**Minutes of Methwold Annual Parish Meeting**

The 21 Room at St George’s Hall Methwold

April 18th 2018 at 7.00pm

J Marriage, C West, S Stones, B Horton, S Burbridge, R Gibson, D Charlesworth-Smith, K Plumridge, D Thomas, T Thomas.

1. Apologies received from M Truss, Rev. Waters
2. Approval of minutes of the 2017 Annual Parish Meeting: B Horton proposed to accept minutes, A Burbridge seconded. APPROVED 2 abstentions S Burbridge, T Thomas.
3. Methwold Parish Council Report- It has been a busy year particularly in respect of the old social club, work started at the end of last year and we still have a few things to finish off. A substantial sum was received from the Peggy Wallace estate, we also received money from the extension of a way leave at St George’s Court. These two sums have met the majority of the cost to convert the old social club, this work is ongoing and there is still some work to complete. The Clerk has prepared a balanced budget where income meets estimated expenses. Neither can be precise, it is hoped that the lettings from Mini Methwold will exceed our expectations.

With funding from the Peggy Wallace the snooker room has been converted by the Mini Methwold team into a children’s imaginary play room which is proving to be very popular with locals and those further afield with hirers coming from Thetford, Wisbech and Bury St Edmunds, we are very lucky to have a group of unpaid volunteers who are running Mini Methwold and we thank them for all they do.

The Youth Room is also being used when hiring Mini Methwold for parties, Beavers have made use of this room during the cold winter months and we have also had the first recycle/upcycle event which everyone enjoyed.

St George’s Hall is an old building and needs regular maintenance, we have had to carry out some floor repairs and it may need the whole floor replacing, the funding for this is built into the Financial Reserves Policy, this is in place to manage ongoing projects and any emergency cost we may incur.

We have a 5 year programme to deal with Japanese Knot Weed in the Church Yard and there may be repairs required to the Church Yard Wall.

This year we have to replace and improve some of the safety matting under the play equipment on the recreation ground, this is due to wear and tear.

This year the parish council have endeavoured to deal with a number of issues including:-

Parking on auction day, no respect is shown for those using High Street and there are some who park on the old social club drive. We have been unable to resolve this so far.

We have looked at CCTV in the village, the new GDPR rules come into effect in May 2018 this will have a significant impact on the regulation of CCTV. However, if the village feels sufficiently strongly about CCTV we will seek advice from contractors to establish likely costs and the technical and practical considerations associated with CCTV.

SAMS2 sign – has been placed in several places in the parish and has confirmed that there is a problem with drivers exceeding the speed limit, some excessively. The sign can only remain in a location for 4 weeks and then moved, it cannot return for 8 weeks.

Roads, potholes etc. we have established a good relationship with NCC Highways, the main problem being that they have little money to rectify problems. Traffic parking along Crown Street and outside the primary school has been discussed with Highways and we are looking at possible solutions.

Improvements to the Trod between Methwold and Methwold Hythe will be made with Cllr. Storey making a contribution from his CC fund towards some of the improvements.

Litter – we are still seeing litter being dropped around the parish and especially on the lay by on the Brandon Road.

Cemetery – The parish council has endeavoured to tidy up removing bushes and seedlings from in and around the graves, a number of residents have expressed their pleasure in seeing the results of such work. It is hoped that during this year the rough area between the old and new parts of the cemetery will be tidied up to increase the view and tie the two parts together more closely.

There is to be a change in the Borough that will directly impact the parish. The Independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England has looked into the distribution of the Wards within the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk. It has published its recommendations and Methwold will be split away from Feltwell [Denton] Ward and in future will be included in a Ward with Methwold Hythe, Fen including Wissington sugar beet factory, Brookville and Northwold represented by 1 Borough Councillor, this will come into force at the council elections in May 2019.

1. **Lazy Days** – we are a club for the physically disabled, our numbers are in decline and we need to bring in new members to enable to group to continue. Currently we have 5 members and 3 support staff, we meet on a Tuesday from 10.00 am until 3.30 pm in the Fenton Room. We struggle to keep the club going, insurance, hire fees, we provide a hot lunch, we are looking at opening up to the elderly but at present we are unable accommodate those with severe dementia or illness without taking on additional carers and the costs associated with this. We will be discussing with our members how to increase membership this year.

Lazy Days can be contacted on 01945 881110

**Methwold Theatre Club** – The group have completed a lot of work in the 21 Room to the stage and storage. There were a few productions during the last year and the AGM will be held next week to decide productions and fundraising for next year with a Christmas play or musical show and another play in the new year. Membership is increasing, if anyone is interested in joining us we need people in all departments, front of stage, costume making etc. please contact Rosemary Gibson if interested on 01366 727526

We advertise all our events on social media.

The Chairman congratulated the Theatre Group on recent performance which was very enjoyable.

**Dressmaking Group** – this is a new group which meets fortnightly on a Monday 1pm -5pm in the 21 Room, we regularly have 12 people attend some already have experience but all help those who need or ask for help. They all bring along their own projects (doesn’t have to be dressmaking) and their own machines. Members are only charges to cover the cost of hiring the room. Contact Rosemary Gibson 01366 727526

**Methwold Community Action Group** – we are now in our 10th year, the original group was formed to save the post office and we are open to all residents. MCAG is the umbrella group for many local groups.

The Lunch Club is the most recent member. All groups are backed by insurance and looked after by our Treasurer. MCAG works cooperatively with the Parish Council and would like to thank the Parish Council for it’s support providing the use of the Complex for the 400th Anniversary of the Market Charter & 125th Anniversary of St George’s Hall on 28th May and other events.

**Methwold in Bloom** – many thanks to all volunteers who plant and water the flower tubs around the parish, and to Derby’s and Mr Nixon, the group are looking to repair and replace some tubs during 2018. The Chairman thanked those who help maintain the tubs.

**Youth Club** – Opened in January 2018 children from all the cluster schools are benefitting from the 3 sessions each week, the youth club aim to open during the school holidays. There will be themed evenings and film nights, a young carers event. The MUGA is being used for tennis and football and it is hoped that there will be some day trips organised. There are plans to train 2 students who could supervise the fitness room so this could be offered as an activity. There will be a jumble stall and games at the 28th May event, a music workshop during half term. Chairman commented that it is very good to have a thriving group, the leader has put in a lot of time and effort, C Stone seconded this.

If older people would like to have a go at the activities please contact Tracey Doughty, Volunteers are required, they will need to be prepared to have DBS checks.

**Mini Methwold** – The building started in April 2017 and opened on 8th December the same day as the primary school Christmas event. There have been some stay & play events which have been well supported. Bookings are coming in from all over with childminders from Bury St Edmunds and Wisbech using the facility. Themed events have been held and these prove to be popular. We hope to apply for Tesco bag funding to help with the cost of setting up the outside space. The parish council owe thanks to those who have helped from the start of the project and the volunteers who help to run Mini Methwold.

C Stone thanked K Plumridge who is the core to the success of Mini Methwold, thank you. K Plumridge thanked all those who have helped it makes a huge difference.

Mini Methwold can be contacted through their Face Book page or [www.minimethwold.uk](http://www.minimethwold.uk)

**Methwold Bell Ringers –** Bells ring out for all church services, practice night is every Wednesday from

7.00 pm until 9.00 pm. There are currently 14 ringers but new recruits are always welcome.

Aims – to ring the bells for church services and special events, to maintain the bell ringing equipment, to learn new skills and develop ringing techniques and to welcome new ringers in order for the bells to ring out over the next millennia.

Achievements over the past year – The bells have rung out for – St George’s Day, Primary School Harvest Festival Service, Methwold Bell Ringers were invited to ring the bells for a wedding at Northwold. We held two general knowledge quiz nights which raised a total of £514 for the E.A.A.A. A full tower clean was undertaken on all floors from ground level to parapet and octagon tower. We welcomed two visiting ringing bands to our tower – Ladies Guild and Wimbledon Rangers. We were praised by Ely District for our monthly maintenance and cleaning schedules at an open training day. Our maintenance plan has been uploaded to the District Website so that it can be shared by other towers.

The bells of St George’s Church can often be heard ringing out across the village in celebration and long may it continue, this is only achieved by commitment, work ethic, patience and good humour of each of our ringers, I can’t praise them enough as without them, our bells would be silent as has sadly happened in many of our churches.

If anyone is interested in joining the bell ringers please contact Alan Burbridge on 01366 727002

**The Vicars annual report 2017/18** – There have been changes during this year with the revised Deanery Pastoral Plan, our group of five parishes have grown to eight as we welcomed into the fold St Andrew’s Barton VBendish, St Mary’s Beachamwell with Shingham and Drymere and All Saints Boughton. Eventually sometime later in 2018 we will become the Wissey Valley Benefice. Our ministry family team consists of 7 Lay Ministers and Revd Ken Waters (Priest in Charge). We have run several courses and study sessions including safeguarding, Lent and Advent Bible studies and Discipleship Course.

We have employed a full-time youth leader – Tracy Doughty and opened up the youth centre based in the community building in the grounds of the Iceni Academy Methwold. We are seeing great results.

We have carried out the following occasional services during 2017 Baptisms = 12, Weddings = 2 and Funerals = 10.

The All Souls service attendance is growing and is proving popular for those who wish to remember their departed loved ones. The Easter service attendance has continued to drop, however we have had good attendance at Harvest, Remembrance and Carol services. The Christingle is seeing standing room only and is the most popular service.

There is continued growth in our quarterly Family Messy Church with attendance around 70+. We also run two other Messy Churches in the group, and we hope to coordinate them so that there will be one a month throughout the year thus giving families the option to attend more often. Our Adult Messy Church is also proving popular, we have had quite a few sessions where we have learnt to decoupage, book fold, bake a Simnel cake and hot cross buns, make decorative soap and in May we will learn how to make a proper crème brulee.

I look forward to us working together in the 2018/19 and beyond as we continue to engage with the community in this special place in Norfolk. God bless.

Revd Ken Waters can be contacted on 01366 727220.

**Methwold History Group –** Are now set up in Peggy’s Room in the Complex which has enabled elderly and less mobile to attend with an average of 15 people in attendance at meetings. We have a full programme of events for the next year. A grant has been received and will be used to buy storage for the archive. The history group is looking forward to putting up displays in Peggy’s Room for people to see. Anyone interested in finding out more about the History Group or the archive can contact C Stone on 01366 728478

**Methwold Lunch Club –** This is a fledgling group set up by T Thomas, K Plumridge, R Buckle & R Gibson, the first lunch was in November 2017 where 12 people booked and 9 sat down for lunch and D Thomas delivered take outs to 3 residents who were unable to attend, we have been told that those who attend really enjoy the experience. After costs any profit is put back into the club funds, 2 x coffee mornings have been held to raise money for equipment for the kitchen in the 21 room, to date we have raised enough money to buy a fridge and will be holding another coffee morning to raise funds for a hot cupboard. The Parish Council have allowed the Lunch Club to have the 21 room and kitchen free of charge. MCAG have given us a grant to help with set up but we haven’t used this yet. The Lunch Club has been awarded a 5 star rating by BCKLWN Environmental Health which we are really proud of.

T Thomas thanked all those who come to lunch for their support, we are now regularly providing 30 lunches and reaching our target group which is lovely and really worthwhile. If you are interested in the Lunch Club please contact T Thomas on 07919 685 387 or R Buckle on 07979 309 607.

The Chairman thanked all those groups who contributed, it makes you realise how much goes on in our community, which is brilliant, thank you everyone for your contributions.

Meeting ended 8.10 pm