

# Sibford Ferris

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023** from **6:45pm to 7pm** in **Sibford School.**

**Present: Cllrs Roussel, Cllr Meyler, Cllr Gordon, Cllr Bennett, 4 members of the public, Clerk.**

### **Present:**

1. Welcome and apologies – Apologies were received from Cllr John Wass.
2. Report from Parish Council Chairman - What have we done for you lately? Well, contrary to popular belief, quite a lot!

As Councillors, we are locally elected volunteers who care about our villages and work to identify the issues that are important to our community as a whole. We employ Kirsty Buttle as Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer and her wonderful work is essential and much appreciated.

We play a key role in representing the community views in planning and policy. We have been working hard to have our voice heard and to ensure that Cherwell district council and local developers are fully aware of the community concerns regarding infrastructure challenges and the social and environmental impact that over development may cause in our small community.

One of our roles is to comment on planning applications and we have also contributed to Cherwell's Local Plan Review, which will set Planning policy to 2040. Although at present we are still waiting for this document to be released for consultation, the first draft suggested that the Sibfords should be reclassified to small villages, which in turn will offer greater protection from over development. However, at present this document seems to be on hold and we await further updates.

In addition to this we have managed to get Tree Protection Orders on the two beautiful 500 year old Oaks on Woodway road and the recent rejection of the Woodway Road site at Appeal was a welcome result.

As Deanfield Homes commence the construction of 25 new houses in Sibford Ferris this year, we will continue to voice our concerns that local people are given priority when it comes to Social Housing or the purchase of affordable homes on the site in order for them to be able to continue to live in the village.

I would like to say a special thank you to our Clerk, Kirsty, for securing funding for our recent Village Coronation Street Party for both the Gower and Ferris Parish Councils and to the Town Estates Charity and the National Lottery for contributing towards the costs. A very special thank you to the committee who made it happen (3 of whom are also Ferris

Councillors). Professor John Wass, Andrew Meyler (treasurer), Tessa Sparks, Diana Thompson, Diana Hughes, Ginny Bennett, Keith Hicks, Tim Huckvale, James Garstin, Clemmie Broom and Anne Spackman. What a wonderful and memorable event it was with a fantastic turn out of villagers on a gloriously sunny day!

On another note, you may have seen the new Notice board in Sibford Ferris and the Cotswold Close play area now has new fencing and we are working towards updating the play equipment step by step.

Other areas that our Council has played a role in are, setting up the Defibrillator training sessions, working to inspire the local Green environmental group which is now up and running, organising litter picks and reporting fly tipping. We maintain the village assets and contribute towards the maintenance of the Sibford Gower Burial Ground. We also maintain the benches, dog bins, grit bins etc. We have planted trees at the Pitch Hill field and continue to seek clearer road markings and signage at the Elm where accidents have happened. We also continue to hold internal audits and to regularly monitor and manage the budget and precepts. We promote options for grants and funding for people facing the cost of living crisis and we communicate with our County and District Councillors.

Our meetings are held every second month in Sibford School in the Ferris and our agenda and minutes can be found on the Sibford's Website and Notice Board.

Everyone is welcome to attend and to have your say!

Katherine Roussel (Chair), on behalf of Ginny Bennett (Vice Chair), Andrew Meyler (Internal Controls Councillor), Michael Gordon, Professor John Wass and Kirsty Buttle (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer).

3. Any other issues parishioners wish to discuss – A parishioner in attendance advised that they have contacted the parish council about some trees on a bank on Back Lane that he is concerned may fall onto his house in high winds but ownership of the trees is unclear. The parishioner has been in touch with Cherwell District Council, and Oxfordshire County Council, and the local tree officer and none of them wish to have anything to do with it and they suggested speaking to the Parish Council. . The parishioner is happy to pay for the work but does not want to do it without the necessary permissions. The trees are just outside the Conservation Area. This item is on the next Parish Council agenda for discussion.

Meeting closed @ 7pm