

GREAT COXWELL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023

Reading Room, Great Coxwell, Oxfordshire, SN7 7NG

Clerk: Joanna Farrant clerk@greatcoxwell.com

Minutes of Great Coxwell Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 15th May 2023, 6:30pm.

Present	Cllr Jacqui Russell (Chair) Cllr Rory Gilmour Cllr Kym MacDonald Cllr Richard Hankinson Joanna Farrant, Parish Clerk
In Attendance	District Cllr Viral Patel County Cllr Bethia Thomas

Item	Minute
1.	Welcome by Chairman of the Parish Council
2.	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from District Cllr Kat Foxhall.
3.	Approval and signing of minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 16th May 2022: the minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by Cllr Russell.
4.	<p>Annual Report from Village Groups</p> <p style="text-align: center;">National Trust</p> <p>Badbury – continuing to keep paths up together & drain/surface the muddiest sections. We removed the conifers from areas of Badbury last autumn as part of our on-going woodland restoration programme. We will be planting trees in the some of those areas this coming winter.</p> <p>Great Barn – continuing to manage the grassland as flower meadow, so cutting paths through and then taking a ‘hay cut’ where we remove the cuttings in late summer. We have replaced the bench by the pond as it was going rotten. The Floating Pennywort has been eradicated from the pond, though we continue to monitor in case any fragments appear, we have also replaced the silt trap.</p> <p>Wider estate – we failed to get the boardwalk installed on the footpath above the barn this year, as we were let down by a contractor. However, a new contractor has the order and is just waiting for the ground to dry up before carrying out the works. We are slowly trying to replace all the stiles with kissing gates to improve access. We had to fell a number of Ash trees along Puddleduck Lane due to Ash dieback. We will be planting up the gaps with Oak, Hawthorn and Hazel this coming winter. The drought last summer took its toll on the new trees. We will be assessing the damage this year and replacing the dead trees.</p> <p><i>Richard Watson</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">W.I.</p> <p>The W.I. has had a busy year with our members standing at 35</p> <p>It has been good for all to be together face to face after Covid. In May we celebrated our 75th Anniversary with a Quiz & Nibbles. On a beautiful warm sunny day for our Summer outing we visited the newly refurbished Kelmscott Manor where we had a tour of the house and Afternoon tea. This year we were able to once again hold our Christmas Party in the Village thanks to the kind hospitality of our hosts who made us all feel so very welcome. This is our main fundraising event of the year which allows us to have varied speakers for our meetings.</p> <p>For the AGM we have a different country's cuisine and this year the theme was Chinese. The Reading room looked amazing with all the Chinese lanterns and its orange & gold theme.</p> <p>I think for such a small village our membership is a great achievement and only goes to show what a caring and friendly Village we are.</p> <p><i>Pam Smith</i></p>

Community Group

Our aims remain the same: to help villagers by providing small amounts of cash to enable them to organise something for the village. It could be sport related, fun, anything that builds community and brings people together and or enhances the village. We are particularly keen to help younger members of the village if they want to start something - a group/club/project.

We funded the purchase of new chairs for the Reading Room.

In May 2023 the Community Group invited all the village to a Coronation BBQ and party in the Great Barn

In 2022 November we helped organised a concert in the church and provided food and wine.

In July 2022 we organised the Queens Jubilee with a BBQ and party in the Great Barn.

On a regular basis we got donations into the account from Sunday Teas and once a year from the Artsweeks cafe.

We started 2022 with £2051. We started 2023 with £4,140. On April 2023 our balance was £3962. If anyone from the village has a bright idea for some village fun please get in touch with any members of the committee.

Annabelle Zinovieff

Greener Great Coxwell – Community Energy

Objectives of the Energy Project

The Greener Great Coxwell group have been investigating a community owned, sustainable and secure energy project that would provide heating and hot water to the whole village.

The schemes main objectives could be to –

Provide a source of hot water and central heating to replace existing oil or gas boilers available to all the village at a competitive cost.

Provide a sustainable and reliable supply of renewable heat energy for decades to come.

Help to cut the carbon footprint of the village and contribute towards the UK's goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

Contribute to relieving fuel poverty. Help spread the costs of the 'Energy Transition'. By doing this collectively there would be no upfront costs and minimal disruption.

How Would the Scheme Work?

Our proposal is to use a ground source heating system powered by a solar installation or wind turbine. The options are to distribute high temperature water through an insulated pipe network from a central heat pump or to distribute low temperature water and boost the temperature at each property using individual heat pumps.

Heat pumps produce fewer emissions than other energy sources, and can use electricity from 2 to 4 times more efficiently than, for example, electrical heaters. They work by concentrating the energy in either air or water – and using water warmed by passing underground (ground-sourced) is most efficient as it avoids the seasonal variations in air temperature that makes the air-sourced pumps less efficient as air temperatures are lowest when you need the heat most.

Potentially, the whole system; boreholes, pipework, heat pumps, metering, and energy infrastructure would be owned and maintained by the not-for-profit community benefit company financed by monthly energy payments similar to our current energy bills. The governance, pricing and general management of the system and company would be done in consultation with the whole village, the Council and other stakeholders.

Such District Heat Networks or Shared Loop networks are common on the continent and several are under construction or in planning locally, for example at North Aston in north Oxfordshire – now live supplying around 30 properties, Upper Heyford in Oxfordshire (<https://heatupperheyford.wixsite.com/website>) where trial boreholes have demonstrated that a high temperature network is feasible and cost effective, and at Swaffham in Cambridgeshire (<https://heatingswaffhamprior.co.uk>) a pilot project which is now live and ramping up to supplying 160 households that have committed to the scheme.

To help with our understanding and potential for such a scheme, we became members of the Low Carbon Hub (<https://www.lowcarbonhub.org/>), the Oxfordshire organisation working to promote Community based and sustainable energy sources, and the Greater South East Energy Hub (www.energyhub.org.uk), a collaboration of Local Enterprise Partnerships working to support local energy projects in south-east England.

Greener Great Coxwell nominated for Community Group of the Month 2021 by Oxford Low Carbon Hub.

Greener Great Coxwell Featured in Oxfordshire Climate Action Stories Website - Community Energy Project included in the 'Climate Action Stories' project run jointly by Friends of the Earth and Edinburgh University.

We successfully applied for grant funding from the south-east Energy Hub (financed by DEFRA and the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, BEIS) to employ consultants to carry out feasibility studies via the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF). The BEIS department was dissolved in Feb 2023 with its responsibilities split between new departments including the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. The RCEF grant systems have expired.

RCEF Feasibility Study:

Phase 1

Our consultants, Locogen, completed a desktop assessment of benefits and risks of potentially technically feasible energy schemes. The study carried out a high level review of our building stock, estimated our energy requirements and mapped our heat distribution across the village. Heating solutions and network options were costed and compared.

Locogen concluded: It would seem that there is potential for a heat network solution at Great Coxwell, but the ability for this system to provide cost effective low carbon heat will be subject to the ability to tie the heating project into an electrical generation scheme to provide cheaper primary energy.

Opportunities for potential Ground Mounted Solar and Wind Turbine locations were mapped by overlapping constraints and planning considerations.

Phase 2

The steps for Phase 2 were to model test scenarios comparing those solutions under different heat demand profiles. The Phase 2 feasibility report included a detailed evaluation of the highlighted options and provided detailed analysis that can be used to take forward to detailed development. From Phase 2 Locogen concluded:

- It is evident that a shared loop DHN could work at Great Coxwell (and similar villages like it);
- A shared loop system with wind generation would be most financially attractive for both network owner and homeowner;
- This option is also the costliest and some properties would need an upgraded grid connection;
- The payback does allow the network owner to increase heat selling tariff without increase payback periods too much;
- It would still require the 1MVA grid export capacity to allow an additional source of revenue to be generated from wind generation;
- This grid connection capacity represents the biggest development risk at this stage;

Summary of Main Risks to the Project:

Wind Turbine

A location for a wind turbine was identified by Locogen and preliminary discussions with the landowners were very positive. Its suitability in terms of windspeeds would need to be investigated. However, the situation regarding on-shore wind is currently very difficult –a government consultation is about to complete but does not appear to have been positive.

Amendments to the 'Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill' regarding changes to planning regulations and to the 'National Planning Policy Framework' would allow onshore wind projects to be considered on the same basis as other infrastructure projects but are not thought likely to succeed.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/feb/28/fears-grow-government-will-renege-on-lifting-onshore-windfarm-ban-in-england>

Solar

Several potential sites for Ground Mounted Solar were identified by the desk top study. Some are located on National Trust land farmed by Andy Cato. Brief conversations with both the National Trust and Mr Cato were positive and we are waiting for response from the National Trust regarding the possibility of taking this further.

An important next step would be to survey to understand their attitudes to either of these two possibilities.

Grid Connection

A major risk to the project is that of connectivity to the grid. Either wind or solar projects would require a grid connection to facilitate selling power to the grid and the potential to draw power from the grid to ensure continuity of supply to the heat project.

However, the connection can take a long time and be very costly to achieve. A recent report from the government's environmental audit committee found that in some cases, customers were having to wait 10 to 15 years to secure a connection for solar installations.

MPs said there were three key areas where the current approach on grid connection was delaying progress: a lack of physical infrastructure such as cables and transformers; poor availability of data on solar photovoltaic generation, particularly for small-scale installations; and a "queueing system" of applications where developers are applying for grid connections without the project having planning permission.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/may/05/uk-householders-face-delays-of-up-to-15-years-for-solar-installations>

Our discussion with SSE suggested that a best-case scenario costing £1-1.6 million would take 2-3 years. Failing this, upgrades could happen after 2028.

Of course, an alternative scenario using individual air source heat pumps would also require network upgrades – so even without the proposed Community scheme grid connection will be a limiting factor. Also, the heat demand work suggested that the majority of our properties would require large capacity heat pumps using three phase electricity. There is no easy answer to this transition.

Grant aid.

We were not able to complete the feasibility study in time to apply for an RCEF phase 2 grant. Phase two grants are for business development and detailed financial modelling. We are liaising with the South East Net Zero hub on the possibility of combining with similar projects.

Funding is available for capital grants from the Green Heat Network Fund grant scheme but that has a minimum requirement of 100 participating properties – at 110 households Great Coxwell is highly unlikely to meet that minimum demand.

The capital costs could be met by issuing our own public shares or working with a green investment group. The cost of the grid connection would, however, most likely be prohibitive.

Next Steps

Work with other community energy organisations to get consultancy help to move the business model forward. Eg. Greater South East Net Zero Hub.

Investigate possibilities for help in generating renewable energy. Eg – Low Carbon Hub, Octopus Fan Club, Ripple Energy.

Engage with the village to understand the appetites for a wind turbine or solar installation.

Lobby for upgrading the Grid

Annabelle Zinovieff, Greener Great Coxwell Group

Great Coxwell Defibrillator – Annual Report to Parish Council 2021-2

The Parish Council has requested the Great Coxwell Defibrillator Group ('The Group') to provide an annual summary to the Council in March of each year on the status of the defibrillator and the support group.

The device has been registered with the Ambulance Service since it was installed and is on their records as being 'rescue ready'. It is also registered on the National Defibrillator Network 'The Circuit' (<https://www.thecircuit.uk>) and quarterly reports have been made to them - to confirm that the machine is 'rescue ready'

The machine was installed in June 2021. It is effectively maintenance-free, although periodic battery checks/software resets are needed (see below) and it has a full 10-year warranty. The cost of replacement pads (due March 2025) is approx. £45 and a new battery (due March 2026) is approx. £200. The cabinet also has a 10-year warranty. The Group will continue to hold the funds (£500) in reserve for replacement pads and battery – this is more than adequate for the next 10 years.

The device has been inspected approximately weekly and there is an on-line record of checks. See: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/2yg6iiu0yqm16fkp7wo4g/Guardian-Checklist.xlsx?dl=0&rlkey=rro7i0yid51vaak40k5cqfgpt>.

There have been six instances (dates noted on spread-sheet) where the device was showing a warning light and required a battery check/software reset. This was easily accomplished and I understand that it remained 'rescue ready' throughout.

The device has not been used within reporting the year.

The Group (the Parish Council already has a record of the names of the membership) is still in place although there has been little call for them to assist since the machine was installed as Ian Mason (the Group lead) has been able to make most of the weekly inspections described above.

Ian Mason (on behalf of the Great Coxwell Defibrillator Group)

Great Coxwell Neighbourhood Plan (GCNP) 2022/3

Following completion of an update in 2020, Great Coxwell Neighbourhood Plan development activity has been minimal during the past year. Discussions have taken place, however, to evaluate the option to update the GCNP policies over the next three years. The Parish Council's view of the benefits and limitations of the GCNP is important to the revision and design of new policies that must also reflect those being developed nationally and at District Council level. Any differences in policy interpretation between the Parish Council and the District Council planners during the year might indicate that a policy or policies need to be re-worded.

At its five Parish Meetings in 2022/3, Great Coxwell Parish Council discussed 11 planning applications and 9 'supplementary' applications, ranging from the large Steeds South development to small developments and changes at local properties.

In responding to elements of the Steeds South application, the Parish Council relied heavily on Neighbourhood Plan Policy EDQ1, *Establish a green buffer to protect the village from coalescence*.

Where planning decisions have been taken by the District Council, specific reference in their sanction letters was made to GCNP policies in seven out of nine granted applications (two applications were withdrawn prior to a decision). Thirteen policies were referred to specifically in categories BE (Built Environment), EDQ (Environment and Design Quality) and NDS (Neighbourhood Design Statement).

Through Parish Council responses and the efforts of planning officers, the GCNP fulfilled its statutory role in the planning process.

Completion this year of a Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), a District Council document that drew on significant input from parishioners, provides a further reference point for the Parish Council. It would be helpful to discover how useful the CAA proves to be going forward.

Peter Gale

5.	<p>Chairman of the Parish Council's Report:</p> <p>Cllr Russell reported that over the last year the Parish Council had maintained the village assets including the Park and Reading Room, as well as the book exchange and war memorial. Verges had been maintained and cut.</p> <p>The Park: Funding had been successfully applied for and approximately £40,000 received from s.106 development monies from the VoWH District Council for refurbishment of the basketball court (MUGA), which had been urgently in need of repair. This project is now complete.</p> <p>The Reading Room: had gutters replaced and repair and maintenance to the soffits and fascias, with assistance from funds from the County Councillor's Priority Fund. In addition, plumbing and electrical repairs had been necessary.</p> <p>Verges: have been mown. No mow May is being followed for a second year, where it is reasonable to do so.</p> <p>An anti-dog mess campaign had been initiated with laminated signs using a winning design from a child at Annabelle's Nursery. In addition, the village had participated in a Council Litter Bug Trail.</p> <p>The Parish Council had been able to support the village Jubilee Event in June 2022 and provided annual funds for the Remembrance Day wreath.</p>
6.	Parishioners: No matters raised

Meeting closed 6.45pm

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Date:.....