

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD 06/05/2014

AT ST JAMES CHURCH WEST Hanney at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs. Trevor Brettell, Graham Garner, Kay Sayers (Clerk), Chris Surman (Chair) and Eddie Wilkinson.

Parishioners: Stan Ashby, Lionel Cousins, Angela Cousins & Jenny Gascoyne

Apologies: Cllr. Matthew Barber.

Chairman's Report:

Our council year started off with deep sadness when Tony Day our vice chairman at the time died after a short but aggressive illness. Tony served on the parish council for over 25 years and in that time showed a dedication to the village he loved and had lived in for 50 years. For many years Tony had looked after bulb plantings around the village and as a memorial to him councilors planted a mass area of daffodil bulbs at the start of Main St and we will be planting some more in the autumn. We are also considering planting some low growing shrubs, although the creeping ivy may be difficult to eradicate first. The Gardening Club's Queen's Jubilee gift of a Rowan Tree has also been planted on the Bankside are, and we are grateful to the club for their gift to the village.

Following the resignation of Alice Grecian, Kay Sayers volunteered to act as Parish Clerk as well as continuing in her role as Councillor and we are all extremely grateful to her for taking on this somewhat onerous task. Thank you Kay.

Following Tony's death Graham Garner was co-opted onto the council. Although you have been serving now Graham for many months can I officially welcome and thank you for joining us.

The parish council have continued to try and protect this small rural village from being swamped with new developments but have only been partially successful. We all understand the need for new houses but are of the opinion that these new properties should be built where there is sufficient existing infrastructure to cope with the increase, and not in villages without resources.

I attended the annual Vale Parish Forum at the Guildhall, Abingdon in November and over the year several councilors have attended various meetings, including those organized by the small villages alliance (SVA), to discuss planning issues in the area.

Over the year we have been involved in many negotiations with the executors of Nigel Eady's estate regarding rights of access and services agreements and we were ultimately delighted when Nigel's wishes were carried out by his executors with the permission of Swindon Town Football Club and it was agreed that the Community Woodland is to be transferred to the village with the Parish Council as

trustees. We have now, however, come across a stumbling block in that the land may well be liable for a chancel charge if the Church ever decides to claim on local property owners for repairs. This can be insured against but the premiums may be more than we can afford each year. We need to find a way around this but that way has not become clear. If anyone has any ideas then please let us know. Could we ask for a benefactor? I don't know! At present it is planned to hold a formal 'handing over' procedure in the near future.

We are in the course of putting together a committee to oversee the woodland and its maintenance and that committee will be required back to the PC regularly with recommendations and suggested actions.

A joint meeting was held with East Hanney PC in October to consider an updated Sport and Leisure Facility Strategy for our two villages. A report compiled by Eddie Wilkinson and Stewart Scott was debated and it was agreed to investigate the way forward through funding grants, and by seeking opinions as to what new facilities may be beneficial.

We have had to be extra careful with our funds this year due to expected expenses in relation to the community woodland and legal expenses but we have donated money to the citizen's advice bureau, the village hall committee, the Church, and the two new Defibrillators fund to name a few. We also sponsored the printing of the programmes for the very successful Hanney Michaelmas Fayre. In relation to the Fayre and on behalf of the organizing committee we applied for, and were successful in obtaining, permission from Vale of White Horse District Council for closure of the local roads during the event. I have recently been asked whether we can organize the same again for this year's event on the 20th September so we will fill in the necessary quantity of forms to apply for that shortly.

Returning to expenses we have also now been told we need to pay a £100 donation per annum for putting our articles in the Hanney News, which was a surprise because that was the original reason for its inception as we understood it. We believe that all the production costs should be covered by advertising revenue, but have been told the rates will not be increased.

If we can find someone to run the existing Hanneys website then we may well consider using this as our reporting platform rather than having to pay out money that we cannot really afford.

So, a year of very different emotions. Sadness at the death of Tony and joy nearly one year later when we learnt that the community woodland would be coming under the ownership of the village. Tony would have been elated.

So, finally, a big thank you to all my colleagues for their work for the council over the past year, especially to Kay for her joint role, and for their support to me as Chairman.

Thank you.

Bus Service:

Stan Ashby stated what an excellent service the village was getting from the A1. He and several other members used it regularly, it was a life line. **AP KS to write to OCC to express thanks.**

Hanney Website:

GG gave an update. **AP. GG to contact Dene Stringfellow to arrange for him to take over the upkeep.**

Hanney News:

There was a general discussion as the PC now has to pay to put their news in the publication. It was thought that originally it was set up by the Church & PCs to inform villages of local news. Trade adverts paid for the production costs. Concern was raised about the future of Hanney News. It was suggested that a member of each PC and the Church meet with the Hanney News committee to discuss the future of the paper. **KS to contact EHPC with the meetings concerns.**

Community Woodland:

Thanks were expressed to the Chairman for his negotiation which ultimately led to the PC acquiring the land. A general discussion on the woodland concluded the meeting.

Signed Chairman

Date