

**Minutes of Methwold Annual Parish Meeting 2017**  
**Fenton Room at St George's Hall Methwold**  
**Wednesday 26th April 2017 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Mr J Marriage – Chairman of Methwold Parish Council, Mr D Thomas – Vice Chairman, Mrs Gibson, Mrs Stones, Mrs Horton, Mrs Plumridge, Mr Crawley, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith

12 members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting

Welcome and to receive apologies for absence: Mr Hood, Mrs Thomas, Mr West, Mrs Ramsay

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2016-Proposed by Mrs Charlesworth-Smith seconded by Mr Thomas. The Chairman read out the minutes of 2016 APM-All approved.

**Mo Truss – Ladies Group** The Ladies Group still thrives with a regular attendance of 12-16 people. We have continued to support other groups who require refreshments etc. and have had some fantastic speakers. We had a very successful outing to the Frankfurt Christmas Market in Birmingham and thus year we are going to Lincoln for their Christmas Market-seats are still available. We welcome any new members to our meetings which are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month in the Fenton Room. Methwold Ladies Group can be contacted on 01366 727462

**Methwold Times**-After a bad year where we said goodbye to our Treasurer of many years we are now back on track. We have a new team, lots of new advertisers, adverts and events. Methwold Parish always comes first with any remaining space going to other areas. I should like to thank publicly all those involved in the Methwold Times, from the production team to the people who deliver over 700 copies a month and the contributors. It is a difficult job and most of us do not do it because it is a fun thing to do but because it must be done. Thank you. Methwold Times can be contacted on 01366 727462

**History Group** – Methwold History goes from strength to strength and the archive continues to grow thanks to the generosity of our residents and ex-residents. We are greatly looking forward to the move to the new building which will make access much easier for our older visitors and disabled. Methwold History Group can be contacted on 01366 728478

**Jim Marriage, Chairman of the Parish Council, on the Council's year**

Highways - We have tried to get action from them on, drains, gullies and treads. We have endeavoured to get regular meetings with Highways and we have achieved a better working relationship with them. We still have an uphill struggle getting them to spend money. They will not reposition the 40mph limit in Brookville which is a disappointment to residents on the Main Road. However set against this decision, the PC has been awarded a Parish Partnership Grant (i.e. 50% of the cost) towards speed awareness signs – SAMs2. They may only be used to monitor speed at one location for a month (monitoring speed for 1 direction), it then must then be moved. The PC has identified several sites in the Parish where we could usefully monitor speed. The equipment, besides indicating their speed to drivers, has the facility to record the speeds of the vehicles which can be downloaded and passed to either Highways or the Police, to support our arguments concerning speeding. It can prompt the police's to take a more proactive approach to speeding in the Parish. However we need volunteers to help manage the

equipment, either moving location or keeping batteries charged up. Please feel free to volunteer by contacting the Clerk or myself.

We are pressing Highways for information concerning their proposals for mitigating the flooding at Petch Corner.

Planning – has calmed down but it would appear that the Planners take little notice of our concerns. This is because the Planners, to ensure fair and objective decisions are bounded by “guidance policies” – both national and local. The best way to gain a better understanding of the planning would be to undertake the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. Methwold doesn’t have one and it is something that I believe this Parish needs. The idea is gaining interest in a number of other Parishes within BCKLWN area.

Within the Parish it has been a quiet year. Litter bins - we are already charged for collections and if we want another litter bin it has to be as big as your black/green bins and we have to pay for the collection. We are keeping with the arrangements we have now – which isn’t adding to the Parish Council’s costs.

Grass cutting in the areas which are the responsibility of the Borough Council – we were to be offered a deal this year to take responsibility for the Borough’s grass cutting in the Parish however (a) they couldn’t get their act together but more importantly (b) the PC was to be responsible for more than grass cutting to include trees and grounds maintenance which is likely to have cost more than we would have received for taking over the grass cutting [6 times a year] Not only that, but we would then have been in line to receive the complaints that are currently directed at the Borough Council – unless of course we paid for more regular cutting.

There are a number of areas that need to be addressed in the coming year:

- Replacement of the safety surfacing around the older play equipment on the Rec
- St George’s Hall car park on a Monday, do we replace the car park markings?
- Tree survey needs to be bought up to date and we need to deal with trees in the Cemetery
- Improvements to the grounds of the Cemetery – we had some help from a Community Day organised by the Icen Academy back in July, but we need to do more.
- Icen Academy approached the Parish Council to have the speed signs changed on either side of the school. These are not our signs so we had to decline but hopefully our new SAMs2 signs will make drivers more aware of their speed. I understand the PC will again be approached to get involved with the Community Day

- We helped Quorn with their concerns over traffic and traffic movements in and out of the factory, in turn they helped the Parish Council by making over-night drivers using the layby on the Brandon Road aware of facilities available at the security station at the entrance to the factory. In addition members were invited on a guided tour of the Quorn facility.

The PC will hopefully continue to widen its contacts with the local community.

Transfer of the old Social Club to the Parish Council. There has been a number of articles in the Methwold Times - The Parish Council is responsible for it now and we are gradually reopening it for community use.

- There is a planning application for some additional windows, a door and a change to the internal layout which should be approved very shortly.
- We have local builders approved by full Council to start work – which we hope will be after the Bank Holiday
- We have been offered £40,000 out of Peggy Wallace’s estate
- There will be a Youth Room and Office and an Early Learning Room
- The Theatre Group has moved over to the 21 Room and is modifying the stage for their future productions. They will have the advantage of more dry storage under the stage – and there is talk of a Youth Theatre Group??
- Later this year we are going to look at physically joining the two buildings. Levels and access are a problem but nothing is insurmountable.

Methwold Parish Council meet in the 21 room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7.30pm, everyone is welcome to come along or to contact the Clerk on [methwoldpc@methwold.net](mailto:methwoldpc@methwold.net) 01366 727851

**Methwold Theatre Club-** We started our events for the last year with the production of The Odd Couple (Female Version) in February, followed by several Murder Mysteries.

June was a busy month for us with a Race Night, these are always good fun and well attended followed by our participation in the Queen's Birthday Party Celebrations organised by the Methwold Action Group. We ran the tombola and performed a Radio Play in the evening 'The Tolling Bell' with 1950's style sound effects. During the summer, we entered the Hunstanton Festival with 'The Green Door' written by Burtie Welland. In October we put on our second full length play 'The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen's Guild Dramatic Society Murder Mystery', it was a brilliant play attended by record audiences over the two nights. Finally to finish off the year we had a Victorian Music Hall Charity Show with some wonderful performers who volunteered their time. We had another record audience and were able to raise an amazing £700.00 for the Bury St Edmund's Women's Refuge.

We have considerably increased advertising in all local village magazines and increased coverage on all the Methwold Village internet sites. This seems to have had the desired effect in increased numbers of audience attending our performances which hopefully will continue to grow. It also has raised awareness of MTC with the intention of attracting more members for the future. We now also have a newsletter mailing list, to pass on details of our upcoming events and news to. If anyone is interested in being on our mailing list please let me know or fill out one of the leaflets.

So finally, what's in store for this year? We have the exciting move into the St Georges Hall Complex in the 21 Room and with the luxury of having a permanent stage it opens up huge opportunities to grow as a club. We are always looking for new members whether you want to be on stage or help out back stage so if anyone is interested please let me know.

We are going to have an open day on Bank Holiday Monday 29th May to sell some costumes and Teas & Coffees so if anyone is out and about and would like to pop in you are more than welcome. Another Race Night on Friday 30th June, these are really good fun and at only £3.00 a ticket great value, we provide a light buffet included in this price. We also plan to put on two plays this year, 29th and 30th September and then a Christmas Play on in December. Methwold Theatre Club can be contacted on 01366 727526

**Methwold Bell Ringers-**Bells ring out for all Church Services, practice night is every Wednesday from 7.00 pm until 9.00 pm.

Aims

- 1) To ring the bells to welcome worshippers to Church Services and for special events
- 2) To maintain the bell ringing equipment in peak condition so that all ringers can enjoy the use of our bells now and in the future.
- 3) To use practice nights for learning new skills and developing ringing techniques.
- 4) To welcome new ringers to our group in order for the bells to ring out over the next millennia.

Achievements over the year

1 Our ringing band won the Wisbech District Call Change competition held at St Mary's, retaining the trophy for a successive year.

We also came second in the Methods competition and achieved a fantastic 88% ringing accuracy in both competitions with a special commendation from the Judges.

2 Held 2 General Knowledge Quiz nights in April and November which together raised £341 for the East Anglain Air Ambulance

3 All 8 bell ropes have now been replaced as the original rope set were worn out.

4 The bells have rung at all Church services and for special events throughout the year. Our ringing band were invited to ring the bells of St Peter's Church Thetford to celebrate the Towns Festival weekend (Saturday September 10)

5 An open practice session was held at one of the Adult Messy sessions (Sat Nov 5) to allow anyone to try bell ringing. We had 6 volunteers, 2 of which have continued to come along to our practice nights and can now ring strokes on their own

6 Welcomed 3 visiting bands to our tower to enjoy the use of our bells.

Social Events – Christmas Dinner and Quiz Nights

Our church bells can often be heard ringing out across the village in celebration and long may it continue. It's only achieved by the 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.

Methwold Bell Ringers can be contacted on 01366 727002

### St George's Church-"The Vicar's" Parish Report for 2016

We have now been Fincham Group B since November 2015. Fincham Group B is currently made up of St George's, Methwold; St Margaret's, Wereham; St Andrew's, West Dereham; Christ Church, Whittington and All Saints, Wretton with Stoke Ferry. Our group has now settled down thanks mainly due to our very strong Ministry Family of Carol Nicholas-Letch and Janet Tanton as our Licensed Lay Ministers, Ray Burman as a Licensed Lay Minister (Pioneer), Peter King Licensed Lay Minister and Michael Poole currently completing an Authorised Lay Minister (Worship Leader). Diane Mantle started LLM training in September.

Services continue to be held every Sunday morning with some time changes to 9.30am with an 11.00am service every second Sunday and services are held for all annual major festivals and events. The All Souls service continues to be popular for those who wish to remember their departed loved ones.

We have lost 4 members of our congregation through moving away or death; we have gained 2 new members. We do not attract young families to our main services, however, Christingle continues to be popular and our Family Messy Church is growing. Attendances for services were as follows:

Service Attendance

	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Sunday (avg)		15	14	14	15
Family Messy Church (avg)				56	
Good Friday		14	12	12	9
Easter		22	22	31	14
Harvest	120**	64	48	70	
All Souls	100*	-	34	47	
Remembrance	116	141**	60	94	
Carol Service		55	54	39	50
Christingle	140	165	175	178	
Midnight Mass	48	17	27	37	

\* Benefice Service

\*\* Primary school involvement.

The Church is well used by the local community with 9 Baptisms, 4 Weddings and 17 funerals. The Quinquennial inspection took place and only a few minor points were raised. This was an excellent result and many thanks go to our Churchwardens for keeping our church in such good condition.

There have been a number of fundraising events held, including, Coffee Mornings (run by Judy Barton at her own cost with all profits going to the church) and the Pure Floyd concert held over

two nights this year as it is so popular. The Friends of St George's continues to bring in much appreciated funds to help with keeping the church in good condition. The 200 Club, in its final year, has provided funds to install a screen and projector, extra power points and new lighting (to be fitted in 2017).

We have started a Family Messy Church on a Saturday afternoon every quarter, which is proving very popular with an average attendance around the 50 mark. We received a £2,400 grant from Ely and the PCC agreed to donate some of the coffee morning proceeds to support the running of the Messy Church.

Our Saturday Workshop (Adult Messy Church) continues to be well-liked, with a wide range of crafts taking place from making exotic sausage rolls and mince pies; to patio pot planting; to putting photographs on candles.

The Youth Club Project is still moving along, albeit slowly, however we have secured rooms in the old Social Club and some additional funding from another legacy giving us some £40,000 to refurbish, equip and pay the rent going forward. We are also applying to the Ely Growth Fund for funding to help employ a Youth Worker.

We enjoy close links with the Primary School who came to the Church for their Easter, Harvest and Christmas services. Regular Collective Worship takes place.

My heartfelt thanks go to all of you for your support and hard work in the parish. To the Churchwardens, PCC Secretary, Treasurer and PCC members. To the Bell Ringers, flower arrangers, church cleaners, readers, coffee makers, and indeed everyone who contributes time and talent to keeping our church running smoothly. Plus a special thank you to Wendy Waters for all that she does in keeping the church and services running and, of course, keeping me sane.

I look forward to us all working together in 2017 and beyond as we continue to engage in mission in this special place in Norfolk making our generous and loving Saviour Jesus Christ visible in our communities through our love and service. God Bless, Ken

St George's Church Methwold contact number Ken Waters 01366 727220

**Methwold Baby and Toddler Group**-2016 was another successful year for our baby & toddler group.

We operate through term time only and have seen good attendance throughout with numbers steadily rising through the latter part of the year.

We have had visits from The Children's Learning Alliance, They have provided messy play and various craft activities which both children and parents have thoroughly enjoyed and a visit from Haartbeeps, a music and movement group. This was a very popular event and with advance notice posted on our facebook page, saw great attendance.

Both these groups have been booked in again for 2017.

We also have regular visits from the Methwold Area Childrens Centre. Providing activities for the children with advice and a timetable of events planned at the childrens centre for parents to book into.

Every week we plan an art activity. Either based on a theme (Easter, Halloween, Christmas etc) or just some cutting and sticking, painting, playdough. Occasionally we get the sand tray out!

To celebrate the Queen's birthday we held a stall at a village event where children attending could make crowns and we used any donated money to pay for materials.

We are a small, friendly group and hope that we can continue to run successfully for the children of ours and the surrounding villages.

Methwold Baby & Toddler Group can be contacted on 01366 728597 or 07789812399

01366 727900 or 07880738136

**Methwold Badminton Club**- held in St. George's Hall. Our season runs from the 1st Thursday in September until the end of April. We commence at 7.00p.m.

During the past few years, we have not played at match level but we used to fulfil matches in the Bury and the Ouse Valley league as mens, ladies and mixed, so now we just enjoy the evening as social, having some good and enjoyable games. Due to the new scoring system, we do find we get through many games. We play on a mat marked out as a court, which enables us to have a safe game as it is non slippery.

Our subscription for the season enables us to be members of the National Badminton and Norfolk, which gives us a bit of security and we all receive information regarding events and players etc. As we have a season of about 34 nights, we all feel that we have a reasonably cheap, enjoyable evening.

We have a Committee to run the Club and a Constitution to adhere to. Each season comes to an end with an Annual General Meeting, with reports from the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and to discuss any other business. The meeting lasts about half an hour and generally ends with playing badminton and refreshments. We have a Child Protection Officer in place, although at the moment we only have 2 junior members who are both of a good standard due to playing with adults. We do have an experienced coach in our midst, who is willing to encourage players.

We have a membership of about 12 to 14 but we are always looking for new players to join our Club. We advertise in the local magazines and we do have a website, so anybody wishing to join a Club, can find us on the internet, which our latest 2 members did.

Our oldest member is a very youthful 80 year old, a small celebration to mark the occasion was arranged last December, despite his age he is a very good player. Although our Club is in Methwold, our octogenarian travels from Necton, along with other members who live in surrounding villages. The only reason for a cancelled evening, as most of us travel, is if we have heavy snow and that does not happen very often.

The Club has been running for over 70 years, so we are, at present, in the process of getting any information together regarding its history. (Anybody with any information would be gratefully received) We are hoping to put together an open day to celebrate the Club's history, possibly inviting past members, encouraging new members, displaying historical events and of course, playing.

We hope this has given a bit of an insight into our Club. We are friendly, sociable and make all new members welcome. It would be lovely to pass on our knowledge of playing to some more juniors but we realise that there are so many other activities they can do nowadays.

To contact Methwold Badminton Club call 01366 383342

### **Any other business –**

Petch Corner-the tiles are falling off the house onto the road this should be reported to the Owner. Concern that the house will be allowed to become derelict so it can be demolished, the Chairman is to contact the Owner.

White gates at Brookville- these are reported to be dirty and need to be cleaned and repainted, a new sign is expected from Highways to include the name and request to drive carefully.

Bin on the Rec. this is overflowing, a pushbike with no wheels has been left on the Rec. Request for a skip to be taken to the Open Spaces meeting.

Meeting closed 7.50pm