



**Kennington Parish Council  
Oxfordshire  
Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held online  
on Wednesday 21 April 2021 at 7.30pm**

Cllr. Colin Charlett, Chairman of the Parish Council, took the Chair.

He welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

**In attendance:** There were 10 residents, PCSO Maddison Highmoor and Mrs Rachel Brown (Parish Clerk)

**Apologies:** Amanda Jempson, Martin Feather, Bill Russell, Kit Smith, District Councillor Diana Lugova and Katie Whelan-Matthews.

**1. Minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting**

The Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 24 April 2019 in the Kennington Village Hall at 7.30pm had been circulated in advance by the Clerk. The meeting approved the minutes, and they were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**2. Chairman's Report**

This will be my eighth annual report.

**ROADS** - As usual, inconsiderate parking is the main problem, especially around the school in the morning and afternoon. Also, the parking at the corner of Playfield road and The Avenue, as well as being dangerous due to restricting the vision to enter and exit Playfield Road is also wrong. Parking within a certain distance of a junction is illegal. The parking in the main road especially outside the Co-op is a perennial problem, made worse by customers of the chip shop. Speeding in many areas of the Village is also a common cause of complaints and especially in Bagley Wood Road. The Parish Council have requested traffic calming measures there especially as the traffic is expected to increase down there when the new slips at Lodge Hill are completed. As promised last year, we have purchased a speed indicator which has been used in The Avenue and Upper Road so far. When things get back to normal it is planned to move it more frequently. Some of the verges will not be cut so frequently as a group have suggested planting wildflowers to brighten the view.

**PLANNING** - We continue to get a steady trickle of planning applications, mainly for an extension to a property, and the occasional new build. There cannot be many areas left to build on, but I am sure someone will find space. Unfortunately, new houses usually means more cars.

**MISCELLANEOUS** - Number one problem litter. During the first lockdown there was a lot of partying going on at Forest Side. The amount of litter generated was unbelievable. There are large wheelie bins at both playfields, and it would be nice if people used them if they have been at the field. Unfortunately, it also seems that a lot of people dump their own domestic waste in them. Number two, dog fouling, no pun intended. We have supplied several dog poo bag dispensers for dog walkers who have forgotten to take their own bag, but they seem to prefer not to use them. Unfortunately, some of those who use the bags then throw them in the hedge rather than put them in the nearest bin. The amount of dog faeces on the football pitches is considerable and has to be cleared up, not a pleasant job before a match. Number three, bonfires. If anyone needs to have a fire, wait until it is dark and make sure that the rubbish you burn is dry and non-toxic. It will save a lot of arguments and complaints. As we were unable to have the Carols around the tree last Christmas, we borrowed the Abingdon Lions sleigh and went around the village blasting out seasonal music. It seemed to be generally well received and we are very grateful to the Lions for their generosity. The money which was given was passed on to the Lions for their charitable funds.

**PLAYING FIELDS** - The project to replace the pavilion at Playfield Road is going ahead slowly. We are at the planning application stage but are being held up at the moment because of concerns over a nearby tree. Following the demise of Kennington Cricket Club, an agreement has been reached with Wolvercote Cricket Club to use the pitch and facilities at the playing field. They will be maintaining the cricket square at no cost to us, and this will help to preserve this valuable facility. After several years of toing and froing we have finally agreed a new twelve-year lease with St. Johns College to continue the use of Forest Side field.

Without this facility we would be unable to cater for all the football teams and also lose a valuable play facility. We have provided a defibrillator at Forest Side which was financed with a donation from the football club and the Parish Council. An outdoor table tennis table will shortly be installed at Forest Side, close to the pavilion. This is at no cost to the Parish other than the installation. Finally, both play areas were treated to some new bark surfacing. After it had been tipped it looked to be a monumental task to barrow it onto the play surface, but with the help of some very willing parents and children the task was accomplished in less than a day. Many thanks to all who helped. It has been a strange time with virtual meetings etc. and hopefully we will be able to catch up on some projects that have had to be delayed this past year. On your behalf I would like to thank all the Councillors for their efforts and a special thankyou to our Clerk, Rachel, who keeps things running so smoothly.

### **3. Financial Statement for 2020-21**

The Clerk presented the financial statement for 2020-21. She reported that the total expenditure in 2020-21 was £162,395. This includes a transfer of £85,000 into a 3-year bond, which now appears on the asset register rather than in the accounts. The remaining expenditure of £77,395 was an increase of £7,000 on the previous year, which is largely due to expenditure relating to the Playfield Rd pavilion project. Income was £102,003 of which £96,109 came from the precept. Other income included the County Council's grant for the highway verge cutting of £2335 and £1,845 from hirers of the pavilions, including the Cricket and Football Clubs. The parish council did not receive any CIL money this year but is holding £2009.31 in CIL receipts. In the last financial year, 31% of expenditure related to employee costs, which includes our new Village Warden who started last summer. 22% was spent on sport and leisure, which relates to the play areas, playing fields and pavilions; and 20% of expenditure was on village maintenance. Over the past ten years, the council's total expenditure has been generally increasing, the proportions of expenditure are relatively similar.

The parish council's income has generally increased over the past ten years, although there was less income received last year from hiring the pavilions and fields, due to the coronavirus pandemic. The council receives the majority of its funds from the precept, which has slightly increased this year. The council is saving money towards the Playfield Road pavilion project, which we hope will receive full planning permission in the near future. The Parish Precept for 2021-22 is set at £97,070 which costs a Band 'D' property £57.23 per year. This is an increase of 42 pence on a Band D property.

### **4. Matters arising from the reports**

None

### **5. Reports from the District Councillors – Cllrs. Diana Lugova and Bob Johnston reported as follows:**

1. At the moment we are waiting for **Lodge Hill consultation** update from OCC Community team – and should get some update by the end of the week/beginning of next week.
2. **COVID.** The Beacon is now offering twice weekly symptom-free testing to anyone who doesn't have access to workplace/school testing along with community collect home testing kits. People need to book an appointment for testing, but no appointment is necessary to collect kits.
3. Applications are now open for the **Restart Grant** we mentioned last week. It is a one-off grant for rate paying businesses that predominantly deliver public-facing services for the general public. The grant will pay up to £6,000 for non-essential retail businesses, and up to £18,000 for hospitality businesses, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym or sport business premises.
4. Also, applications are open for COMF Transportation Fund. Government funding is available for voluntary and community organisations to help with the costs of arranging and providing Covid-safe transportation for residents. Groups can receive funding of between £1,000 - £15,000 and it can go on revenue costs like paying for petrol as well as capital costs like PPE supplies or wear and tear on vehicles.

### **6. Report of County Councillor - Cllr. Bob Johnston reported as follows:**

1. The dominant theme has to be the response to Covid which has occupied a huge amount of Officer and Member time with two lockdowns. This has resulted in Officers very largely working from home with all meetings held remotely. It is likely that meetings which do not take decisions such as briefings will

continue to be held remotely. This will save both Officers and Members considerable travel for an hour's meeting.

2. Some attention following much lobbying has been given to the roads and footways, though not nearly enough. Most recently the footpath in Sandford Lane was resurfaced, it was so bad that some residents were almost housebound because of the poor and uneven condition of the footway.
3. Currently much time is being taken up with the consultation over the new slips at Lodge Hill, I am currently pressing for better traffic calming in Bagley Wood Road with a 30 mph speed; limit for the same.
4. After much pressure, the threatened Oxford to Cambridge Expressway has officially been abandoned. However, there is concern that some of it will be built by stealth as bypasses to the existing network.

## **7. Reports from Local Committees and Organisations**

Written reports have been received in advance of the meeting and uploaded to the village website.

### **7.1 Friends of Kennington Library reported as follows:**

FOKL has continued to be active in its support of the OCC run library. In 2019/20 we held two fund-raising events, a Quiz Night again run on our behalf by Tonks Brothers and the other an evening with Mark Damazer, former controller of Radio 4. With the generous help of Councillor Bob Johnston, we were able to purchase audio-visual equipment for use by speakers and at other events.

Many of our activities had to come to a halt with lockdown early in 2020 but throughout the months of closure we worked to ensure we were prepared for such time as the library could re-open. This it did in October 2020, and we were very grateful that many of our volunteers were willing to return and to adapt to different roles in order to ensure that the library was Covid secure. We moved our monthly author talks online in the autumn of 2020 which have proved to be popular. With the library having re-opened once more on 14th April 2021 we hope to be able to return to supporting more of the regular activities, especially those for children, as soon as possible. During closure it was clear how much the library was missed by many local residents and we encourage everyone to make the most of this precious local facility now that it is open once more.

### **7.2 Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society (KADS) reported as follows:**

It was decided after the Panto Cinderella in January 2020 we would do a Summer concert show "Thank you for the Music" and then Covid-19 struck which meant we had to postpone it. As the pandemic continued, we also had to make a decision to pull the Panto Aladdin. This has been very frustrating for our members and indeed for all the theatre trade country wide. After a lot of discussion our stalwarts of KADS who have directed and produced our Pantos for the last number of years David Buckmaster and Ian Biggs decided they wanted to have a rest and step back from the front line as it were so we needed to find a new team to take up the reins.

Luckily, we had two people who were willing to share the direction that of Hannah Gordon and Dan Peel we also have a new producer in the name of Dave Peel vice-chair of KADS. Choreography this time is being done by Rachael Peel so once again it is a family affair.

The Panto for January 2022 will be Rapunzel and our summer concert will be "Thank You for The Music" Over the lockdown we have also started to put in place what is needed to become a registered charity which is good news as this will enable the Society to be eligible for grant aid in order to renew our lighting and to take us into the digital era. We are excited about this. We are also looking for chaperones to be backstage to look after the Kaddettes during show time if anyone knows of anyone who would like to be involved could they let our Producer /Vice Chairman know Dave Peel. We are all hoping to get back to meeting each other and treading the boards in front of all the good people in Kennington, fingers crossed.

### **7.3 Kennington Athletic Football Club (KAFC) reported as follows:**

Kennington Athletic FC currently have 13 teams representing the club and the village, offering the opportunity to play football to over 200 players on a regular basis.

- Men's First Team – Managed by Rob Cattell.
- Men's Reserve Team.
- Under 15s – Managed by Dave Wiggins.

- Under 13s – Managed by James Dagg.
- Under 12s Yellows – Managed by Lee Saunders and Daniel Goff.
- Under 12s Greens – Managed by Mike Rawlings.
- Under 11s – Managed by Gary van Gucci.
- Under 10s yellows – Managed by Dom Howson.
- Under 10s greens – Managed by Gareth Simpson and Ed Drury.
- Under 9s – Managed by Christian Bunt and Mark Baker.
- Under 8s – Managed by Andrew Gilbert.
- Under 7s Yellows – Managed by Billy Allen.
- Under 7s Greens – Managed by Dave Phillips.

The men's teams compete in the Oxfordshire Senior League and the junior teams take part in the Oxfordshire Youth Football League. In addition, there is a very successful academy, which is overseen by Jim Kent and Jordan Trevelyan on a Saturday morning, for children aged between four and six. This introduces them to the basics of football and prepares them for starting 'proper' matches when they progress to the under 7 age group. There are currently over 20 children taking part in these training sessions on a weekly basis. The aims and objectives of the club are to offer coaching and competitive opportunities in Association Football; to promote the sport of Association Football; to ensure a duty of care to all members of the club; to provide all its services in a way that is fair to everyone; to ensure that all present and future members receive fair and equal treatment. The club is FA Charter Standard accredited, which means that all of the coaches have an FA coaching qualification and have all undertaken up to date safeguarding and first aid training. In addition, the club has a dedicated Child Welfare Officer.

Like everything the last two football seasons have been severely disrupted by Covid-19 and neither season has been completed in full. The 2019/20 season was paused in March 2020 and never returned. The 2020/21 season was put on hold in December and has only just resumed, with a fragmented fixture list, it is planned that most teams will continue playing into May and June to try and make up for the lost time. The pause in football being played has allowed the club to undertake some much needed pitch maintenance work at both Playfield Road and Forest Side. This work has been supported through a grant from the Football Foundation and the funding will continue for the next six years, although the amount received will taper each year. In the 2019/20 season the club incorporated a women's team for the first time, although they sadly disbanded at the end of the season, along with the only junior female team. The club is keen to support women's football and it is hoped that in the very near future a new junior female team will take shape. The club's annual summer tournament was cancelled in 2020 and will also not be taking place this year either. The tournament is the club's main fundraiser, so it is very unfortunate that both had to be cancelled, but we hope to have it back again in 2022. Further details about the club, including contact details for team managers and committee members, can be found on the club website [www.kenningtonathleticfc.com](http://www.kenningtonathleticfc.com), so please get in touch if you require any information. We are always keen to hear from people who may be interested in playing, volunteering or supporting the club in any way.

#### **7.4 Kennington Festival Group reported as follows:**

The last meeting was held on Monday March 9th 2020. It was our AGM. This year no AGM. The Committee has been keeping in touch with members sporadically. Last Christmas we delivered a tin of M&S chocolate biscuits (which I have to say were delicious), a bottle of Schloer and a card to all our members which were well received. Many of our Members asked when we might be able to meet again but obviously, we had no way of knowing. This year at Easter, we gave them all a bag of mini Easter Eggs and card in lieu of our usual Easter Tea, not quite the same I must admit however I was able to tell them that we may be able to start again late July or early August as Village Hall would be opening its doors again in June. Who knows, it depends on so many things and having to sit 2 metres apart would not be practical with masks on. Thank you to the Parish Council for all their support in the past.

#### **7.5 Kennington & District United Church Choirs reported as follows:**

It doesn't seem possible that 2019 was the last time the Choirs were able to provide concerts in various venues. We sang Haydn's Creation in Exeter College Chapel in April 2019 for the charity Alexandra House of Joy and raised £1,133.00. In June/July we sang Songs from the Shows at Witney £504.04 for Christian

Aid, at Abingdon £814.00 for The Abingdon Bridge and Abingdon Baptist Redevelopment Fund and at Kennington £2,725.00 for the Naiso Trust. Entrance is always free to our performances and collections are taken for various charities with no expenses deducted. We are proud that since 1973, when the Choir was formed, we have raised £558,332.79 for charitable organisations locally, nationally and internationally. When we came to 2020, we little realised that the whole year would be without concerts due to the Covid-19 and is still in the same position in the first few months of 2021. We are not able to meet so we started a monthly Zoom meeting to keep in touch with each other and this has been a real help for us as we are missing our friends. We are looking forward to singing again and hoping that we can perform Handel's Messiah in October, if restrictions have finished. Details will eventually be added to our website [www.kenningtonchoir.org.uk](http://www.kenningtonchoir.org.uk). Sadly, our conductor, Trevor Cowlett, MBE, is not well and has been in various hospitals since mid-January. We are hoping it won't be too long before he is with us. We will have a stand-in conductor in October. We are always looking for new members to the Choirs and if you would like to join us (especially for Messiah) please contact me at [cravenscroft111@gmail.com](mailto:cravenscroft111@gmail.com). No subscriptions, no auditions, just come along to rehearsals on Friday evenings in Kennington Methodist Church at 7.45pm, starting in September, dates to be decided and details will be in our website. We thank the residents of Kennington for their support and encouragement, despite the lockdowns and rules, and will look forward to seeing you all at our concerts when we are allowed to perform.

**7.6 Kennington Chronicle reported as follows:**

During the last year, The Kennington Chronicle has had to change its ways somewhat due to Covid-19. Whilst the publication continued to be produced, for 5 months May to July 2020 and February to March 2021, we were unable to deliver the paper version as it was deemed unsafe for a lot of our deliverers, who are in the more vulnerable categories. The advertisers will be given extra months of their adverts, so that they receive the correct number of printed adverts for which they have paid.

There has been a change in the committee too, and many thanks go to John Maine who has organised the deliveries to the entire village for about 15 years, and to Paddy Landau who was the editor for even longer. Both gentlemen are still involved with the Chronicle, but to a lesser extent, and the village is all the richer for having folk like them. We remain very grateful for their many years of dedicated service to the Chronicle. Fortunately, Amena, Roger, Marilyn, Angie and Maggie have joined the team, and brought new ideas, enthusiasm and style to the publication, now in its 37th year.

**7.7 Kennington Good Neighbours reported as follows:**

Due to Government regulations and restrictions, we have not been able to offer any services as our volunteers are at the 'vulnerable' stage in their lives. Thankfully Whats App groups and other people have been helping those in need around the village and recently I have been able to refer requests from Age UK Oxford to them. Many others in the village have volunteered with the PPG at the Health Centre. We still belong to the Oxfordshire Community Network Volunteer Link up and all our volunteers are covered by public liability Insurance through them. New volunteers now have to complete a DBS which I can do and it is free. If Good Neighbours is to continue the time has come for younger people to take up the reins and take the Group into the future. The committee is hoping to have a public meeting at some point for anyone interested.

**7.8 Kennington History Society reported as follows:**

During the last year, the Kennington History Society has continued to operate as best it can, but due to Covid 19 has been severely curtailed in not being able to hold face to face meetings for its members. This was unlike previous years when we offered a varied series of talks to our members and visitors in the Methodist Church Hall. We did, however, produce a Newsletter and in February held our Annual General Meeting via Zoom when it was agreed to roll over our membership subscriptions for 2021. This was followed by a fascinating presentation about "Chimney Sweeps in Victorian Times" by David Holt. We hope to be able to resume face to face meetings in September 2021 and look forward to hearing the talks we missed from last year.

**7.9 Kennington Horticultural Society reported as follows:**

Only one event was able to take place last year, when in July some 30 members enjoyed an evening visit to the gardens of the Manor House at Dorchester on Thames. All other Society events including the Annual

Show and the planned holiday to Yorkshire, were cancelled due to Covid19 restrictions. The Society had some 300 members in April 2020 and their memberships have been carried over to cover 2021. Unfortunately, further restrictions this year have resulted in the cancellation of our Annual Plant Sale in May and the rearranged holiday to Yorkshire in June. However, we are planning coach trip outings to Exbury Gardens in May and the Hyde Hall Flower Show in August. The primary event of 2021, the Annual Show, is scheduled to take place on 4th September in the Village Centre. Evening talks and presentations to Society members and guests are planned to restart from October. Society news and events are regularly published in the Chronicle and on the Village noticeboards.

**7.10 Kennington Methodist Church reported as follows:**

2020 - This year, we have changed our pattern of worship on Sundays- a traditional service, a communion service, an alternative service (including a café style church, discussion or meditative/prayerful service) and a Together Service (inclusive for all ages particularly children). This service is more interactive, multi-sensory and brings a smile to everyone present. One always leaves with a message of bringing Christianity to our everyday living. All other aspects of discussion, bible study, and prayer groups remain the same. The Minister continues to take a monthly informal meeting at Edith Court and Christians Together in Kennington continue quarterly services at Kirlena and Mon Choisy. The United Choirs performances of Yeoman of the Guard before Christmas raised over £700 for Action for Children. Maintenance continues at a pace on our building-roof and guttering checked, cracked tiles on roof replaced, moss removed from one part of the roof and the cross repainted. The water heater in the kitchen was replaced and a new worktop fitted over the fridge. The spare wooden chairs had become unstable and splintered. Plastic chairs were obtained from a church in North Oxford who was disposing of them. Trimming of hedges continue in the hope of keeping them at a manageable height. There is a 5 year check due on the building and we wait to hear of any other maintenance problems, which we don't know about. The February Coffee Morning raised £145 for the Churchill Hospital Dialysis Unit. Coronavirus-March. As with all churches we closed immediately and worship details were put on-line each week. Pastoral Visitors had a list of members for them to contact during this time and make sure that they were O.K. This was a testing time for everyone in the world and a time when we craved to be able to see friends and family. Being part of the village made one appreciate the caring and friendliness of people, the network which was arranged to ensure that most people had a contact to be in touch with and neighbours helping out with shopping etc. I feel that we all should feel privileged to live in such a village with beautiful surroundings and people who put themselves out for others. We are truly blessed.

2021 - Well, as with many other organisations, churches etc. we have had a bumpy ride this last year. When we were allowed to do so we have had a half hour church service each Sunday under COVID regulations. During this past year a few of our members have become unwell and therefore are unable to participate in their usual roles. As our numbers dwindle, we hope that we will be able to cope with maintaining the life of Kennington Methodist Church. Reverend Stephen Maunder will leave us in the summer and Reverend Peter Powers from Wesley Memorial Church will oversee the Pastoral aspect of our church. On a personal note, I would like to thank the Parish Council for all the work that they do to help maintain the village of Kennington and to sort out any problems that arise. It is appreciated.

**7.11 Kennington Playgroup reported as follows:**

Kennington playgroup continues to provide a high standard of childcare, delivering educational activities with differently weekly themes allowing children to learn through play. Whilst maintaining a high level of care in a safe environment. The last 18 Months have been a challenge for the playgroup due to a number of factors, the main one being the Pandemic and the knock-on effect to the business. We have seen our child intake halved to what it has been seen in previous years, this in turn has left us with a drop in income and unable to carry out some improvements to the inside and outside of the building. While closed staff were furloughed and advertising for new children stopped. Other changes also occurred to the charity during late 2020 the biggest being the manager leaving her role to explore pastures new. Recruitment by the current committee was successful and Vickie Ward (also a village resident) was offered and accepted the Role as manager. Since Vickie took over at the end of January, she has been making great progress, and we are pleased to say that new child numbers are starting to rise with an amazing number of new children

starting this term. Vickie has also recruited 2 new members of staff and is looking for ways to work in partnership with the local community and also raise the current profile of the amazing area we live in and the fantastic staff that help make Kennington playgroup what it is. Looking to the future we will be looking to raise funds by fundraising and applying for grants so we can recoup some lost funds during the coronavirus pandemic. We will also continue to advertise for new children and plan to build the business once more.

#### **7.12 Kennington Strollers reported as follows:**

Councillors may remember that Kennington Strollers was established in 2013 as an opportunity for people to meet up for a gentle sociable walk at their own pace around the Playing Field in Playfield Road. This was a follow on initiative after the original Kennington Health walks (2003-2013), still continuing today as Kennington Walkers. The Strollers always aimed to support “older” people in the village and people who are managing chronic health problems, recovering from illness, or in the post Covid world of today waiting for their operations! It is our view that short walks to encourage people to take gentle exercise are needed more than ever following the year of the pandemic. Many people have been self-isolating and shielding over the past year and some will have become very cautious about getting outdoors. Anxiety and depression have also increased dramatically over 2020 and walking is proven to help both conditions. It is our plan to re-launch the Strollers short walks during May 2021, on Wednesday afternoons between 2 - 3pm at the Playing field. We hope to have a few helpers to support people by walking alongside them around the Playing field and enabling people to have a bit of time to be sociable after the walks. Walking will still be at a social distance. Probably in a small group of six people. Kennington has a long history of Walking for Health. Walking is just one way for people to feel better by getting outdoors and meeting new people. We have had a break from these short walks since 2018, but it seems like they are now much needed and will enable residents who have been stuck indoors for many months protecting both themselves and the NHS by following the Government’s advice to “Stay at Home”. We are a small group of residents who just want to share our love of walking safely together by using one of the assets the village provides – a Playing Field! We hope for continuing support of the Parish Council to facilitate the walks in 2021.

#### **7.13 Oxford Preservation Trust reported as follows:**

Oxford Preservation Trust owns 113 acres of fields in Kennington, over which we permit public access. These are the Kennington Memorial Field, bought in 1946, and the Flood Meadows from Sandford Lane up to the old railway line. These were acquired from Colin and Olive Walker in 1971, and from John Tait in 2001. The Sustrans cycle track and Thames Path run through these fields. During the last year, the OPT green spaces around Kennington have been used more than ever. With the concerns of the pandemic and a lack of cattle grazing on the fields, the access gates have often been propped open. Cattle are now due in the fields, so please can I remind users to ensure that the gates are now fastened when passed through. Increased footfall has also meant increased litter and I am very grateful to all who collect as they walk across OPT land.

The management of the Memorial Field remains the same, with the field grazed by cattle from spring to autumn. During 2020, the field was untenanted and not grazed, so the longer accessible grass was cut by tractor to encourage new growth. A new tenant has been secured and cattle will be returning to the Memorial Field in the near future. In addition to the grazing, several volunteer work parties are scheduled each year. In 2019 and 2020, work parties in February and October were held to clear scrub from the bank and clean the bank along the stream. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the work party in February 2021 was cancelled. The work parties that took place were well attended by local residents and the Abingdon Green Gym and we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone from the village for their time and help. Oxford Preservation Trust’s Flood Meadows are also grazed and cut for hay when ground and weather conditions permit. In 2020, no cattle were present on these fields, but all were cut and cattle will be back grazing soon. These fields have had two new footbridges installed along the permissive path between Sandford Lane and the Thames Path. In the early months of 2020, the Sustrans cycle path, running adjacent to the railway and within the OPT Flood Meadows, was widened and resurfaced. The improved pathway has been extensively used by cyclists, walkers and runners and provided an ideal route when the

meadows were flooded over the winter. This wonderful scheme was entered into the OPT Awards 2020 and I am delighted to share that it won a plaque in the Landscape and Public Realm category. Judges recognised the public benefit and increased health and wellbeing opportunities of the improved path, not just for Kennington but for the wider community. I am always very grateful to local walkers and the Parish Council for being my eyes and ears in the village and letting me know when things need attention – thank you all.

**7.14 Parish Footpath Warden reported as follows:**

The Public Rights of Way in the Parish of Kennington were checked during this year and found to be generally in good shape. The improvement made to the surface of the Thames National Trail between the Southern Bypass and the Kennington railway bridge over the river some years ago is still evident in spite of the significant flooding by the river this winter and spring. However, one problem on the Trail is very evident and that is the amount of litter that is left on the path. I carry out a litter patrol once every month. The Thames National Trail is reputed to have the highest footfall of all the country's National Trails. Each time I walk from the Southern Bypass bridge to Sandford Lock I usually collect two large sackfuls of litter; beer and soft drink cans, plastic bottles of all sizes, crisp packets, plastic bags, beer bottles, fast food containers and miscellaneous paper. Occasionally one finds a small bag containing dog mess which the owner has thoughtfully tied up and hung, like a Christmas tree decoration, on a nearby bush. The bridge which carries the footpath at the back of the Memorial Field across the stream into Radley Parish, installed a few years ago, has been damaged by vandals. The handrails at either end of the bridge have been torn off and thrown into the stream.

**7.15 Botley and Kennington Patient Participation Group reported as follows:**

The year has been challenging in many ways. March 2020 saw Kennington Health Centre (KHC) closed for Covid testing. Necessitating Kennington patients having to travel to Botley. During this time, the medical centre was uncommunicative with the PPG resulting in a meeting in July, facilitated by Healthwatch Oxfordshire to resolve this. Communication continued to be poor until the end of the year when we were required to support the practice in the vaccine roll out. KHC reopened in October 2020. The PPG chose to meet via Zoom monthly throughout lockdown 1 as a form of support and information processing related to how patients were managing and any developments at the practice. The PPG has continued to meet virtually monthly but recently has moved to six weekly and times have alternated from 6pm to 7.30 pm to enable a wider audience to attend. We aim to have a speaker at each meeting, and have had talks on Social Prescribing, Power of Attorney and many more. From January 9th Botley Medical Centre have vaccinated several thousand patients against Covid 19 at Kennington Health Centre. KHC continued to be open for general patients' needs. Staff and volunteers gave up their weekends not only to deliver the vaccine, but admin staff processed forms and phoned patients to ask them to attend for vaccinations. A real feat given the volume of patients and the short time they had to do this: just a few days. This continues to date. Botley/ Kennington Patient Participation Group had a huge response to a call for volunteers to act as Marshalls both inside and outside the practice. Helping with car parking, supporting those in wheelchairs and needing help to get from car to practice. Over 60 people signed up to be volunteer drivers both in Kennington and Botley and nearly 20 can be in action over the vaccine periods. From the volunteer group more general community support has emerged with the Social Prescriber asking for help to take a gentleman to see his wife in her care home, one volunteer now takes him weekly. A gentleman unable to walk his dog and get to the Churchill Hospital and Maggie's Centre is now being helped by another volunteer. We are proud of what we achieved during this very difficult period. The PPG is an open for anyone to can attend.

**7.16 40<sup>th</sup> Oxford Sea Scout Group reported as follows:**

This time last year I don't think any of us thought we'd still be in semi-lockdown. Luckily, this month has seen the return of some face-to-face Scouting in most of our sections, albeit in a limited way, and with extensive risk assessments undertaken. The last year has seen so many grappling with a new approach and thinking up new ways of doing things that don't require people being in the same room. Through much of lockdown our leaders have still been able to provide virtual Scouting: you may have seen our reports in the Chronicle that young people have still been learning first aid, making spaghetti & marshmallow towers,



getting knotted, and taking on new challenges like ironing, as well as outdoor adventures together, but distanced, when it was allowed! In particular, we have really successful Scout leaders – the section is the most popular it has ever been. It's so good to know that around 20 12-14 year olds in the village have embraced the opportunity to participate. This year, I'd like to give special thanks to Steve Daniels, who has spent much of lockdown attending to grounds maintenance and done a phenomenal job. And to Sandra Ward for endless patience communicating with loss adjusters over our current subsidence claim; and various others who have been talking with our neighbours about boundary lines. Our plot is sufficiently old to pre-date the modern land registry systems, so it is unclear where responsibilities lie. Thanks too, to Clare Platt who is 'retiring' from HQ hire management. We will need a replacement if anyone has a few hours a month spare. We are hoping to have an evening picnic on September 3rd to reacquaint ourselves as leaders, young people and parents, and anyone thinking of volunteering is welcome to attend. And of course, we sincerely hope to host our usual Fireworks Fundraiser, which will be on October 30th, if it is permitted. Please do get in touch if you are curious what we get up to. We have a waiting list in most age groups for children, but there is always space for adults. Email [kenningtonscouts@gmail.com](mailto:kenningtonscouts@gmail.com) if you'd like to get involved. You can do as little or as much as you want.

**7.17 Thames Valley Police – PCSO Maddie Highmoor reported as follows:**

I continue my role as a PCSO in Abingdon Neighbourhood Team and have the responsibility for Kennington and Radley. Our team is made up of one Police Sergeant, four Police Officers and just seven PCSOs. We are split into three smaller teams, and as a team we cover Abingdon, as well as the surrounding villages and Botley/Cumnor/Kennington areas of Oxford. My team and I work a four-week shift pattern, which consists of early and late shifts. The last two years in Frontline Policing have been like no other, and the level of challenge that we have faced has been unprecedented. As a team, we have consistently adapted to changes that have come our way. I believe that I can speak on behalf of my team, by saying that none of us expected that when the announcement was made informing us all that we were going into the first lockdown on Tuesday 24th March 2020, it would not last as long as it has done. The laws defined in the Coronavirus Act 2020 have changed a large number of times during the last two years, sometimes with us having as little as 24 hours to gain an understanding of them. During the first lockdown our team became smaller, as our Police Officers were taken back to response roles, in order to strengthen Police resilience. Therefore, this left PCSOs to solely carry out all Neighbourhood roles. Over the course of the past two years, a large amount of my time was spent out on patrol across Kennington and Radley, explaining and enforcing the restrictions in place. The parks were constantly patrolled, and inevitably during the first lockdown there was a significant dip in anti-social behaviour.

The local priorities in South & Vale are: Burglary, Anti-Social Behaviour, County Drug Lines (CDL), Knife Crime and Rural Crime. The first three have certainly been relevant to my work in Kennington, and thankfully knife crime remains at a low level in the village and rural crime is not significantly applicable in my role. Other work that I have been involved in over the last year has included:

Reporting individuals for breaching Coronavirus legislation, as well as conducting frequent patrols of the COVID-19 Vaccination Site at Kennington Health Centre. I have also conducted multiple house-to-house and CCTV enquiries for thefts and burglaries in the area, and have completed safeguarding visits/calls with individuals, who have been a victim of fraud. Abingdon Neighbourhood Policing Team's crime data figures are recorded and divided into Abingdon Town and Abingdon Outer. Kennington is included in Abingdon Outer figures. There has been positive news for Abingdon Outers, and the last 24 months has seen: 9% reduction in Bicycle Theft; 22% reduction in Business and Community Burglary; 35% reduction in Residential Burglary (Sheds/Garages.); 38% reduction in Theft from Vehicle; 25% reduction in Theft Offences.

**7.18 Kennington Baby & Toddler Group – Katie Whelan-Matthews reported as follows:**

My name is Katie, and I took over running Toddler group in September 2019, it took a few months to get the group up and running efficiently and getting new members through the doors. We had a lovely Christmas party in the December which included a visit from Father Christmas and gifts for the children, we had party food and fun activities. 2020 started well, however due to COVID things took a turn for the worse

and we had to close to doors. We reopened after the summer all within the government guidelines, introducing a new online booking system and adapted our sessions so all children could enjoy the activities. Every session we have a craft activity or sensory play which is fantastic for the children to explore different textures, smells and helps with their motor skills. We always have the soft play area and ride on toys, we then alternate other toys each week. We have replaced all the old mats with safer and cleaner ones and have purchased new resources as some were getting tired. We are opening the doors on the 20th of April 2021 and my aim for the future is to continue encouraging new members to join and keeping the group going as it has always been a strong resource for the community for many years. We look forward to a better year and providing the children, parents and carers of Kennington and surrounding areas with a safe and enjoyable space to make new friends.”

**7.19 Thames (Kennington) Trefoil Guild reported as follows:**

Like all other Groups, meetings our Trefoil Guild have been unable to take place since March 2020. However, our Secretary has kept in touch with all members either by Email or by letter. All ideas for activities considered of interest sent from Oxfordshire County Trefoil Guild have been forwarded to our members too. Zoom meetings have not been practical as some members do not have a computer, but they have been in touch with each other by ‘phone and all have remained Covid free. Some have had other health issues but thankfully as I write this our members appear well, cheerful and are looking forward to when we shall be able to meet again as a group later this year.

**7.20 Kennington Village Hall Management Committee reported as follows:**

The Hall is located in Kennington Road, almost in the centre of the Village. It is adjacent to King George’s Field which became a subsidiary of the hall on March 24th 1998. We are regulated by a scheme which came into force on October 5th 1981. The object of the Charity is to provide and maintain a Village Hall for the use of Kennington residents, also to provide and manage a children’s playground. The Committee at present consists of representatives of the following user organisations: Parish Council; Youth Club; Mother and Toddler Group; Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society; Kennington Festival Group; Kennington Alternative Badminton Group; Four members of the Public. The Committee is assisted by two Honorary Officers: Treasurer- Mrs. Fiona Von Hoven; Secretary- Mr. Peter Biggs. Both receive an honorarium, which is decided at the Annual General Meeting. Mr Biggs is also our Hall Manager and key holder for which he receives a salary. Our banking is done with CAF bank online and works very well. Our accounts have been audited by Mrs. Sandra Ward, a local resident, to whom we are very grateful. The Custodian trustees are Kennington Parish Council who are always very supportive. The Covid pandemic has obviously impacted on the finances due to being unable to operate for most of the year. Unfortunately, it involved a lot of time and effort to ensure that when we could open we were operating within the guidelines, which seemed at times to change from week to week. The financial burden was eased slightly by getting a grant from central government via the district council. We also furloughed the two caretakers. Our Manager Peter Biggs retired at the end of August and was replaced by Rachel Brown, who resigned from the committee as a member of the public to fill the position. We now have a new member of the public, Mrs Whelan-Matthews. When restrictions were eased a lot of our regular bookings decided they would not resume until things were more settled, so usage is still very little. Thanks are due to everyone who helped through the last year and hopefully we will see an improvement in lettings once the current situation eases. Special mention to Peter Biggs for all his work over the years and I am sure his successor will carry on the good work.

**8. Suggestions/Comments from Parishioners**

It was queried whose responsibility it would be to repair the bridge in the memorial field, which the Footpath Warden has reported as damaged. It was reported that a plank across the bridge has collapsed and now presents a trip hazard. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk will report this to Oxford Preservation Trust. Roger Gelder expressed his thanks to Colin Charlett, Sylvia Buckingham and all the volunteers who have helped with the Covid vaccinations at Kennington Health Centre.

**Signed .....**      **Date .....**