cake. At the end of February and early March, the meadow in the wildlife garden was cut and re-seeded with both annuals and perennials, aiming for species of traditional hay meadows. Bird boxes were also installed on the trees and the encroaching Himalayan bramble cut back. In April, funding from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, allowed the creation of two "scrapes" on private land on Derby Road, under the Natural Flood Management Scheme. The scrapes instantly filled with water to create two large wildlife ponds. As well as creating ecological value, these ponds will help to store water and reduce the impacts of flash flooding within the fields and gardens at the bottom of Derby Road. Rowan trees were also planted near the ponds which were kindly gifted by a local resident. This upcoming year, SWG plan to hold further walks, a Bio Blitz, talks, a wildlife gardening reward scheme and another exhibition. Again, we wish to express our gratitude to the Parish and Borough Council for their support, and we wish to continue to work with them to protect and enhance the ecology of Swanwick.

Presented by Amy Trewick

St Andrew's Parish Church Report

We entered 2022 looking forward to the installation of the Rev. John Wigram, vicar of Ripley, as priest-in-charge of our Benefice of Swanwick and Pentrich. This duly took place at the end of January, a slightly subdued occasion as we were still having to bear in mind the constraints of Covid. However it was also a joyous and celebratory one as we welcomed John and Rachel into our midst. The following day we closed the church for a month! We had been left a lovely legacy and wanted to use the money constructively, so we decided to have the whole lighting system replaced. We have been delighted with the set-up we now have which gives a warm welcoming light and is also much more economical to run. The church opened in time for our Easter celebrations which is the most important time in the Christian year. Our benefactor left enough money so that we could have the organ repaired and it is now in an excellent condition to cover the upcoming years. The church is now in good shape for the future. During 2022 we supported the collection of clothing and bedding for the Ukrainian refugees, being deeply affected by the situation there. Our monthly coffee and cakes continued to be very well supported by church and non church goers alike from all over the area. This is a wonderful time for people to get together in relaxed and comfortable surroundings. We have many coming along who go nowhere else for the rest of the month. This time is precious to them. It also results in the raising of funds for the church and various charities including Smile Train (supporting children with cleft palates), the Ukrainian refugees and people suffering from the many natural disasters around the world. The funds are essential for the church's future as our income has dropped enormously, but also essential for the charities who are needed now more than ever before. During the year we have invested heavily in safeguarding training. We have happily supported a few concerts and our bell ringing team now rings at St Andrews most weeks. We held the village Remembrance service outdoors again. This had got a positive response the previous year. We learnt from our mistakes and this year we were able to parade. The scout and guide movements in the village did all of the organising and it was an excellent job. Their sound system is brilliant! The Rev. Pam Macnaughton led the service and St Andrews' was ready to open up should the weather have been poor. We also hosted the village civic carol service. During the year we welcomed various retired clergy from the team at All Saints in Ripley and who now regularly conduct services at Swanwick, and that includes Tom Johnson who used to be our vicar here. In addition, our own Robert Quarton is in the team and we have welcomed Ralph Lawrence who has retired to this area. Sadly, over the year we lost some stalwart members, having either died, become too ill or frail to attend or have moved into care. Like many churches, charities and groups nationwide we have seen our active membership decline, manpower is short. But we look forward positively to 2023 with all that it will hold for us. Prepared by Anne Veale and Tim Dening Church Wardens