#### HOLME Parish News

June 2023

Free to Holme residents

(thanks to the Reading Room Trust)

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**New Editor for the Holme Parish News**

I have been the Editor of the HPN for more than 25 years. It has now become more difficult for me and so I am very happy to announce that Louise Roderick Smith has agreed to become the new Editor.

The change-over will take place over the coming few months. I have prepared this June issue and Louise has been involved. The next July issue we will work on together and the August/September issue will be done by Louise with help from me if she needs it.

So from the next HPN please will everyone send their information to me as usual and also to Louise. (email: [louisersmith@hotmail.com](mailto:louisersmith@hotmail.com))

Both Louise and I will be writing in the coming HPN.

Thank you for all your help and support in the past and I am sure Louise will also enjoy this in the years to come.

Barbara

**Holme Parish Council News**

Thank you to everyone who attended the Annual Parish Meeting in April. A special thanks to all the village organisations who gave an update. For a small village a lot goes on!

At the meeting we heard from the Gigaclear Community Engagement Manager about the history and benefits of Gigaclear including how they will connect a house if required. She also talked about the ongoing reinstatement and care of the verges/roads following the installation.

We heard too from the Great Fen Project Manager. Kate talked about the 100 year vision of the Great Fen connecting Holme Fen and Woodwalton with the aims to create habitats, making the area accessible while boosting the economy and doing what they can to prevent climate change. She also talked about the current 5 year plan to introduce more wet farming techniques to prevent the loss and erosion of dry peat. You can find out more by visiting www.greatfen.org.uk/holme-fen

The Parish Council highlighted that a priority for the coming year is to find an area in Holme that is suitable for a play area. Do please get in touch with me (via email) if you have suggestions as to where a play area could be located.

At the time of writing this update, the Coronation weekend is approaching. Thank you to the Yarn Bombers for their decoration of the post box and to Ralph Thompson for posting very interesting photographs on the Village Facebook page which include pictures from the time of the last coronation.

Sarah Abbott, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer [holmeparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:holmeparishclerk@gmail.com) 07548 441977

**Holme CofE Primary School**

Here at Holme we have really enjoyed celebrating The King’s Coronation. We have had a special coronation party lunch, the children came to school dressed in red, white and blue, we learnt a song to share with the parents on our messaging platform. The lovely PTA organised commemorative coronation coins for all of the children in school as well as making 120 coronation plaster of paris crowns and emblems to paint and sending edible treats into school for all the children. We thank them for all the lovely things they do for the children.

**Our reception children have been really excited this term and have** really enjoyed the sessions they have had on the balance bikes. They have been learning how to ride these safely in the school playground, they have been learning how to keep safe when out and about and have been enjoying every minute of it.

Our Year 2 and Year 6 children need a special mention to say how amazing *they have been* with their statutory assessments. They have worked incredibly hard and have tried their very best. We are truly proud of them and they should be proud of themselves.

As well as all of these amazing Summer Term events, we have had some great learning in the classrooms too. Year 5 and 6 have been learning all about The Cold War whereas Year 3 and 4 have been exploring The Stuarts. Year 1 and 2 have been discovering climate changes between the UK and Northern Europe and the reception children have had fun exploring fairy tales.We had a great day at the start of May where we held a governor in school day. It was lovely to welcome our governors into the classrooms to experience what life at Holme Academy was like. The governors were blown away with the children and their thirst for knowledge and love of learning. We are looking forward to the rest of the Summer Term!

Mrs King, Mrs Ferrara and The Small but Mighty Team

**Holme Community Speedwatch**

Holme Community Speedwatch has been running for about 15 years now with a small group of volunteers turning out in all sorts of weathers . The rates of speeding vehicles vary, some months worse than others, however we remain ever hopeful that we are making progress. We are always looking for more volunteers so if you feel you would like to give us a hand then please do get in touch, csw.holme@btinternet.com. Our sessions generally run for 1.5 hours and are on varying days and times of the week. Any help would be gratefully received. Full training will be given and you get to spend time with us lovely lot, what more could you want?

Victoria Lunan

**Holme Youth Club**

We are now planning our summer day out for this coming July. Last year we took 42 members and adults to Fenland Aqua Park in Whittlesey and everyone had a great time (including the adults).  Over the next few weeks, we shall be putting it to the vote where the children would like to go. If you have any suggestions, please let us know.

On return from the Easter break we now have permission to use the school field on our club nights – subject to the weather of course. We are very lucky to be able to use this space alongside our village hall in the warmer months and gives the children the opportunity to play football and have a run around without the confines of our carpark!

In June we shall be sending out invitation to current year 4’s to welcome them for 2 taster sessions at the end of July before we break up for the summer.

Membership of Holme Youth Club is open to school years 5-10, who live in the village or attend or have attended Holme Primary Academy. If you meet our membership criteria and would like to see what we are all up to, please pop in and see us at the Holme Village Hall, between 6:30 and 8:30pm on a term time Fridays and check us out.

**For further information please check us out on Facebook @HolmeYouth or website HolmeYouthClub.co.uk or email us holmeyouthclub@outlook.com**

Lynsey Caslin – Chair of Holme Youth Club

**Holme Village Pre-School**

We've had a busy start to the summer term at Holme Village Pre-School, not only welcoming new friends to the setting but also some caterpillars! The children have enjoyed watching and learning about how they transform through their life cycle into butterflies.

As the weather gets warmer, we are able to spend more time in our outdoor space, where the children can play in the construction area, playhouse, mud kitchen, sandpit and much more. The children have also enjoyed being able to take care of their outdoor space by planting flowers and helping to water and look after them.

We also enjoyed celebrating King Charles’ coronation, we held a special party, where we dressed in ‘red, white and blue’ and took part in lots of fun 'royal themed’ crafts and games.

The Pre-School is committee led who support a fantastic team of staff. Spaces for September 2023 are filling up fast so if you would like to join the committee or would like any further information on enrolling your child at the Pre-School, please contact our manager Kelly on [managerholmepreschool@yahoo.com](mailto:managerholmepreschool@yahoo.com). Information about upcoming fundraising activities and photos of recent activities can be found on our facebook page @Holmevillagepreschool.

**Annual Parish Meeting Reports 2023**

**PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN’S Report 2022/2023**

**Structure**

Janice Osborne retired this year after 12 years. I would like to thank her for all her work and guidance and also managing to keep me on the straight and narrow.

We appointed a new clerk in September. However, having started she found the role too much and that it did not fit in with her existing employment and family life.

Having gone through the interviewing process again we are very pleased to confirm the appointment of Sarah Abbott who started in February.

Another thank you to Janice for training two new clerks in a matter of months.

David Neil as stepped down from being vice chairman, but will remain as a councillor. Thanks to David for all his work and filling in for me when I was unavailable. David will continue to look after SID.Ed Whittaker has taken over as vice chairman and I am sure he will do a great job.

Last year I informed you that the appointment of three new councillors was approved. I am very pleased to welcome Louise Roderick - Smith, James Edwards and Corbin Reed. The existing council is very much looking forward to working with them all.

**Finance**

The opening balance was £51,424 and the closing balance is £53,794. Included in these balances is £6,032 Community Infrastructure Levy.

Other activities

We have installed a dog poo bin at the end of Church field.

We are continuing to try to get an approved plan to improve the lay- by to make it look tidier and to stop it flooding.

We continue to search for a suitable site for a children's play area.

We have a quote of £1,730 to convert the SIDS to solar power. We are also looking in the cost of a speed camera.

We are continuing to discuss with highways to improve the white lines on the B660 and rectify the recent damage to the verge.

**Planning**

The planned development at Pingle Bank has been approved but no start date has been set. We are still in discussions about the planned crossing on the B660.

We have no update on the planned development on Yaxley road and Laws yard seems to have gone to sleep

**Church Yard and Cemetery**

We have planted a red oak in the Churchyard in memory of John Bliss who was the village tree warden for many years.

We are continuing to have the trees inspected and we are checking the safety of the walls and gravestones as we are in the cemetery.

A few years ago, when we had the shed in the cemetery dismantled, we found some WW2 white crosses. These were in memory of POW who were killed crossing the railway line.

Ed Whittaker is refurbishing them, and we will replace in the cemetery.

John Griffin Chairman

**District Councillor Tim Alban**

IT'S GREAT UP NORTH!

I like to gently remind other district councillors, especially those who represent communities in the south of Huntingdonshire, that the Stilton Folksworth & Washingley ward is one of the largest in the district and at the northern most point near Wansford, one of the furthest from the council offices in Huntingdon. I also like to mention we have the lowest point in the UK and the lowest pub!

Whilst there are issues which might affect only one of the 9 villages and 8 hamlets in the ward, there are also issues we have in common; fly tipping and speeding traffic are most common but larger planning applications and parking issues are also of particular concern in some villages - especially Holme.

At the last joint parishes meeting, which I organised with my fellow ward councillor, Marge Beuttell and County Councillors Simon Bywater & Ian Gardener, it was good to welcome Oliver Morley, who is one of the council's Senior Management Team (and now the acting Managing Director) where he was able to listen to concerns and also explain in detail some of the work the district council does.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

The meeting also included a presentation by Councillor Carl Stretton, who chairs Glatton Parish Council, on their Neighbourhood Plan. I am pleased that along with Glatton other parish councils are making progress in this area.

COUNCIL TAX UP - POSSIBLE CHARGES FOR GARDEN BIN COLLECTIONS

At the Full District Council meeting in February, there was a majority vote in favour of the budget which including raising council tax by 3.1%. There was also near unanimous support for the council's climate change strategy, which I spoke and voted in favour of.

One area of future concern, which was raised in the local press before the meeting, is a proposal for a separate charge (on top of council tax) for emptying the green garden waste bins. I will wait to see the details in the proposal but instinctively this seems like a retrograde step.

GREAT GIDDING SCHOOL SET TO CLOSE

In spite of representations from local residents and Shailesh Vara MP, as well as Ian, Simon and me, the County Council is set to close the school in August. I mention it in my report as residents in Holme have expressed their concern about the closure and Holme School was mentioned in the meeting papers as one of the possible alternatives to Gidding.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR SIMON BYWATER**

I continue to be humbled by the various voluntary groups locally who have continued to “step up to the plate” supporting individuals and their own communities and I wish to give my heartfelt thanks to you all.

It has been a busy year since my last annual update, with Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) both recently setting their annual budgets for next year. The costs of this can be seen in the recent council tax bills you will have now received. Sadly both councils decided to increase their parts of the council tax bills to the maximum. Given the pressures on households I just couldn’t support this approach by the joint administrations.

In short, I felt CCC didn’t need to do this (4.99%) and our alternative budget of a reduced increase with better delivery was voted down. I couldn’t support the HDC budget increase (3.31%) because I was very concerned with their Medium term financial Strategy over the next five years, in particular their plans to consider charging for Garden waste Bins along with their business plans for Leisure in the district. I think we need to leave as much money in residents pockets as opposed to councils thinking they know better on how to spend money through taxation.

I’ve been dealing with countless other issues including the sad proposals by CCC to Close Gidding Primary school, which has effected many families in Sawtry and surrounding villages. Thank you to those residents who spoke with me against this at the Children and Young Peoples Committee.

I would like to say a massive thankyou to everyone in our community who have helped in providing our warm spaces through the winter. Please do take a look to see how they may be able to help and support your residents.

I have been meeting a wide variety of people, partners and stakeholders to ensure both Councils are doing their very best for us all. I have particular concerns on how CCC are budgeting and maintaining the conditions of our roads. Despite this huge frustration I have had some local success in ensuring some of our roads and pavements were treated and repaired, but it is a continuous battle to ensure we have a voice, and that our local roads, and areas where the County Council have responsibility, get the attention that is needed.

You can help me by reporting any highways faults/issues that you find here

https://highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/

A large part of my time is also occupied by the various local planning issues in the Division. For example I attended a recent appeal to the Planning inspector regarding change of use of a commercial building in Stibbington to the withdrawal of an application for large Commercial units on the A1 near Alwalton. Both had significant impacts on local residents.

If there is a local planning issue that is important to you please do not go on Facebook to complain or have a rant, it is more effective to have your voice heard on the

Huntingdonshire Planning portal here <https://publicaccess.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/online-applications/>

You may be aware that the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership (GCP) are looking at congestion charging for Cambridge. At the moment there is no clear plan on how congestion charging will work and more importantly the impact on residents. I’m yet to be convinced what benefits we will get in particular this part of Cambridgeshire. We will have to wait and see what these proposals look like following the consultation which has now finished. I would urge you all to keep an eye on this going forward.

I support moves to improve public transport and make it easier for people to travel via means other than their car but I’m concerned this part of Cambridgeshire will be used as a “Cash Cow” for the Cambridge centric County Council. County Councillors will have the final vote on any proposals although no dates/timelines have been set.

Proposals for a 20 mph zone in Stilton and the consultation results are now being considered by CCC. Thankyou to everyone who has taken part or emailed me with their thoughts. A final decision will be made later this year by the highways committee.

This year’s 20mph scheme is open and CCC are accepting applications. You can apply via the link. The deadline for submitting the applications will be by Sunday 30th April 2023 at 17:00PM. Further information on the process, funding available and application timeline is available on our website at https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/20mph-funding

Despite the many challenges please rest assured I have been working hard as your Councillor representing our communities and bringing a voice for you. I would like to thank you all for your help and support over the last 12 months in particular our Clerks and Chairs. It is not always possible for me to attend Parish council meetings, given all my responsibilities and diary clashes, but I do try my upmost to attend as many as is possible.

Finally I would like to thank my District Cllr Colleagues, Tim Alban, Marge Beuttell and Ross Martin for their continued support.

Don’t forget you can get more info on what I’m doing on my face book page Cllr

Simon Bywater "Sawtry & Stilton"Cambridgeshire County Council | Facebook

You can contact me at Simon.bywater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or 07984637553

Many thanks for taking the time to read this short report.

Best wishes

Simon

Simon.bywater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Simon Bywater (County Councillor Sawtry and Stilton Ward)

**VILLAGE HALL REPORT 2023**

Another year passes and the hall is back to normal activities after the Covid interruption.

There is very little of note to report, the hall continues to be well used, with Yoga, Short mat bowls and the Youth club providing evening activities weekly and children’s parties on occasional weekends. Sadly, however, the WI have disbanded after many years of meeting at the hall.

The planned refurbishment of the kitchen didn’t go ahead due to various reasons, main amongst them, a requirement to upgrade the electrics for the proposed hot water heater. This was carried out in the summer with help from the reading room trust for funding. As the refurbishment didn’t go ahead, new member Mick Gadsdon undertook to give the kitchen a complete deep clean, make good the tiling around the electrics consumer unit and re-decorate. I think everybody must agree what a fantastic job Mick did over the summer. Hopefully the planned refurbishment will go ahead this summer although we are currently struggling to get quotes for the work.

Pre school have continued to flourish and use the hall 5 days a week. They have also paid for the redecoration of the green room and bar room, again with help for funding from the reading room trust.

**HOLME SHORT MAT BOWLS**

The Holme Short Mat Bowls club meet at the Holme Village Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings 7:30 to 9:30 from mid-September through to mid-April. The club is characterised as being a friendly club where new members are welcomed regardless of whether they are complete beginners or experienced bowlers. Club nights are split into two sessions with a short break between the two sessions, when tea, coffee and biscuits are available.

For those members who are looking for some competitive bowling, the club enters a team in the Cambridgeshire Short Mat Bowls league. Members can also enter a number of competitions or events organised by Cambridgeshire Short Mat Bowls Association.

The 2022/2023 season saw a return to more normal conditions with the club able to enter a team in the Cambridgeshire League Division 2 competition. The Club have welcomed some new members who are bowling on a regular basis and the additional income is helping to keep the club financially sound. However, the club would benefit from having a few more members. Anyone interested can try a couple of sessions for free. Details are in the Holme Parish Newsletter.

If you would like more information please send an email to holmesmbc.secretary@gmail.com.

**HOLME YOUTH CLUB**

Youth Club is still very popular within our community with 61 children now on our register since September 2022. We currently accommodate children in the village or who have attended Holme Primary school and we regularly have between 25 -32 members attending weekly during term time.

We were very fortunate to receive a grant from the Reading Room Trust last June, which paid for 12 people, including our 4 committee members and other community volunteers to gain there level 3 emergency first aid at work certificate.

We also supported the village in last year’s Jubilee celebrations by arranging the hire of a bouncycastle. Which was enjoyed by many people, including children and some adults.

In July we took 40 members to the Fenland Aquapark, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all and in

October we had another successful trip to Laser Force.

Recently we have taken 31 members to Flip Out, which was a great evening, enjoyed by all.

It is lovely to be able to take them outside of the village for a chance to try something they might not

usually get the opportunity to do.

Lynsey Caslin – Chair of Holme Youth Club

**HOLME COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH REPORT**

The speedwatch volunteers continue to monitor the speeds of vehicles passing along the various roads in the village. We try to do a different time and day each week and vary the location and are pleased to see that the percentage of speeders has gone from in excess of 25% to about 10-15% although we feel the regular through traffic knows what we are doing and slows down - normally they would be tearing through way over the limit as can be seen on the fixed camera returns – incidentally it would be useful if I could have sight of those, please. We do still get repeat offenders and the police have made in person visits to deliver the third letter to several people in the past year.

We have had to cancel quite a few sessions just recently because of the weather but also because of illness and a shortage of available volunteers so I would like to appeal for anyone who feels they can spare an hour or so each month and would like to help out in this effort to make our village safer and pleasanter to please get in touch and we can arrange your training with the police and welcome you onto our team.

**SIR JOHN COTTON TRUST - HOLME CHARITY LANDS**

Holme Charity Lands was set up in 1869 to support “the most deserving and necessitous bona fide inhabitants of the Parish of Holme, with a preference to those with disabilities”. The charity owns a small plot of land and the rental income creates the fund to be distributed.

154 years later, life in 2023 is very different but people are still suffering hardship. Back then this fund was straight forward to administer, as everyone in the Parish and their circumstances, was known to the Trustees of the charity. Today, we don’t know this information.

The Trustees meet in early November to discuss the distribution of the small amount of funding that we have. It is a contribution to help with heating bills, to those who need a little support.

To help us in our decisions, a letter is placed in the Parish News in October to ask for applicants, with information on how to contact the charity to be considered for this support.

If you think you might qualify for this grant (i.e. bona fide residents of Holme Parish who are receiving free school meals, who qualify for food bank support, pension/universal credits, anyone struggling to deal with impairments, or other situations) please check the Parish News in October and November – giving your reasons for why you feel you qualify – in one of the following ways

· Send or drop off a letter to Holme Charity Lands c/o Holme Village Hall, Short Drove, Holme PE7 3PA

· email holmecharitylands@gmail.com

· call 07989554268 to either give your reasons or request a visit from one of our representatives

**HOLME WI REPORT FOR HOLME PARISH COUNCIL 2023**

Unfortunately, as many of you may already be aware, Holme WI closed at our March meeting this year. I decided last summer to stand down as President, feeling it was time for a change and for someone new to take over the group with some fresh and new ideas. By the time we held our AGM in November no one had come forward and therefore we had no choice but to close, we cannot continue without a President. Our records and remaining assets have been suspended and sent to our federation where they will be held for 3 years in the hope that someone may reopen the group within that time.

However, before we closed we planted a Rowan tree in the village and our Knit and Knatter Group has been very busy knitting baby clothes and blankets for people fleeing the conflict in the Ukraine, blankets for Olive Mead Care Home and chemo pouches for the local hospitals. Despite our closure, our Knit and Knatter Group is continuing and they will continue to knit for local groups as needed. Our Book Club is also continuing.

We have also had a good variety of guest speakers to our meetings in this last year including a Scene of Crime Officer from the local police force, the Ramsey Walled Garden and a history of the Ramsey Tunnels, to name just a few. They have all been very good and very entertaining.

We decided we would bow out with a social evening that included a fantastic buffet provided by The Admiral Wells pub, quizzes provided by one of our members, a rather lovely cake decorated in our WI colours by one of our members, lots of alcoholic fizz and every member left with a goody bag. It has been a privilege to be President of Holme WI for almost 8 years and I certainly never expected to become President after only 2 years as a member. It has been a fun but sometimes challenging role but I felt it was time for a change.

I would like to thank everyone for their support over the years.

With very best wishes.

Alison McGuinness President

**READING ROOM TRUST**

In the last year, the Trust supported 4 applications and provided c. £4000 of financial support to local (Parish) good causes including contribution to the Queen's Jubilee celebration, Pre-school (reading shed and re-decoration), Youth Club (First aid training), the Scarecrow competition (Prizes), Village Hall (Fuse Box).

The trust is keen to support good causes locally that enhance the lives of villagers in the Parish of Holme.

After 8 years as Chairperson of the HRRT, Steve Weston has decided to step down. The trustees wish to pass on their huge thanks to Steve for his contribution. The Chairperson role has been taken on by Jenny Whittaker, and Steph Bunce has joined the Committee as Secretary.

**HOLME CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Council report – April 2023

**School Context**

Total number of pupils on roll – 117

Where do the children come from? Holme, Yaxley, Sawtry, Connington and Stilton

We continue to be rated as Good by Ofsted (last inspected in March 2017) and Outstanding for our SIAMs (in January 2018).

**Staffing structure**

Executive Headteacher – Mrs Clara King

Assistant Headteacher – Mrs Charlene Ferrara

SENDCo – Mrs Rachael Weeks (newly appointed)

Class Teachers – Mrs Banner, Mrs Barnard, Miss Weeks and Miss Williams

Teaching Assistants - 5

School Secretary – Mrs Holmes

Site Manager – Mr Adcock

Cleaning Staff – 1

Kitchen Staff (Aspens) – 2

Wrap Around Care Staff (Breakfast and After School Clubs) - 2

Chair of Governors – Mr Iain Fairlie

Vice Chair of Governors – Reverend Canon Becky Dyball

Total number of Governors – 9 plus Executive Head Teacher (Joint Governance with Stilton C of E Primary Academy)

**Staffing update**

Since the last annual parish report we have had a few staff changes in school. We have had a change of teacher in our Year 1/2 class. We said our fond farewell to Mrs Hood at the end of last academic year who had been with us for many years. Although it was some time ago now, we wish Mrs Hood all the very best for the future and want to thank her for all she did for our pupils in her time with us. Mrs Barnard has joined our team, with a wealth of teaching experience and specialisms in Speech and Language. We are very excited to have Mrs Barnard on board to support our ‘Small but Mighty Team.’

Early in the Spring term, we said goodbye to one of our lovely teaching assistants, Mrs Foley. Mrs Foley decided to leave to spend more time with her family. We wish her all the best and look forward to seeing her pop back to school to hello.

We have sadly had to recently say goodbye to Mrs Cole, our SENCO. Mrs Cole worked across Holme and Stilton, and we would like to thank her for her hard work in supporting our SEND children and their families over the last 2 and a bit years. In light of this, we now have a newly appointed SENCO. Our current Year 3/4 teacher has now taken on this additional responsibility and she is very excited to undertake her role and begin supporting our vulnerable children across the school. Mrs Dee, our Challenge and Inclusion Teaching Assistant, continues in her role and will support Miss Weeks as she takes on this new challenge.

**Teaching and Learning.**

We have continued to deliver a knowledge rich based curriculum for many of our foundation subjects, such as Geography, History, Science and Art. The children love the wealth of knowledge that comes with these subjects and astound us every day with their retention of new information.

We follow the White Rose scheme for Maths, which builds learning up in small steps in order to complete a larger objective. We have recently started an online tutor programme which the children are beginning to access which we feel will really support children in school and at home to ensure their mathematical knowledge is as secure as it can be,

We use a writing approach set out by the Trust and this is working well for us. The children are enthusiastic writers, enjoy writing and write well. They are clearly able to use the vocabulary taught and that learnt from their reading to improve the language in their writing too.

Our RE learning follows the Emmanuel Project scheme of work. This is a really creative approach to learning RE but with deep roots in religious stories too. The children act, create models, explain, question and present their RE in many different ways. The children have taken to this well and their retention of learning is again amazing.

As a school we offer a wide range of PE lessons, including those taught by the class teacher and some supported by qualified coaches/specialists. In addition, these coaches/specialists provide after school activities, which give the children an enriched experience and an opportunity to practice and develop further.

**COVID-19 update**

Even though Covid-19 does not come with the same restrictions as it did previously, as a school we are still ensuring that children are washing hands thoroughly, particularly before lunch. Cleaning still remains a priority and we have an in school cleaner as well as 2 cleaners from an external company that support with the cleaning of the school.

We have at times had children and staff off school still due to Covid-19 so there has still been an impact in school in that sense. When staff absence has occurred, this has then pulled on resources of senior leaders to cover these roles to ensure high standards of learning have continued to be provided.

School is still working on consolidating gaps in learning that has occurred due to the previous Covid-19 disruptions. Children are making excellent progress in narrowing these gaps and staff have been rigorous in their planning and additional support they have been offering to pupils. So a huge well done to all! We have used the National Tutoring Programme to fund and target individual pupils in the upper years to ensure adequate progress has been made for these pupils. As mentioned previously, we have introduced a further Maths tutor computer based support programme that is in its early stages that will also help us to ensure gaps in learning are identified and addressed.

As a school, we have welcomed families back in to school with numerous events such as the Easter Service, Sports Day, Jubilee event plus parents evenings, new to school evenings and productions for the end of year and the Nativity.

**Additional updates**

We have received 12 applications for our Reception class for this next academic year and although the PAN is 17, with last year being over-subscribed by 6 pupils being admitted following the appeal’s process, this balances our pupil numbers. We will continue to advertise our vacancies in local magazines and present our school effectively amongst the wider community in order to encourage a higher placement intake in the future.

Our PTA have continued to support school amazingly well. They have supported in refreshments at many of the events we have held over the year, held discos, world book day events, mothers and father day event’s and they paid for a huge inflatable for the children to enjoy at the Jubilee picnic, which was very much loved by all, just to name a few of the things they have done for us. The chair, Rebekah, worked incredibly hard on producing a special jubilee commemoration book for all the children to be a part of as a way to remember the special event. The PTA continue to think of ways to fundraise for school and are really supportive with everything we ask of them. We are extremely grateful and thankful to them for all of the support they give us. Without their financial support, we wouldn’t be able to do everything we do.

Alongside fundraising from our PTA, this year we have had to be creative in supporting our in school fundraising too. We had a very successful Christmas Fair which was great fun and enjoyed by all who took part. More recently, we have held a sponsored reading event and competition with a local photography company to raise further funds for school. The money raised from these events have/will be used to support purchase of additional resources, opportunities and creative spaces across our school for the benefit of all children. We would like to thank everyone who has come along, donated or supported these events as they make such a difference to what we are able to do in school.

For our next project in school, we are looking to create a weather-proof outdoor reading space for children to enjoy during their break and lunchtimes, which we think will have huge benefits. We are also looking to improve our Badger set with new furniture to home our Stay and Play resources and we would like to have a food preparation station too, so that it is easier to provide alternative food options for those accessing our wrap around care.

Finally, we would like to thank our local community for all of their support again in the last year. We have continued to work with our community and families with areas of need, such as encouraging families to park considerably and sensibly. We would like to thank Reverend Canon Becky Dyball and Reverend Diane Kutar for their continued support from the church. The Christingle and Easter services they supported us with this year was like no other, so thank you for keeping the fun alive for the children.

**Church & Parish Directory**

**St Giles Church** **Website:** [**www.holme-parish.org**](http://www.holme-parish.org)

Priest in Charge Revd Becky Dyball, The Rectory, Church Causeway, Sawtry

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