

## **BEDALE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting**

**DATE:** Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024  
**TIME:** 7.00pm  
**LOCATION:** Drawing Room, Bedale Hall  
**PRESENT:** Cllr John Howe Mayor of Bedale (Chairing), Nick Reed (Town Clerk) and **28 others**

#### **1) Welcome**

Cllr Howe welcomed parishioners to the meeting. He noted that it was not a Bedale Town Council meeting, but it was chaired by the Mayor of Bedale in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972. Town Councillors attended this meeting as member of the public. Cllr Howe explained that there would be a short film shown of the Bedale Pageant held in 1951. This would be followed by the presentation of the community awards.

#### **2) Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 were **AGREED** as a true record of the meeting.

#### **3) Film of the 1951 Bedale Pageant**

Cllr Howe introduced the film of the Bedale Pageant community event, held in 1951.

#### **4) Bedale Community Awards**

Community Awards were presented to Janet Gleeson, Nigel Jenkins and Melvin Watson. The citations, which were read out by Baroness Harris of Richmond, Cllr John Howe, and Cllr Christine Mollard respectively, are attached to these minutes. The Mayor presented the citation and a certificate to each of the recipients and thanked them for all their hard work and commitment to Bedale over the years.

#### **5) Questions and comments from parishioners**

There were none.

The Meeting Closed at 7.30pm, with refreshments served afterwards



## **BEDALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024**

### **BEDALE COMMUNITY AWARD**

#### **JANET GLEESON**

Janet was born and brought up in Hartlepool, and came to Bedale in 1982 after getting a job as the Northallerton, Bedale and Thirsk reporter for the Northern Echo. She says, "I found a warm and welcoming community, although some still regarded this stranger from the North East with a bit of suspicion as an offcumden, who didn't understand Yorkshire ways". Janet has been a pillar of the community for over 40 years, including serving as a Town Councillor, marrying local taxidermist Brian Lancaster, and bringing up two daughters in the town.

Work took Janet to Calendar News at Yorkshire TV and Tyne Tees news, as a producer, news editor, and reporter, and she also worked for North Yorkshire County Council, as was, running their "95 Alive" road safety campaign. Eventually she returned to the Northern Echo and the Darlington and Stockton Times in 2012, covering the local news that in reality makes the world go round, and particularly covering Bedale and Northallerton Town Councils' illuminating meetings.

In a time when local and regional newspapers have been in crisis and often unable to cover the often mundane but always important workings of town and parish councils, Janet's commitment to reporting from Bedale Town Council has been an exemplar of how local media outlets can continue to reflect and serve the communities they serve.



## **BEDALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024**

### **BEDALE COMMUNITY AWARD**

#### **NIGEL JENKINS**

Nigel was born in 1972 to parents Ronald and Sylvia Jenkins and was raised in a house in Warrington with his half siblings David and Richard. Nigel's childhood home was filled with love. As a child Nigel developed epilepsy which hampered his schooling and Nigel left school without much in the way of qualifications but with plenty of compassion and enthusiasm for nature and the world around him. Despite applying for many jobs over the years Nigel has never managed to secure himself employment.

In 2022 sold his home and moved up to Bedale and moved in with his brother Richard and sister-in-law Vicky for company. Nigel has always been interested in the environment and a supporter of Greenpeace, the Woodland Trust, World Wildlife Fund and many more. Once living in Bedale, Nigel tried many things to occupy his time such as zumba, pilates, a poetry group and the Hambleton strollers. He then joined Bedale Litter Busters The Wombles of Hambleton. He enjoyed this so much that he bought himself a litter picking trolley and grabber, and litter picking has become an almost daily activity, Nigel regularly walks to Leeming Bar litter picking then back to Bedale, always walking around the park then recycling the waste appropriately.

Nigel has never sought recognition or reward but he does like a cheerful hello or word of thanks. Nigel loves to help to keep Bedale and the surrounding areas tidy and litter free, and Bedale is a much better place with Nigel in it. The world needs more Nigels.



## **BEDALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024**

### **BEDALE COMMUNITY AWARD**

#### **MELVYN WATSON**

Melvyn Watson has been the point of contact between the communities of Bedale and Snape, and the headquarters of Santa Claus at the North Pole, for over 50 years.

In Christmas 1970 Santa came to Snape only, and after that first visit Melvyn received a letter from the mother of a child called Edward with Down's Syndrome. Edward was so excited to have seen Santa that his mum asked if Melvyn could arrange a visit every year. Melvyn and his family decided that since Santa had brought such joy to Edward then all the children of the area would be equally pleased to see him, and so from 1971 onwards he arranged for Santa to visit Bedale and Snape every year

Throughout the years many people have helped with the event including Melvyn's family and supporters who donate fruit, sweets and crisps for Santa to hand out both on Christmas Eve and at the Christmas Lights switch-on. The help of these honorary elves is essential to keep Santa visiting.

Even in 2020 Santa was able to visit the area thanks to Melvyn, having a run around Bedale and Snape even though "Christmas elf and safety" Covid rules meant that he could not stop to hand out treats as usual.

Now 83 years young, Melvyn Watson is still going strong and he is responsible for one of the highlights of the year, bringing happiness to children, families, and everyone who gets to see Santa on his big rig.