



## Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

Upwood and the Raveleys Annual Parish Meeting  
at 6:30pm on Monday 13 May 2024. Upwood Village Hall

**Present:** Councillors: J. Burgess (Chairman), R. Mashford, I Macartney Ward, J. Milner

**In Attendance:** Mrs. J Russel (Clerk) and one member of the public.

### Minutes

#### 1. Welcome by Councillor Burgess (Chairman, Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council)

Councillor Jan Burgess welcomed councillors to this meeting which provides an opportunity for registered electors to discuss parish affairs and pass resolutions thereon. It is also an opportunity for the parish council; higher tiers of local government; and community group leaders to share news of their activities over the last year. It is unfortunate that only one resident was in attendance.

*It should be noted that unfortunately the previous clerk did not arrange the annual parish meeting last year and so there are no minutes to approve.*

#### 2. Apologies

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

A. Costello (Cambridgeshire County Council) (personal), Mr. J Edwards (work commitments), D. Awit (work commitments).

#### 3. Review of 2023/24 and finances from the chairman of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council. Please see attached. Councillor Burgess has also considered the end of year cashbook prepared by the clerk. The parish council had voted to increase the precept this year to £31,000 and it would need to increase again the following financial year due mainly to the planned purchase of Glebe Paddock. There is still a substantial amount of money to be received from the VAT reclaim, which has been submitted to HMRC and unfortunately there were additional staff costs by employing a consultant clerk to correct numerous issues left by the outgoing clerk in October 2023. The Bentley Close play equipment was funded by CIL monies. There are a couple of minor items still to be purchased for this project such as the bug house and willow arch.

#### 4. To invite community representatives to address the meeting.

Representatives of the following community groups had offered apologies and forwarded reports which had been shared with councillors ahead of the meeting and are attached to these minutes:

- Upwood Cricket Club, prepared by Rebecca Milner.
- Upwood Golf Society, prepared by Howard Smith.
- Upwood Small to Tall, prepared by Rebecca Mashford.
- Upwood Village Hall Management Committee, prepared by Stephen Howes, Chairman.

#### 5. To invite the public to raise any matters of interest. There were no matters arising.

#### 6. Questions for county and district councillors. No district or county councillors were present.

#### 7. Chairman's closing remarks.

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The chairman thanked members of the parish council, all of whom have busy lives, for their continued commitment to this community. Councillor Burgess also thanked the community groups for taking the time to prepare reports.

**Meeting closed 7.10pm**

2 2024/2025

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**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024**  
**Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council**

**Parish priorities**

The four main priorities the Parish Council have been addressing this past year have been:

1. Our steps to mitigate the increased speeding through the parish in specific locations
2. Upgrading the existing play area at Bentley Close
3. Planning for fund raising to purchase Glebe Paddock
4. Village aesthetics

One in five motorists exceed the speed limit and a small percentage exceeds 70mph in the 40mph limit through Upwood, and in the 60mph through Great Raveley. One motorcyclist routinely exceeds 100mph leaving and entering the village.

We've been campaigning hard for a reduction of the 40mph speed limit on Huntingdon Road in Upwood and last year, secured agreement through a 'privately funded highways initiative' (PFHI) to reduce a section of it to 30mph. We expect this section of Huntingdon Road to be reduced to 30mph in the first half of the summer and the majority of the current 30mph roads within the parish to reduce to 20mph over the summer.

The Bentley Close play area upgrade is now complete bar a few minor planting aesthetic tweaks and minor projects such as a 'bug house' and willow arch still to be installed. It's anticipated that these will be completed by the autumn.

We've spent much of the year in negotiations with the agent for the landowners of Glebe Paddock, from whom we lease the land. We were told that the landowners wanted to sell off their small parcels of land and as such, extending the previous 10-year lease was no longer an option for us. We're almost at the point of obtaining a licence for 3 years to enable us to have the time we'll need to raise the funding required to purchase the paddock. Once we have the licence, we'll establish a working party to begin the funding raising process.

Once we've purchased Glebe Paddock, our plans will be to create a more engaging recreational space for the children of our parish, their families and all other residents. We're acutely aware that our focus (with the Bentley Close play area refurbishment) has been on the under 5s and that as soon as we can, we need to turn our attention to the over 5s and above!

Over the past two years, we've continued our re-wilding of some of the grass verges throughout the parish. We've had very positive feedback about the wildflowers and the increase in insects they attracted. As such, we've sowed many more seeds this year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. G. G.', located in the bottom right corner of the page.

The parish aesthetics is important to us and as such, we continue to work with our grass-cutting contractor to ensure we get the best value for money for the parish whilst ensuring the work is carried out to the expected standard.

We're planning a community litter pick this summer as it's not gone unnoticed that littering and dog fouling is still unfortunately a blight to our parish.

### **Precept**

We took the decision to increase our precept again this year, recognising that the projects that are underway and on the horizon will come at a cost. We carefully considered what this increase would mean for each household and took a proportionate approach to arrive at the figure of £31,000.

### **Spending**

Our biggest spend this year (aside from our grass-cutting contract and staff costs) was on our contribution to the Bentley Close play area refurbishment. We had put aside resources specifically for this project, so it was not a surprise to us!

This coming year, we'll need to spend money to fund the PFHI and set aside a portion of funding to contribute to the purchase of Glebe Paddock and pay for the licence in the intervening period.

We're planning to change how we award grants in the coming year and going forwards. Historically, we've supported community groups with the award of grants. We're conscious that we have a finite amount for this purpose and to try to make it available to all community groups in the parish, we aim to restrict the total amount we will award each year to individual groups and the number of groups we can award to. We'll provide more details about how we'll do this and how groups can apply over the coming weeks.

### **Vacancies**

We've struggled this year with low numbers of councillors and currently have three vacancies. We saw many long-standing councillors leave us this year having given the Parish Council many years of dedicated service.

To fill these vacancies, we plan to reach out to parishioners in the Raveleys and the Farm Close area to try to recruit some councillor representation from parishioners living in those parts of our parish. This would allow us to have representation from all 'pockets' of our parish. We currently have only one councillor from Fairmead Park with the rest residing in older part of Upwood village.

### **Our Clerk**

We welcomed our new clerk, Jo Russel, in autumn last year following the resignation of the clerk who replaced our clerk who retired at the end of March 2023. Jo, with the help of





Carol over the winter months, managed to put us back in order and we all feel much more reassured with her at the clerk helm!

Jan Burgess  
Chairman  
Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council

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**From:** Rebecca Milner <munchkinmilner6805@googlemail.com>  
**Sent:** 10 May 2024 14:42  
**To:** parishclerk@upwood.org  
**Subject:** Upwood Crick Club report

Dear Jo

Please find below a brief report from Upwood Cricket Club

The season has begun with 3 senior teams and numerous junior sides. We have welcomed back Jake Wynd again this year from Australia to play for us.

Junior training starts up again Friday 10th May at the club, all are very welcome.

Year 1 - Year 6 5.15pm-6.15pm

Year 7 -year 11 6.30pm - 8pm

Fixture cards will be delivered around the surrounding villages to advertise the home games as well as some events we will be holding throughout the season. We would love for the local community to wander up to the club and enjoy the cricket and a drink with us.

We have secured some extra car parking with the help of the Edwards brothers using their field opposite the cricket club, hopefully this will help with the parking on the verge this season especially when holding events and large tournaments.

Kind regards

Rebecca Milner  
Club Secretary



[parishclerk@upwood.org](mailto:parishclerk@upwood.org)

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**From:** hjnsuk@btinternet.com  
**Sent:** 01 May 2024 08:47  
**To:** parishclerk@upwood.org  
**Subject:** RE: Upwood & The Raveleys Annual Parish Meeting 13 May - DATE CORRECTION and Agenda attached

Good morning I am Howard Smith and am part of the committee running Upwood Golf Society a report on our activities follows.

### Upwood Golf Society

Report on the Society's activities in the last 12 months.

The Golf Society holds two fun events a year based on golf in various formats. Team and individual competitions including nearest the pin and longest drive mean there are 15 or more opportunities to win a prize. This being said, the day is about having fun and meeting other players from the villages.

We played in September at Lakeside lodge Pidley.

The Champion Golfer and winner of the Stableford at that event was Denice Smith playing off 22 - our first lady winner

The Texas scramble team winners were Geoff Carrington, Keith Whittle, Bernard Taylor and Pauline Moore.

In April we played at Ramsey Golf Club our Champion Golfer was Jon Hopkins who had a remarkable round coming in 2 strokes under the gross par. A truly remarkable round which has totally wiped out his society handicap.

The Texas Scramble was won by Jon Hopkins, Steven East, Cliff Bloomfield and Sue Whittle. With a one under par round.

The society is delighted to have had 5 new players join us in the last year and will be pleased to welcome more new members. Anyone who is interested please contact Howard Smith on 07770847953.

Howard J Smith  
07770847953  
hjnsuk@btinternet.com



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**From:** parishclerk@upwood.org <parishclerk@upwood.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 7:58 AM  
**To:** parishclerk@upwood.org  
**Subject:** Upwood & The Raveleys Annual Parish Meeting 13 May - DATE CORRECTION and Agenda attached

Dear all,



## **Upwood Small to Tall Report**

### **Autumn term**

We had a busy first few weeks of this academic year. It was encouraging that numbers were healthy from the start – not only in the preschool setting, but numbers at our breakfast and after-school clubs continued to slowly grow.

We continue to see the impact of the Covid pandemic on our youngest members of society and find that communication and language are less developed than they were on pre-pandemic entry. Staff have focused on this area of development and will continue to do so, giving children the best start in school that we possibly can.

Our old mobile classroom is continuing to throw up challenges, and we had to spend quite a lot on its maintenance over the summer. This is all complete and our focus and excitement is focussed on our garden makeover; we just need to get the final funds together. It's wonderful to have a committee team that are dedicated and proactive in seeking out funding/grants and organising events too – we are so grateful as the extra funding makes such a huge difference to the children in our care. Events we've enjoyed this term include, wreath making at Great Fen, the UPA Christmas fair, our carol evening with a visit from a cheeky elf, with our Christmas party being the grand finale with an extra special visit from Father Christmas! The children absolutely loved it!

### **Spring Term**

We started the Spring Term feeling very un-Spring like! Although an exciting visit from Billy Goat Gruff himself did lift our spirits. We took part in the Tesco Stronger Starts scheme in Ramsey Tesco and were excited to receive £500 towards our garden makeover.

Numbers across the clubs continue to be healthy and following feedback from parents we are now extending our opening hours on Fridays and for our afterschool club, with a closing time now of 6pm.

### **Summer Term**

The Easter holidays were an exciting time. Not only might you have seen our troll as part of the UPA Scarecrow hunt outside the play area, but it was also when our garden was being transformed by the wonderful GilbertScape. The result is amazing, and it has made such a difference to the children in our setting. The planting is gorgeous, and we can't wait to fill the other bed with tasty home-grown vegetables! Already we have been spending so much more time out there and can't wait for the weather to get a bit warmer to enjoy it even more.

A couple of weeks ago we had our Spring Fayre. We had the most amazing day and were completely bowled over by everyone's generosity, which helped us raise £1000 (which covers the last bit needed for the garden). In addition to our brilliant committee and staff volunteering, it wouldn't have been the success it was without such incredible support from local business. We were so grateful to Jason and his straw bale seating Ramsey bouncers, This Little Piggie, jewellery by Vanessa, Robert and his wood crafts, Sam with Usborne books, The Wildlife Trust at Great Fen, the UPA PTA and their teddies, Farmer Jordan and his tractor, Mooi Pizza, Tonys Ices Desserts, Damien





from The Malcolm Whales Foundation for the marquee, and last but not least, thank you to everyone who so generously donated to the event – whether it was cakes, raffle or tombola prizes. More than the money raised, it was really special to host an event that brought our incredible community together.

With only a couple of weeks until half-term – it will be the end of term, and the end of another year at Upwood Small to Tall before we know it!

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UPWOOD VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

April 2024

Hall bookings in the past year have continued to improve and are slowly edging back to pre-pandemic levels. The Senior Lunch Club is now firmly established and are using the hall twice a week.

The 'current cost of living' crisis which has been affecting the whole country has continued to be a problem for us too (especially energy costs) and whilst we have been forced to pass these on to our hirers we are trying to keep our bookings as affordable as possible.

However, in an effort to try and mitigate our electricity costs and to play our part in tackling climate change, in the autumn of 2023, we applied to Cambridgeshire County Council Communities Fund for a grant to install solar panels with battery storage and for the fitting of infrared heaters in the hall to supplement our existing radiators and to provide instant heat.

I am pleased to say that at the end of March 2024 we were advised that our application had been accepted in full and that we would be awarded £37,794 to cover the entire project without any contribution from hall reserves. We are now progressing to the next stage of getting the grant released and anticipate that the works will be completed during the spring/early summer. This project will make the hall largely self sufficient in electricity and will hopefully allow us to substantially reduce our electricity charges to our hirers.

Once again, we would like to thank the Parish Council whose grant helps us to cover our insurance costs.

Last but not least, my sincere thanks go to the management committee and its trustees whose tireless efforts continue to ensure that the hall remains a valuable community resource.

Stephen Howes  
Chairman,  
Upwood Village Hall Management Committee