

## Rackheath Annual Community Meeting Minutes

Held at the Pavilion, Green Lane West, Rackheath

At 6.00pm, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**Chair of Meeting:** Paula Lowe (Community Council Chair)

**Attendance:** Members of the Community Council, Fran Whymark County and District Councillor and nine Members of Rackheath Community.

### 1. Welcome and Apologies for absence

Paula welcomed residents and Councillors to the meeting and advised that apologies had been received from Chris Stace Practice Manager at Hoveton Medical Centre; Chris Ashman, Primary School Headteacher; and Allan Jennings, Norfolk Police.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019

The minutes of the previous Parish Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019 were approved as a correct record.

### 3. Community Council Annual Report for 2021/22

Paula Lowe, Chair, gave the following report from the Community Council:

#### Introduction

It has been 3 years since the Community Council was last able to hold this meeting due to the restrictions imposed by Covid. This proved to be a very difficult time for everyone but one positive to come from this was the amazing support provided by so many residents in the village. It was estimated that Rackheath had one of the highest numbers of volunteers in proportion to residents and so much good work was undertaken. This was marked by the presentation of a Covid Plaque by the Norfolk Lieutenancy in March of this year. The plaque is to be displayed on the village sign outside Holy Trinity Church as reminder of the supportive community we have here in Rackheath. The Council would like to thank all those who volunteered and co-ordinated the effort.

The impact of covid was also felt by the Council who moved to online meetings for over a year, something which was not without its teething problems but once underway Councillors really got into the swing of it and it also enabled residents to join in remotely, which was lovely to see.

## **Pavilion**

The last time this meeting was held the Council reported on the near completion of the Pavilion refurbishment which was scheduled for the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Unfortunately due to difficulties presented when the main building contractors went into administration, the official opening was postponed until 30 September of that year. However, the event, when it did go ahead, was a huge success with a large turnout from the community and hirers. On opening the building, the Council were also able to employ a Booking Assistant to deal with all the administration involved in operating the hire of the building and the surrounding playing fields. Sadly, Covid severely hampered the plans to get the business off to a flying start when, like many other businesses, it was forced to close on 23 March 2020. However, when we were able to reopen most of our regular hirers returned and remain with us, along with lots of new activities. It has also been lovely to welcome so many residents who have used the hall to celebrate birthdays, christenings, baby showers and more and despite the setbacks the business has picked up really well.

Rackheath Lawn Bowls Club and Wroxham Youth Football Club continue to operate their clubs from the bowls green behind the Pavilion and Stracey Playing Field respectively and the Council are looking forward to working with them in the years to come.

The next stage in the development of Rackheath's outside spaces is to increase the amount of play equipment and add a trim trail and outdoor gym equipment between Stracey Playing Field and Jubilee Park. The decision on how best to proceed with the refurbishment of the MUGA has been put on hold until we have a clearer picture of the improvements and expansions of similar facilities locally to make the right decision for the community and the business.

## **Housing Development**

Another major change for Rackheath over the last 3 years is the rate of development. The village has been earmarked as an area of large residential growth and since we last met Sam Smith Way has largely been completed and we have been able to welcome lots of new residents into our community.

Green Lane East and West is now seeing significant changes in its landscape with Lovells, Persimmon and Norfolk Homes all on site. There are two more sites allocated further along Green Lane West towards the Industrial Estate and it is expected that these will commence shortly. The main talking point, development wise, is the area to the north of Rackheath with its own masterplan drawn up and being taken forward by Taylor Wimpey. This will eventually see the village of Rackheath grow into a small town. The developers held a public consultation with the village earlier this year and the feedback has been considered and implemented into a revised plan which should be available for the public to view this month.

## **Newman Road Woods**

The adoption of Newman Road woods has been set in motion but is currently delayed by issues surrounding the boundary. Once resolved the Council looks forward to working with the Pathfinders who have carried out an enormous amount of work in clearing and

revitalising this area for the Community to use. It has been transformed into a network of pathways which allow sight of the old airfield buildings and information boards have been installed to explain how the site was once used. The Council would like to take this opportunity to thank the Pathfinders, particularly Ivan Barnard, Alec Blyth and all the volunteers for the enormous amount of time and work they have put into improving the access and heritage interest of this area for all the community.

## Events

Despite the restrictions on social events, the Council did finally manage to hold a Fireworks event on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Unfortunately, due to a lack of events being held centrally in Norwich, the outlying suburbs all experienced unprecedented demand and it was regretful that despite all the hard work put in by the Parks and Leisure Committee to hold the event safely, the turnout was unprecedented and attracted negative publicity and feedback. It has been decided that due to the increasing amount of work involved in holding an event such as this and a decrease in the membership of the Council, the event will not go ahead in 2022. On a positive note, plans are underway to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in the village with a picnic in the park at Jubilee Park on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 12.00noon followed in the evening by fireworks being set off on the school playing field.

## SAM2

Earlier this year the Council placed an application for 50% funding with the Parish Partnership for a SAM2 device. This records the speed of vehicles travelling past it and allows data collection so that Police resources can be focussed on the areas in need of specific surveillance. We have received confirmation that our bid has been successful and we will be going ahead with purchasing the device. A total of 5 dual direction sites have been identified along Green Lane West and Salhouse Road and it is hoped that this will help with reducing the speed of traffic as the amount of movement through the village will undoubtedly increase.

## Closing

The membership of the Community Council has changed since our last report. We have said goodbye to Rebekah Hughes and Stephen Oakley both of whom worked hard for the community. Brian Gardner left but couldn't stay away and returned after a break of 12 months. We have also welcomed back Chris Yates. As the community grows it will become more important than ever to fill the 3 vacancies we currently have, so that we can continue to carry out the work needed to shape the changing face of our village. Remember more hands make light work! If you are interested or know someone who is, please get in touch.

Lastly, I would like to refer you to the Parish Council statement of Accounts which shows how we have spent our funds in the last year.

#### 4. Reports Received:

- **Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Practice**

Chris Stace, Practice Manager provided the following report which was read in his absence.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to report to your Meeting and I apologise that I am unable to present the report in person.

There are three main topics I wish to report on:

- Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre resilience during and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The changing shape of general practice.
- Rackheath Medical Centre.

To many, the pandemic is now becoming a distant memory, but it remains for Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre and many of our patients the main risk we have to manage. Unlike many practices we remained open throughout the pandemic and our risk management measures successfully ensured we could continue to meet the demand from patients. We delivered with fellow practices last year a successful vaccination programme based from Hoveton Village Hall and this continues as we progress through the spring booster campaign. We are also now awaiting NHS direction on how we can support the inevitable autumn booster campaign.

The ongoing pandemic and vaccination campaign has put additional but manageable pressures on the team at Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre. Covid infections only really struck the staff from December onwards and we generally have one or two members off staff away unable to work. Fortunately, we have not had a mass outbreak, but we will continue to enforce infection prevention and control measures to keep to a minimum the risk of such an outbreak and to protect patients and carers.

Moving on to the future, there are ongoing and substantial changes being made to general practice at Hoveton & Wroxham Medical Centre and across the country where we are seeing an increasingly varied team of specialist clinicians working in the practice. Depending on your health problem when you contact the surgery (by phone or ideally using our online system), the receptionist may book you to see, or speak to:

- a physiotherapist if you have muscular or joint problems.
- a pharmacy technician if you need medicines advice.
- a mental health nurse or mental health and wellbeing coach.
- a social prescriber if you are caring for someone who is becoming increasing frail or nearing end-of-life.

All these roles are described on our website. We are now also recruiting a full-time paramedic and increasing our numbers of nurses to reflect the growing patient numbers. We rely on our

patients working with our experienced reception team to ensure your health problems are dealt with effectively and efficiently.

Having touched on the growing numbers of clinicians dealing with the ever-increasing workload, we are now, despite a building extension in 2021, running out of space. So, moving on to something very close to your hearts, the prospects of a medical centre at Rackheath. This is a perennial issue that the current and previous practice managers have been dealing with since 2008. However, this time, a substantial amount of capital funding has been provided to Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group and a Programme Business Case was submitted late last year that covered five projects, of which Rackheath Medical Centre was one.

The facts are this:

- The capital must be spent by March 2024, so a new medical centre needs to be largely completed by this date and funding committed.
- A Programme Business Case presented by the Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group has needed to be amended in two main areas (funding figures and project managers) and will be resubmitted for approval later this year. You will have seen perhaps the EDP story a few weeks ago.
- In parallel we are working on a Full Business Case, which involves the level of detail to initiate the building of the Practice. The aim is for this to be completed this year so building can commence in 2023.
- The site is Broad Lane.

There is no doubt that there are risks in meeting the deadlines for NHS approvals and project initiation, but we have some momentum that should not be lost.

At present there is no date set by the NHS N&W for the next meeting of the Steering Group for this project but we would expect it to resume once the necessary amendments to the Programme Business case are resolved.

- **Pavilion & Stracey Sports Park facilities**

The report was presented by Anne Tandy, Community Clerk.

### **Introduction**

The past 12 months have been challenging for the business. With continued Covid lockdowns, and restrictions on the way people have been able to interact with each other. This has resulted in building closures and reduced activities. Since the beginning of 2022 confidence has been slowly increasing amongst private and business hirers and enquiries and bookings are at the highest, they have been since opening.

### **Management**

The management of the facilities is overseen by the Community Council. The Clerk undertakes the task of facility management and has delegated powers to make decisions on the day to day running and dealing with issues as they arise. The Council meets its responsibilities by having in place policies to meet the legal requirements of running a public building. The Booking Assistant manages all bookings, enquiries, invoicing and marketing and reports to the Clerk, where necessary. The cleaning is contracted out as is the grounds maintenance. Building maintenance is currently quoted based on what is required and future plans will need to consider a more

contractual arrangement as the building ages and usage increases. Minor snags are addressed as and when, allowing the building to be maintained to a high standard.

## Bookings

Following the various lockdowns most of the regular hirers have returned and new activities have commenced. As of March 2022, the following groups are running:

- Norwich Yoga x4 per week
- Boogie Bounce x2 per week
- Dynamic Dance for adults and children 2x week
- Zumba Gold weekly
- Beebops x2 weekly
- Family Yoga once a month (also in discussion about a weekly class)
- Tropic Business Meeting every two months

One off bookings for hypno-birthing, Rackheath Rainbows and dog training classes have helped to raise the profile of the facilities and provide an income.

One area which has really taken off is private party bookings and the hall has become popular for children birthday parties as well as Christenings, baby showers and adult birthday parties. This may be an area that would benefit from further investment to make it more attractive.

Football continued for the Wroxham youth team, and we are advertising for adult teams to use the pitches on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. The Wroxham Youth teams carried out training and matches on Saturday and Sunday mornings with dedicated training sessions on weekday evenings. During the darker winter months portable floodlights have been used by the club to assist with training but many age groups opt for winter training facilities elsewhere.

The resident Bowls Club rent the green on a seasonal basis to allow practice and match play during the summer and were able to return in May 2021 and enjoy a full season of play. They managed to make use of the Club room for refreshments whilst having in place measures to ensure they followed covid guidelines.

Financial Report

**Rackheath Community Council**  
**Cost Centre Year Comparison Summary**  
**Cost Centre Pavilion and Stracey Playing Field**

	Receipts 2021/22	Payments 2021/22	Receipts 2020/21	Payments 2020/21
<b>Pavilion and Stracey Playing Field</b>				
Booking Assistant Salary		2,321.04		2,115.06
Pavilion Cleaning		2,590.26		3,951.45
Repairs, Renewals and General Maintenance		1,238.00		616.68
PWLB Loan				4,948.05
Hire Income - Pavilion Hall	8,903.79	150.00	1,719.41	200.00
Bowls Club Income	1,500.00			
Football Income	3,989.16		4,277.50	
Pavilion Utilities		5,480.65	40.40	6,922.06
Pavilion Fixtures and Fittings		3,785.00		408.95
Grounds Maintenance - Stracey Playing Field	120.00	7,396.14		7,801.45
MPSA Hire	2,022.85		1,900.01	
Covid Business Support Grant			19,907.43	
Grounds Maintenance - behind the Hall		318.12		
Furlough Payment			717.89	
Pavilion Advertising		53.17		
Call Out	50.00			
New and replacement equipment		29.99		
<b>NET TOTAL</b>	<b>16,585.80</b>	<b>23,362.37</b>	<b>28,562.64</b>	<b>26,963.70</b>

## Budget 2022/23

	Receipts	Payments
Booking Assistant Salary		2,800.00
Pavilion Cleaning		4,000.00
Repairs, Renewals and General Maintenance		2,000.00
Hire Income - Pavilion Hall	5,000.00	
Bowls Club Income	1,575.00	
Football Income	6,000.00	
Pavilion Utilities		6,000.00
Pavilion Fixtures and Fittings		1,500.00
Grounds Maintenance - Stracey Playing Field		6,000.00
MPSA Hire	4,500.00	
Grounds Maintenance - behind the Hall		350.00
Pavilion Advertising		200.00
Call out	200.00	
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>17,275.00</b>	<b>22,850.00</b>

Despite the pandemic the business of the Pavilion continues to recover and is getting closer to the target of breaking even. As business picks up this gap should continue to close and securing an adult football team will certainly assist.

### Policies and Protocols

The most relevant legislation applicable to the Pavilion are Disability and Health and Safety legislation, fire safety and electrical safety. Risk assessments have been prepared by the Clerk and are reviewed regularly. The Clerk ensures that the correct level of insurance is provided for the building which is approved by the Council. Some of the work undertaken is carried out by contractors such as the cleaning, grounds maintenance, mole control, fire extinguisher testing and PAT. These contracts are monitored by the Clerk throughout the year and reviewed annually to ensure they continually meet the needs of the business and provide best value for money. During the annual Fire Risk Assessment this year it was discussed how the assessment of medium risk of harm could be reduced and as a result a new L1 fire alarm system was installed to provide the highest level of protection to the occupants and the Council. Due to long closures of the building a water check system was put in place to prevent the formation of Legionella bacteria. Water systems are run weekly by the cleaning contractor and a record kept of how and where this is carried out.

There are in place the following documents:

- Terms and Conditions
- Hire Rates
- Booking Form
- Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Policy
- Partnership Agreement with the Youth Football team
- Hire Agreement with the Lawn Bowls Club
- Fire Safety
  - Fire Safety Policy
  - Fire Evacuation Plan
  - Fire floor plan

- Fire Safety Induction Training
- Waste transfer Notice
- Bad Debt Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Snow and Ice Plan
- Insurance

## Future Planning

The ongoing housing development in the village has released a sum of s.106 money earmarked as follows, up to February 2022:

Sports	£263,197.40
Play Equipment	£ 52,724.27

There is currently lots of development and expansion of 3g surfaces in the local area which would be likely to impact on the viability of such facilities in Rackheath. The result of this is for the refurbishment of the MPSA to be placed on hold whilst a clearer picture of new provision is known, giving the best assurances that this project can be made a success. In the meantime, the installation of an adult gym trail and new play equipment from this allocation is still under consideration but includes plans for Stracey Playing Field. Commencement of work is expected to be sometime during 2022/23.

With the increased number of private party bookings it would be beneficial to look at installing some disco style lights and a glitter ball. This will also be attractive to some of the higher impact classes that use the hall. Specification and quotes for this will be obtained during this financial year.

- **County & District Councillor**

Councillor Fran Whymark presented the report.

### County and District Councillors Report for 2021/22

The last year has continued to be dominated by Covid and the success of the vaccination programme. Although Covid is now endemic worldwide, in the UK the number of hospitalisations and deaths resulting from Covid have remained very low. Many older and vulnerable people have already had their fourth vaccination and I would urge everyone to have theirs when they are contacted.

Local residents are generously offering their 'Homes for Ukraine'. Norfolk County Council (NCC) and Broadland District Council (BDC) are supporting families who have been issued a visa and a offered a home. The host family will be offering the Ukrainian family a home for at least six months but this could be much longer, the visas last for three years. Anyone who has seen the terrible damage inflicted upon Ukraine will see that many areas have no homes to return to, or schools and hospitals. BDC Housing Standards and Help Hub have been visiting homes to ensure they are suitable for the Ukrainian family and that the host family understand their responsibilities. NCC will ensure DBS checks are undertaken and will coordinate health care, social care and education for the families.

January 2022 saw the launch of NIDAS – Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service. A collaboration between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, NCC, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk and BDC, the first in the County. NIDAS offers a dedicated support service for people experiencing domestic abuse in Norfolk, including children and young people. There will be the offer of recovery programmes, co-ordinated multi agency support (from initial contact and through the court process) and training for professionals, enhancing their understanding of domestic abuse.

For more information on how NIDAS can help you, or someone you know, visit [www.nidasnorfolk.co.uk](http://www.nidasnorfolk.co.uk).

- Call: 0300 561 0555 9am to 6.30pm weekdays and 9am to 3pm weekends
- Text: 07860 063 464
- Out of hours: 0808 2000 247
- Email: [referrals@nidasnorfolk.co.uk](mailto:referrals@nidasnorfolk.co.uk)

If you are in immediate danger, always call 999.

NCC now have 111 Roadside Nature Reserve Schemes, with more planned over the coming years. They stretch over 10 miles and promote the growth of once common but now nationally rare plant species. We will only cut them at the end of the summer, after they flower and set seed. Look out for Reserves on your travels.

Wroxham Library is now open for much more than books. The Business Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) is open offering free support and guidance for budding entrepreneurs and from 10<sup>th</sup> May the Registration Centre will be open until at least the end of 2022 (dependent upon usage) for births, marriages and deaths.

The Community at Heart Lottery at BDC has raised nearly £50000 for good causes in its first year. 68 local groups are benefitting every week, raising much needed funds. If you are a not-for-profit group that benefits Broadland residents, you too could sign up. Go to <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/communities/community-heart-lottery> for more information.

At Broadland we also want to encourage residents to take the first steps to set up new groups. We know that this can often be risking money you do not have but help is at hand. A Get it Started Grant could give you up to £300 to get an idea off the ground. No constitution or committee needed, just three or more residents or a voluntary group with a good idea. Walking football, jigsaw, Pokemon, or anything else your community needs but does not have yet. For advice and more information contact the Communities Team on 01508 533914, [Communities@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:Communities@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk) or go to <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/council/get-started>.

We all know that many people are facing challenging times ahead with food, gas and electric bills increasing dramatically. NCC have just announced an extra £7.7m Cost of Living Support Scheme for residents. NCC, through the Norfolk Assistance Scheme (NAS) and BDC, through the Help Hub are there to help if you are struggling to make ends meet. For support contact NAS on: 0344 800 8020 or <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/care-support-and-health/support-for-living-independently/money-and-benefits/norfolk-assistance-scheme> or BDC Help Hub on: 01603 430431 or <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/help-hub-1>.

Everyone should now have their £150 energy rebate if they live in a Band A-D property. If you live in a Band E-H property and are struggling to pay the bills there is a discretionary fund available. Go to <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/council-tax-1/150-council-tax-rebate/3> for more information.

Although plans have come forward from Taylor Wimpy for the major development (GT16, 3850 homes) in Rackheath, due to a need for 'nutrient neutrality' on any new sites in Broadland (and many districts across Norfolk), it is likely GT16 will be delayed by many months. This is due to the runoff from development and waste generated by people living in the housing, from nitrates and

phosphates, which then impact the watercourses and rivers. BDC are working with developers to look at how best this can be mitigated so building can once again commence.

Cllr Fran Whymark, Housing and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder BDC and County Councillor NCC  
Martin Murrell, BDC County Councillor

- **Norfolk Police**

Police Report: PC 855 JENNINGS Local Policing Neighbourhood Team which was presented in his absence.

Crime Figures – From 01/01/2022 to 20/04/2022.

There have been 12 Crimes raised and 5 non-Crimes raised.

Crimes of note -

Criminal Damage to the gate leading to All Saints Church.

2 x Diesel Thefts from vehicles on Rackheath Industrial Estate.

Drug use –

We have had recent intelligence of possible drug issue on the grass area at the end of Craske Drive, which leads to the foot path running alongside the Primary School.

I have also been carrying out foot patrols through the woods at the end of Canfor Road. After reports of suspicious behaviour. This may also relate to drug dealing in the woods.

Speeding –

Speeding is once again our Priority. We have been carrying out speed checks and will continue to do so, on Salhouse Road in Rackheath.

Behaviour around All Saints Church –

As the weather improves, unfortunately we fear the Lewd behaviour will also increase. My Colleagues and I are aware of the issues and will continue to patrol the area and challenge people when we have the powers to do so.

Initiatives being targeted over the last 12 months –

We held our Priority Setting Meeting for the area on 28th March.

The following priority was set:

Speeding and Road Safety.

On March 16<sup>th</sup> we spent 2 hours in the entrance of Sainsburys on Pound Lane in Norwich conducting a Street Surgery engaging with members of the public face to face and answering any concerns they had. We will be holding another community engagement day at Salhouse Garden Centre on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2022. Please follow Broadland Police Facebook page for any details of any future engagement events in your area.

The next Priority Setting Meeting will take place at 6pm on 28th June 2022 via Microsoft Teams, please get in contact with us on [SNTThorpeStAndrew@norfolk.police.uk](mailto:SNTThorpeStAndrew@norfolk.police.uk) for any further information or to raise any concerns.

Launch of public engagement survey

There is a new way for the public to contact us. The survey will run until Tuesday 7 June and will be available online. People can take part in the survey by clicking here

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/LK2S0T/>.

- **Rackheath Primary and Pre-School**

Chris Ashman, Headteacher sent the following report, which was read in his absence.

### **Context**

We currently have 201 children in school. In September 2022 this is likely to drop to around 195 as we currently have 25 children joining us in September's Reception class with 32 children leaving Year 6. The school's nominal full capacity is 210 – working on 30 children per class.

Since the September 2013 extension we have had 7 classrooms and since January 2014 the Rackheath Bombers have been on site with us. In September 2019 The Bombers became part of the school which secured the longer term future of pre-school care in Rackheath.

We were last visited by OFSTED In November 2017 when the school was rated good.

### **The last few years**

The last 2 years have thrown up some unique challenges. Children, staff and families have had to be flexible and quick to take on new challenges. We have had 2 periods of remote learning for many children during the lockdown periods (Summer 2020 and Spring 2021) with simultaneous face to face learning for key worker children. In school we spent the academic year 2020-21 in bubbles which necessitated a complete re-organisation of the school day

Alongside this the school have supported families in lots of other ways including support with emotional and mental health problems, providing meals/vouchers for disadvantaged children etc I feel that during this period the community really came together to support each other. The school was certainly at the centre of the community, the parent survey results from Summer 2021 clearly back this up.

Although the school has felt more “normal,” this academic year has had its fair share of challenges too. In January/February 2022 around half of the children in the school were off with Covid/ issues linked to Covid. Nearly all staff have had Covid at least once. Fortunately, we have been able to keep the school running without too much disruption for the children

As we move into the summer term, we hope to be able to look forward to a term as free as possible from any disruption, with lots of exciting learning opportunities for all the children.

Through the whole process the children have been amazing!

### **Moving Forward**

We have put programmes in place to support children catch up on lost learning. Some of the younger children have needed additional support with language and socialisation as a result of missing some key early learning experiences. To illustrate this point, it is worth reflecting that a child in Year 1 or 2 has not yet had a “normal” year in school.

Having said that through this year the children have made good progress thanks to everyone's hard work.

Unfortunately, one of the by-products of the pandemic is that services to support children and families, already stretched before the pandemic, have even longer waiting lists than before. A lot of the additional burden has fallen on schools.

As yet the additional building in Rackheath has not had too much of an impact on the school in terms of issues with capacity, although unfortunately we have had a few families who wanted to join the school who we couldn't accommodate. Surprisingly, our smallest class is the current reception class, which only has 21 in it. We have a limit of 30 children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. From Year 3 upwards we take 32 maximum. As time goes on, I'm sure this will become more of an issue as more and more houses are built.

- **Rackheath Village Hall**

Steve Hands, Vice Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee presented a report:

## General Comment

The Rackheath Village Hall continues to thrive and operate as an asset to the Village, despite the recent restrictions imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic and fluctuations in users of the facilities. One of few halls that boasts a sizeable stage, large hall, meeting room and kitchen facilities, it is used by regular bookings and parties of a varied nature – badminton, a range of fitness/keep fit groups, amateur dramatics, home education, young at heart, short mat bowls and others. Whilst pandemic restrictions imposed a carefully regulated form of use, the Hall continued to function and has come out the other side in a viable financial state, predominantly as a result of grants/funding that became available during lockdown periods. That said, like a lot of volunteer-run facilities, there are areas that need to be addressed going forward. As detailed in the Neighbourhood Plan, the Village Hall is hoping to gain funding from the Community Council, using money from the new developments to update and modernise the Village Hall which is identified in the Plan as a `Community Asset`.

## Areas Of Concern

In common with other local community organisations, the RVH Committee face a number of issues and concerns that impact the well-running of the Hall and the provision of the facilities it provides: **Increasing Longevity of Committee Members.** The RVH is a charity. The Committee comprises of trustees with other volunteers and user representatives. Most of the Committee are getting old and several seek to relieve themselves of the responsibility of running the Hall. However, despite encouragement for new members on the Village websites, few have come forward, and those who have decided to help are usually involved already in other parts of the community. This is likely to remain a concern going forward.

**Structure & General Fabric.** Maintenance of the Hall and its age is another aspect that has increasingly come to the fore. As the Hall gets older, there are areas that are difficult to look after and refurbishment is on the agenda. Like a number of places, finding and retaining a regular cleaner/caretaker is problematical. Consequently, these functions are not undertaken as often as users might wish. Although users are provided time before and after hire to clean / clean up, the Hall is showing signs that this is not being undertaken conscientiously by some and cleanliness can be affected. Equally, there are some major works/projects to be addressed to bring the whole facility up to a standard that the Committee would see as acceptable going forward, particularly the toilets and kitchen.

**Energy Supply.** Present constraints on energy supply has brought focus to this issue. Whilst the Hall remains one of the most cost-effective hires in the area, it is likely that costs will be driven up.

**Security & Damage.** Unfortunately, like other parts of the village, RVH suffers from its share of damage from mindless vandalism. This is an area that will need to be addressed with heightened security.

**Respect For Property & Users.** RVH and its grounds are private property. This is not strongly enforced. However, Hall users have experienced nuisance activities from members of the public and uncontrolled children on the grounds whilst the Hall is in use. The Hall Committee seek to encourage respect for those who have booked the Hall and an acknowledgement that the grounds are not a “free-for-all” play area.

## Summary

RVH has an ongoing role to play in village life and amenities. In conjunction with other village community buildings, it continues to provide useful facilities to a wide range of hirers. It needs

support and refurbishment and, despite concerns, if respected and looked after, will continue to be viable for the future.

- **Rackheath Women's Institute**

Frances Pointer, President of Rackheath Women's Institute presented a report:

We are now celebrating our 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary. Our activities include a range of speakers, local walks and theatre trips and much more. Our current membership totals 40 but there are not many from Rackheath and we would like to increase the local membership. The primary school have invited us to attend their Summer Fayre and run a cake stall which will help to raise our profile. There has been an advertising campaign through local magazines and we would like to get a Rackheath magazine up and running again. Meetings currently take place at Rackheath Holy Trinity Church but problems with storage and availability of the venue for some sessions means we may need to consider an alternative location in the future. Members were involved in the Community Café which has now finished and we previously looked after the War Memorial at Rackheath Industrial Estate until this became too onerous. This is now in need in some attention. We would like to see footpaths from Rackheath through to Salhouse Station.

- **Young at Heart**

Brenda Wright attended as a representative of the group and presented a report.

The group meets on Tuesdays 10am-12noon at Rackheath Village Hall and has been running for five years for the over 50's. Activities regularly include table tennis, darts, new age curling and bowls amongst others. In the summer the group enjoys French bowls, BBQ's and afternoon teas and at Christmas a meal together. Some younger adults are now attending with carers who join in with the activities. Refreshments are served at each session and the weekly cost is £1.50.

In 2018 we were awarded the Community Group of the Year Award by Broadland District Council. This is remarkable as the group was only set up in 2017. The recognition was due to the inclusive approach to the community. We are run by volunteers who keep it going and evolving. We would like to extend our thanks to Steven Dunston for setting up the group. We are a very friendly group and all are welcome.

- **Bowls Club**

Doreen Cliffe of Rackheath Lawn Bowls Club attended and presented a report.

The historical background of the club was given. We had been sharing the green with the Wellington and Coronation teams but sadly Covid affected membership and the Coronation Team has folded. This resulted in the maintenance of the green becoming untenable. However, a new club has joined to fill the gap and a reduced maintenance schedule has enabled the green to continue to be available for the clubs to use. Promotion of the facilities has been attempted but no new members are yet to attend. With falling numbers, the future of the club and the green is by no means secure for the future but with new residents coming to the village we very much hope to see an increase in membership. We are open to ideas as to how we can promote the group and would like to hear from anyone who thinks they may be able to help us with this.

- **Pathfinders**

Ivan Barnard attended to present the Pathfinders Report for 2021.

It is a privilege for me to present this report to you, both as the Founder of the 'Pathfinders' and also a director of the 467<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Association, USA.

The Pathfinders were founded in February 2020 as a voluntary group under the auspices of Broadland District Council. The purpose of the group was to explore and develop Newman Road Woods, both as a community woodland and a heritage site to the memory of the 467<sup>th</sup> BG USAAF who occupied the site from March 1944 to July 1945.

Norfolk County Council was appointed as the Project Manager to oversee and implement a series of technical reports and infrastructure works. While the Pathfinders, working in conjunction with the Project Manager researched, surveyed and unearthed the buried historical infrastructure. With the completion of Norfolk County Councils, contracted involvement the Pathfinders continue, Saturday mornings to develop maintain and enhance the site.

The showcasing of our endeavours is contained in a 43-page PowerPoint presentation that has been produced in anticipation of the public launch, when ownership of the site passes to Rackheath Community Council.

The methodology of our vision is the unique provision of community woodland, as a place of peace and tranquillity. An oasis of the natural world, from the Greater Crested Newt to the European Cave Spider.

All of which is set in the historic environment of The Mess Site, where during 1944/45, 3,000 personnel of the 467<sup>th</sup> BG USAAF, ate daily.

You can follow our weekly progress on our Facebook page; Rackheath Pathfinders, or see us on YouTube; Postcard from Rackheath.

### **The Pathfinders Motto**

We learn from the past, to inform the present, to inspire the future.

### **In conclusion, some brief bullet points**

- In addition to the previously installed bird, bat and owl boxes, the local scout group has made an additional seven of the bird boxes.
- June should see the release of a 20-minute documentary film that showcases the endeavours of the Pathfinders.
- August should see the commencement of the Ground Museum. Stencilled on the floors of each of the buildings will be all the prominent features; a teaching education facility thought to be unique in the UK.
- This coming October will see our first American visitors.
- Today we have taken delivery of three truckloads of woodchip, donated by a local businessman. This will be used to top up the woodland paths.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:06**