



**Minutes of the Ashfield-cum-Thorpe  
Annual Parish Meeting  
held on  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022  
In the Community Hall**

17 in attendance, including 4 Parish Councillors, the District Councillor and the County Councillor.

Apologies – Cllr Simon Garrett

**1. Welcome by Chair of Ashfield-cum-Thorpe Parish Council**

Chairman Robert Grimsey opened the meeting, thanking everyone for coming.

**2. Agreement of Minutes of the Previous Annual Parish Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2021 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by Chairman Robert Grimsey, seconded by Councillor Ruth Hart, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Chair and the Clerk

**3. Matters Arising from the Previous Annual Parish Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

None

**4. Report by the Chair of Ashfield-cum-Thorpe Parish Council**

Chairman Robert Grimsey, gave his report:


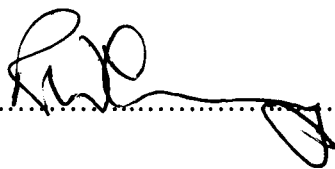
Firstly thanks were given to Myles, the previous Chairman for all his work and help. The Parish Council typically meets four times a year, the minimum required for a smaller parish of this type, which usually is sufficient. At the meetings a wide range of topics are covered, from Highways to Planning. There have been one or two planning applications at most meetings, these are generally for extensions of remodelling – there have been no new build applications in last year.

One issue that has been a major problem for the Parish Council in the past years has been anti-social behaviour in the village. The District Council and police have both been involved in handling the situation, with the Parish Council acting as liaison and helping to monitor the situation.

Another item that has taken up quite a bit of time has been dealing with the issue of vehicles speeding through the village. A study was undertaken to consider the feasibility of extending the speed limit to the north of the village, but unfortunately the data collected by Suffolk Highways did not support this measure at the present moment in time. However, the Parish Council will be meeting with residents at that end of the village to look at what measures could help, such as cutting back hedges and strategic white-lining.

A further application to ask for police enforcement cameras to attend the village is currently being assessed by Suffolk Constabulary. It seems that the vast majority of vehicles passing through the village do respect the 30-mph limit, but unfortunately there are occasionally one or two that are greatly in excess of the limit. This is a common problem in a lot of villages throughout Suffolk.

Finally, during the course of the past year, Paul Whayman has moved away from the village and as a result stepped down from the Council, but Chris Sharpe took on the voluntary role of Parish Councillor in January. This means that there are five Councillors currently serving Ashfield-cum-Thorpe, with two vacancies remaining. There will be elections this time next year, but if anyone who has lived in the village for at least 12 months would like to consider joining the Parish Council they can be co-opted onto the Council in the meantime.

Signed .....  ..... (Clerk) Signed .....  ..... (Chair)

**5. Report from Mid Suffolk District Councillor Kathie Guthrie**

The full Annual Report from the District Councillor is available on the Ashfield-cum-Thorpe village website. A brief outline was delivered and then the floor opened for questions.

Chairman Robert Grimsey asked when is something going to be done to contain the ongoing development taking place at Stonham Barns. Although outside of Ashfield-cum-Thorpe as a parish, there are knock on effects for residents such as traffic issues and the risk of dangerous planning precedents being set. Both District Councillor Kathie Guthrie and County Councillor Matthew Hicks explained that they couldn't comment as they may need to be involved with a planning committee to deal with the matter, but confirmed that the matter is being taken very seriously and will be addressed.

**6. Report from Suffolk County Councillor Matthew Hicks**

The full Annual Report from the County Councillor is available on the Ashfield-cum-Thorpe village website, but at a local village level in the past year attention was drawn to the following:

County Councillor Matthew Hicks was pleased to report that the speed limit on the A1120, just outside of Ashfield-cum-Thorpe had now come to fruition. Chairman Robert Grimsey commented that it was disappointing that the new speed limit did not include the junction into the village, but Councillor Hicks explained that this can be monitored and an extension could be applied if deemed necessary.

Clr Chris Sharpe raised concern about the lack of mobile coverage and broadband which is causing problems with the work from home culture. Councillor Hicks confirmed that 98% of Suffolk now has access to superfast broadband and suggested that if properties within Ashfield-cum-Thorpe are still not served in this way then to let him know, so that he could ensure that it is included in the next phase of rollout that is due to start soon. Unfortunately, Suffolk County Council don't have any say on mobile coverage as this is a national issue, Councillor Hicks suggested taking this concern to the local MP.

**7. Report from PC Simon Green – Report on village website**

**8. Report by a Representative of Ashfield Footpaths Group**

Chairman Robert Grimsey reported that he tries to walk all the footpaths in the parish at least once a year, with many being covered much more than that. As a general rule the footpaths are in good order and there is regular contact with the Suffolk County Council Rights of Way Officer to get things sorted out as and when issues occur. The majority of landowners take their duties very seriously, but occasionally some need reminders to ensure that they reinstate or care for paths as they should.


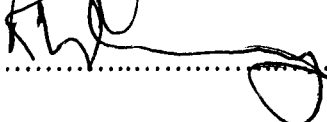
A query was raised about the use of about bird scarers and whether there are any rules around their positioning. Chairman Robert Grimsey said he believed that they should be at least 50 ft away from paths and pointing away from the path. They should also only be discharging during daylight hours. If anyone has any concerns then please let the Parish Council know and they will look into the matter.

**9. Report by the Chair of Ashfield Community Council – Report on village website.** A lot of renovation work has been put into the hall over the lockdown period and its lovely to now see people come and use it. Thanks were expressed to everyone for their efforts. Chairman Robert Grimsey confirmed that he had been able to secure one Acer Queen Elizabeth Field Maple, which would be planted to the rear of the hall as part of the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. The tree will be recognised as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project.

**10. Report by the Group Organiser of Ashfield Ladies Group – Report on village website.** It was also explained that the Ladies Group are going to undertake some advertising within the village to ensure that any newcomers are aware of the group and what it can offer.

**11. Report by a Trustee of Ashfield Welfare Trust – Report on village website.**

**12. Report by Ashfield's Village Recorder** –A brief summary of the report was provided, with the Village Recorder commenting that it is always surprising how much actually goes on in the village, despite its outwardly 'sleepy' appearance. The reports make reference to individuals and houses in Ashfield, and it has therefore been decided that these should not be available via the public pages of the Ashfield website. If you'd like a copy of any of the reports, please contact Anita at Merryvale House. Historic reports on the website have also been tidied up due to data protection concerns, but are of course still retained. If anyone

Signed  (Clerk) Signed  (Chair)

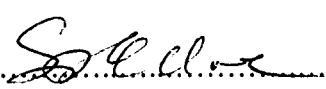
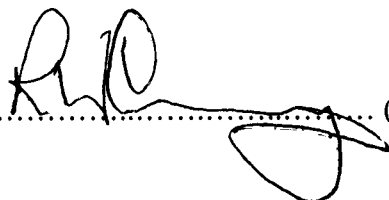
thinks things have anything that should be included, please let the Village Recorder know. Any documents or historical information about properties can also can be lodged with Suffolk Records Office.

**13. Report by the Head Teacher of Earl Soham Community Primary School** – No report received at date of meeting.

**14. Open forum for questions and discussion**  
None

Chairman Robert Grimsey thanked everyone for coming and giving up their time.

Meeting closed 9 pm

Signed  (Clerk) Signed  (Chair)