

Minutes of the Connect Committee 31/07/23 at Plum Tree Cottage, Whitley

Present: Maurice Hubert, Matt Wills (Editor), Roger Hatherall (Accounts), Joe McNeige (Distribution), Sara Whiteside (Secretary)

General Discussion

Maurice led thanks for John Harding's many years of service and volunteered to be the new Chair of Connect. Roger seconded this proposal and it was unanimously accepted.

The new Chair suggested that there was no legal requirement for an AGM, but it was probably pertinent to hold one, given that Connect receives £250 annually from the Council. Currently our print run costs £360 over alternate months. We have reduced the number of copies as we no longer deliver to Dunch Lane. We have also lost a few advertisers recently. Invoices will be sent in August.

Maurice is still hoping to fill the vacancy of Advertising Secretary with someone he knows. It was agreed that we should hold a minimum of two meetings a year, unless something turns up which requires a group discussion.

A short discussion ensued regarding links with Atworth. It was agreed that links between our villages should be encouraged but there would always be financial implications which would need agreement.

Editor's Report

The biggest concern remained content. Matt is constantly putting out feelers to contacts within the local community for contributions. It was agreed that it was acceptable to publish local events at, for example, Lowden Garden Centre, as this benefited our community.

Some suggestions were made regarding further potential contributors:

A local W.I although there is not one in our villages;

The school which hasn't contributed of late - **Maurice to approach the new head;**

Phil Alford, local councillor - **Matt to contact;**

Budding local journalists, e.g local students who might wish to practise their skills - **Matt to flag in the next edition and on social media.**

A local author has published a book about the history of our villages. It was suggested that we could possibly serialise a few excerpts from this and pay royalties if appropriate.

Matt to pursue.

It was agreed that publishing local photos would be a good idea, either current ones or those from the past if local people have some. **Joe to supply some current/recent photos for possible inclusion.**

Matt will publish a pdf version of Connect on Facebook as this will increase its coverage and possibly increase the number of advertisers.

Future issues could include local walks/trails, news on local businesses, e.g the reopening of The Fox at Broughton Gifford, the new landlords of The White Hart, Atworth

etc. Whilst there is a fine line between publicity and advertising, it was felt that the former was a benefit to the community, providing valuable information.

We could also approach our local animal sanctuary, Coppershell, at Gastard. As with the above, it is strictly outside of our area, but would be of interest to our readers and is very close to our villages.

Treasurer's Report

Roger asked where we are with the envelope scheme which was discussed at the AGM. We agreed that this should go ahead and the envelopes should be inserted in the October/November edition. The collection points could be The Pear Tree, Spindles, Methodist and parish churches. Online donations could also be accepted, via our bank account - details would need to be available. **Matt to action.**

650 envelopes will be required. **Roger to send to Joe.**

It was agreed that more advertisers would be very beneficial. **Maurice to action.**

Distribution Report

Joe had received a complaint that someone's copy had been left on a drive, rather than being posted in a letterbox. It was agreed that many local letterboxes were hard to locate and our distributors did a fine job.

AOB

Matt queried whether John might have files from his tenure as Chair. **Maurice to enquire.**