

HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 2015 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

held on Thursday 16 April in the Village Hall

Present: John Anderson (chairman of the Parish Council, in the chair); Parish Councillors Karen Jones, Mike Parry, Paul Pattison and Peter Spall; Parish Clerk Jane Woolley; Waverley Borough Councillor Elizabeth Cable; and over 60 villagers

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillors Stewart Payne and Philip Underwood, Waverley Borough Councillor Adam Taylor-Smith, Tracey Taylor and Dave Boxall (Surrey Police) and Paul and Pauline Stone.

1. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS - presentation by Ian Motuel, principal planning officer, Waverley Borough Council

1.1 These were introduced by government in 2011 to enable local communities to have more say in the siting and appearance of developments in their area. They were optional; they carried more weight than Parish Plans or Village Design Statements; and they were already being produced by several Parishes adjacent to Hambledon. However, they could not be used to stop development or to promote less development than that set out in (in our case) the Waverley Local Plan.

1.2 Before embarking on a Neighbourhood Plan it was important to ensure that enough volunteers with time, skills and knowledge were available to commit themselves for the two years or more which it normally took to produce a plan. Costs also had to be considered, although some government-approved grants and direct consultancy support were available. Because Neighbourhood Plans formed part of the planning process they had to undergo examination by an independent inspector to ensure they conformed to national and local policies. Once past the examination stage a Neighbourhood Plan could only be adopted if at least half the Parishioners who voted on it in a referendum expressed themselves in favour.

1.3 Whether or not to produce a Neighbourhood Plan often depended to a significant extent on the adequacy of existing policies in the [Waverley] Local Plan. Hambledon is categorised by Waverley as a rural community with very limited services; there were no plans to focus any growth in the village; the village has Green Belt and AONB protection; and various parts of it are designated conservation areas. If the Parish felt that existing policies provided adequate protection from development, a Neighbourhood Plan might not be necessary.

1.4 In response to questions Mr Motuel clarified the difference between Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements which were more concerned with design and character issues than with types and siting of development. Nor, like Parish Plans, did they have any legal force. Neighbourhood Plans could be amended (only by once again going through the entire consultation/examination/approval process) but it was generally expected that, once adopted, they should hold good for at least 10-15 years.

The Chairman thanked Mr Motuel for an extremely informative presentation which would help the Parish Council to consider the best way forward for Hambledon.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

These were circulated, taken as read and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that were not covered by other items on the agenda.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Highlights of the report (reproduced in the May issue of the Parish Magazine and on the village website) were as follows:

4.1 The granting of a Certificate of Lawfulness to turn a small vernacular cottage in one of the village's conservation areas into a substantial five-bedroom house. The Parish Council, with the support of Waverley Borough Council and Jeremy Hunt MP, took this up with the relevant government minister and (perhaps co-incidentally) an appropriate amendment had been made to close this particular loophole.

4.2 The affordable housing issues created by the proposed development at Orchard Farm and the application to build on land opposite the Merry Harriers - the need on the one hand to provide housing that was not out of the financial reach of so many providers of essential services and on the other to preserve Hambledon's rural heritage. Not an easy circle to square but the Parish Council had attempted to do this in several ways:

- commissioning a housing needs survey to ascertain what changes in Hambledon's demand for affordable housing had occurred since the last survey was carried out in 2010-11;
- recognising that those living adjacent to Orchard Farm had justifiable concerns regarding drainage, traffic and access, site layout and numbers of houses; ensuring that these and all other villagers' concerns were addressed by the developer; holding a public meeting to gather views; and passing these back to the developer.
- recognising that, once a planning application was submitted it would be incumbent on the Parish Council to make sure that what was proposed for the Orchard Farm site would be in the best interests of the whole village.
- in the case of the planning application to build two market and four affordable houses on land next door to the Merry Harriers' car park, recognising that the need for affordable housing had to be balanced against the potential over-development of a small site and a loss of parking space.

4.3 The conclusion by independent transport consultants that Dunsfold aerodrome was unsustainable for any substantial housing development, despite its being proposed as a component of all four of Waverley's alternative proposals for meeting housing requirements in its new Local Plan.

4.4 The approval by Waverley of 18 other planning applications which had been supported by the Parish Council and the granting of six Certificates of Lawfulness for permitted development

4.5 The increase in planned expenditure of just under £1,000 (met from reserves) on the housing needs survey; public meetings on Orchard Farm; a small contribution towards the cost of providing superfast broadband in the Hydestile area; and the Dunsfold aerodrome transport review.

4.6 Ensuring that Scottish and Southern Energy took remedial measures to prevent a re-occurrence of the Christmas 2013 power cuts.

4.7 Obtaining funding under SCC's localism initiative to carry out its own programme of hedging and ditching throughout the village.

4.8 In response to a further SCC bus review, pressing for the retention of the 503 service through Hambledon.

4.9 Supporting the initiative of residents in the Hydestile area to obtain superfast broadband which could not be provided by the joint SCC/BT project that had installed it through the rest of Hambledon.

4.10 Making a small contribution towards the cost of the much-needed repairs at Oakhurst Cottage carried out by the National Trust, which had also undertaken extensive research into the history of the cottage and reflected this in a new guidebook.

4.11 Continued its support for many other village groups and organisations which between them offered something for just about everyone in Hambledon and whose enthusiasm and efforts made Hambledon so special.

5. FINANCE

The audited accounts for 2013-14 were circulated to all present. There were no comments.

6. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

A written statement from the **Police** reported a total of nine non-dwelling burglaries in the village during the past year, mainly been from sheds which highlighted the importance of securing both these and their contents. Julie Llewelyn then spoke on behalf of the **Hambledon Community Fund**. This now stood at over £154k, an amazing achievement for so small a village; and 14 grants, totalling £12,630, had been made. She thanked all donors to the fund and those who had identified the need for or otherwise assisted in the making of grants; and she sought assistance in organising more village events which were essential if the Fund was to maintain its high profile. More good news followed from **Oakhurst Cottage** with Norman Gravestock reporting on the major refurbishment carried out by the National Trust during the winter. To make good the loss of the Gertrude Jekyll artefacts that had been returned to the Guildford Museum he appealed to everyone to keep their eyes open for pot hangers, rush lighters or similarly pieces – such as the tinder box which he had found on a recent visit to Amsterdam.

Andy Falk stated that, following completion of the refurbishment of **Almshouse** no. 2, the generosity of individual and charitable donors had enabled the Trustees to obtain a bank loan to finance the refurbishment of no. 1. Work was due to be completed by the end of the summer and in future the Almshouses would be known as Russett and Bramley Cottages. Tim Parker spoke about the **Village Shop** where turnover was up year-on-year by over 30 per cent. Increased trade had necessitated a (manageable) increase in staff costs and volunteer recruitment continued. Refurbishment would be undertaken during the summer with the help of a grant from Surrey County Council and conversion to a Community Benefit Society would give all shareholders a say in its management. In conclusion he thanked Jo Jazeel for the energy and enthusiasm she had brought to the running of the shop.

On behalf of the **Cricket Club** Arthur Blackman reported that the senior XI had come third in Division 1 of the Village League. Several of the friendly XI's matches had been cancelled but, of the seven played, four had been won. Over 60 juniors had trained and played during the summer and were now signing on for the forthcoming season. The loan for rebuilding the pavilion had been paid off but £3k still had to be raised annually to cover expenses. Matt Kiley then spoke about the **Football Club** which was now fielding four teams. The first had ended the year just below mid-table but the reserves were in line for their league title and would also be playing at the week-end in the Intermediate Reserve Challenge League cup

final. The third team had finished the season mid-table, the veterans were unbeaten and the Milford Pumas were now using the ground.

Julie Steele reported on the **Heritage Society's** recent and very successful AGM at which Audrey Monk had taken her audience on a tour of Hambledon from the cretaceous age to the present day. The view map on the top of Hambledon Common had been installed and especial thanks were due to Stephen Dean for allowing use of the site, George Pitt whose firm had provided the plaque, the church whose stone had been used for the plinth which had been built by Bob the builder, and the Merry Harriers' llamas who had transported the refreshment for the unveiling ceremony.

John Tidmarsh said that, thanks to a share of the profits from the fête it had been possible to commission a major electrical up-grade. However, takings were down at the **Village Hall** and he appealed for more bookings. Catherine McBride then thanked all those who had kept **St Peter's Church** open during Easter week. She encouraged use of the hearing aid clinic at the coffee mornings that were held on the third Tuesday of the month and said that a Children and Families worker would shortly be in post. Highlights of her past year ranged from judging the dog show at the village fête, through participation in assemblies at St Dominic's School and regular visits to the Nursery School, to Christmas carols and Messy Church services.

Jane Woolley spoke on behalf of the **Hambledon Village Trust** which had recently undertaken substantial repairs to the exterior of the Village Shop and Pendle Cottage and maintained its responsibility for the **village web site**. As Paul Osbourn then reported, after seven years this needed to be refreshed and was about to be migrated to a new and more user-friendly platform.

Derek Miller spoke about the **Hambledon Ramblers** who maintained their strength despite increasing years. In addition to the monthly long (though never more than eight miles and always with a pub lunch) and short walks, there was now a company of strollers. Age had also taken its toll of the **WAGs** which was no longer run by Jan Kilsby and Julie Atkin; instead the group now met once a month for tea at the Merry Harriers. In her written report Jan thanked all those who in the past had invited the WAGs to their homes for delicious teas and to enjoy their beautiful gardens.

Nicola Collett reported that 72 children were currently attending **Hambledon Nursery School**. The creative development project continued and in September the School would become a creative hub for Surrey. Its latest Ofsted inspection had judged it outstanding in all areas and Nicola thanked its staff, parents and Trustees for their support: their passion was the School's success. An outstanding care report had also been received from Ofsted at **St Dominic's School** and it retained its accreditation by the National Autistic Society. As a result, Monica Fisher reported that it would be taking its maximum number of 100 pupils by September, covering a seven to 19 age range. The sixth form concentrated mainly on vocational training and transition to independent living and a grant from Lloyds Bank was helping with the latter.

Finally John Hindly, joint editor of the **Parish Magazine**, thanked all contributors together with Tony Parker (advertisements), Derek Miller (treasurer) and Pat Williams (distribution) and he expressed the hope that some younger people might like to get involved.

8. VILLAGE CLEAN-UP AND BARBEQUE

The Chairman invited everyone to take part in the village clean-up and barbeque on 18 April.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 19.20

