

# ***SHEPHERDSWELL WITH COLDRED PARISH COUNCIL***

*Sunny Lawns, Densole Lane, Densole, Folkestone, Kent. CT18 7BL*

*Tel 01303892621*

*E-mail [parish.clerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@hotmail.co.uk)*

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Shepherdswell Village Hall on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7pm.

## **1. Present**

Cllrs: K Regan (Chairman), A Barter, M Cobb, B Crush, R Edmond, M Harris, M Elgar, G Peagram, C Pickaver, C White, A Williams, G Lymer (KCC) and C Tearle (Parish Clerk) and 13 members of the public

## **2. Apologies of Absence**

Cllrs: I Robertson and M Ovenden (DDC)

## **3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016.**

It was resolved that these were approved.

## **4. Chairman`s Annual Report (Cllr K Regan)**

The year has flown by since my previous report.

As you will know Steven Durbidge decided it was time to retire from his position as Parish Clerk. After advertising the position we had a number of applicants and were fortunate that Colin was one of them. Welcome.

The lease with the Allotment Association was signed in February and great progress is being made on the ground. And after many years of discussion we are still waiting to finalise the terms and conditions of leases with the VHMC and Pre-School.

The playground equipment was renewed in 2016 and has been well received.

The ongoing traffic nuisance through our villages is still a major issue but we are doing whatever we can to reduce this problem.

A defibrillator was installed in the old telephone kiosk in Coldred and another has been installed on the Scout Hut wall on the recreation ground. We have also purchased the telephone kiosk on Mill Lane and it is being well maintained by one of our villagers.

The biannual tree condition survey was carried out and the necessary tree work that it highlighted.

New heritage signs have been purchased from DDC to be placed on the V/Greens.

The new version of the Council`s website, which I think is a big improvement, is now up and running.

We were made aware in December 2015 that our Post Office would be closing and we are working closely with all those involved to try and find another location for a viable P Office. Lots of us enjoyed a retirement party for Sue & Graham in the V Hall And our thanks to the Plymouth Brethren for their voluntary work clearing and tidying up around the Village Hall.

## 5. Provision Financial Report (C Tearle Parish Clerk)

The Internal Audit just had been successfully completed and the Council finances are on track. This year the Council has precepted for £37346.00 which is £50.52/year or 97p/household on Band D. This represents a rise of 0.06%.

Overall the Council balances are down by £2.4K primarily due to the capital expenditure on the new play equipment and setting up the allotments in Reed Meadow. Administration and maintenance costs are on a par with the previous financial year, although income from the cemetery is up by £1.5K.

### BANK RECONCILIATION

#### Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council

#### Financial year ending 31 March 2017

**Prepared by:** Colin Tearle. Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 13th April 2017

Balance per bank statements as at 31 March 2017	£	£
Current account 90567285	3,686.73	
Business account 90567293	37,772.65	
NS&I account 138073796	1,932.59	
Petty cash float	0.00	
		43,391.97
Less: any unpresented cheques at 31 March 2017		
Cheque number:		
1006	36.00	
1012	2,490.00	
		2,526.00
Add: any unbanked cash at 31 March 2017		0.00
Net bank balances as at 31 March 2017 (Box 8)		40,865.97
<b><i>The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year, as follows:</i></b>		
<b>CASH BOOK:</b>		
Opening Balance 1 April 2016 (Prior year Box 8)		47,699.27
Add: Receipts in the year		52,197.48
Less: Payments in the year		59,030.78
Closing balance per cash book (receipts and payments book) as at 31 March 2017 (must equal net bank balances above - Box 8)		40,865.97

## **6. County Councillor`s Annual Report (Cllr G Lymer)**

- Customer services - Good performance was maintained for call answering and caller satisfaction, with call volumes continuing to decrease. Complaints responded to in timescale was just below target.

- Economic Development & Communities – Jobs secured from the Regional Growth Fund continues to increase, close to target. Properties returned to use through No Use Empty remains above target. Library usage levels are relatively stable. Economic indicators remain positive.

- Environment and Transport - Pothole repairs on time were above target, and timeliness for routine repairs improved to just below target. Recycling of waste and diversion from landfill were ahead of target. Greenhouse gas emissions reduced, although behind target.

- Education and Young People – Continued improvement for Ofsted inspection results for schools and Early Years settings. The new measure for Young people who are NEET is slightly off target. Outcomes achieved for Early Help cases and step down from specialist children`s services both improved but are behind target, while pupil exclusions and new entrants to the youth justice system both achieved target.

- Specialist Children Services – Permanent staff social workers remained stable, slightly below target. Case file audits good or outstanding was ahead of target. Children returning to child protection plan reduced and was close to target range. For children in care, adoption timeliness, stability of placement and use of in-house fostering were all above target. A new indicator for care leavers has been added to the report.

- Adult Social Care – Contacts resolved at first point of contact increased ahead of target. Clients referred to enablement showed further decline and was significantly off target. Clients still independent after enablement however remained above target. Clients with Telecare continue and admissions to residential and nursing care both improved but are behind target. Delayed discharges from hospital where KCC is responsible improved and met target.

- Public health - Health Check completions showed further improvement and was close to target. Access to GUM services remained ahead of target. Health visiting fell further and was significantly off target. Successful drug and alcohol treatment was slightly down, but close to target.

- Central Government has allocated £26 million over the next three years to pay towards the additional high costs that Adult Social Care is costing the County. This is to help those adults who are either, diabetic, morbidly obese, suffer mental illness, to include Alzheimers and Dementia or have permanent physical disabilities. I state these issues for many believe, incorrectly, it is confined to just being elderly.

- A great dent was made in the KCC's budget for Children's Services due to the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children presenting at Dover, where there were costs for medical exams, housing, clothing, education. Central Government has

assured KCC it will pay £1 million back into KCC's budget to help address the financial imbalance.

- I have arranged for another pothole repair and white line refresh in the Dover West Ward, so we should be seeing the results of that over the next few weeks.
- I have requested the Police and Crime Commissioner take a firmer stance in dealing with foreign registered HGV drivers who believe they can just park anywhere within the Ward, then leaving litter and human defecation on our verges.

I have been assured offending HGV drivers will be dealt with and their HGVs will be either impounded or wheel clamped until the fines and clamp release fees have been paid.

### **7. District Councillor`s Annual Report (Cllr M Ovenden)**

Apologies but I have Scrutiny at DDC and as we have the Police and CSU into answer questions on local issues, I feel it is important I attend.

My annual report can be summed up very shortly as traffic issues. Once again another year has passed and we still have HGVs plaguing the lanes through the villages. As before it is the lack of cooperation from Highways England but very recently there have been glimmers of hope and some of the A2 signage has been restored. The traffic lights at Coxhill and Lydden junctions have caused concern due to malfunctions and the ever increasing volume of HGVs clipping and damaging the columns. After a serious accident on the 23rd December last Highways England have said they are seeking funding for a complete assessment of both sets of lights. Very best wishes for the coming year.

### **8. KCC Community Warden Report (J West)**

A busy year again in the villages and across the District. I have dealt with many calls, enquiries, complaints and, questions over the year.

The issues that I address are wide and varying, encompassing local, district and county communities.

These include subjects covering crime incidents, environmental issues, community concerns, social welfare and individual welfare concerns, crime prevention, detection, safety and personal safety awareness.

The complaints most frequently raised in the Shepherdswell and Coldred Parishes this past year have been related to fly tipping, dog fouling, parking, traffic flow, scam phone calls and emails.

As a consequence, and with the aid of our joint partnership working teams such as the community safety unit, Kent Police, the environmental crime team, parking services, education and schools, trading standards, the County, District, Parish Councillors and the neighbourhood watch have been very pro-active in working alongside us to alleviate, and in some cases resolve many of the above issues.

The community warden service has again undergone various structural changes and we now sit alongside the emergency planning team in the public protection service/ environment/ planning and enforcement/ growth/ transport directorate.

The vision of which as always is to create stronger and safer communities, promoting social inclusion and cohesion for the long term benefit of the whole community.

I shall as always endeavour to continue upholding and enhancing those values.

### **9. DDC Environmental Crime Team (A Kluczynski)**

2.5 million pieces of litter are deposited in the UK each year which costs us approximately £855m/annum to dispose of. A nationwide review is going on at the moment with regard to Councils charging for waste being brought to their collection points as it is now accepted that this policy is exacerbating the problem of fly-tipping which in turn is costing more money to sort out than the revenue generated by charging at collection points.

Last year 157 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued with 23 successful prosecutions for dog fouling and litter.

Both Reed Meadow and the Recreation Ground are covered by the DDC Public Spaces Protection Order. An Order which deals with all dogs on leads, dog fouling, dog exclusion areas, etc.

### **10. Community Land Trust - CLT (Cllr M Cobb)**

The working party is a mix of councillors and villagers working towards the provision of affordable housing in Shepherdswell and Coldred. This provision will almost certainly be for rental accommodation provided by a Housing Association.

Qualification for tenancy is very strictly enforced as those people who can demonstrate their links to the village through residency, family members or work.

The group has sent in an application to be accepted as a Community Benefit Company under which the CLT can operate. The group applied for and received start-up funding from government and the Parish Council has become a member of the CLT network.

Many parcels of land have been considered and letters were sent to the relevant landowners of the prime sites for this type of development but none were interested in selling the land for what amounts to be agricultural prices. We are now working our way through the less favoured sites and hoping to find somewhere that the Housing Association and the District Planning Office could work with.

We thank the Parish Council for their continued support in this project and recognise the work and support of Tessa O`Sullivan from Action with Communities in Rural Kent and all the work put in by Cllr M Elgar and others in identifying possible sites and giving the working party something to work with.

### **11. Shepherdswell and Coldred History Society (C Howell)**

Shepherdswell and Coldred History Society has had another successful year; highlights as follow:

- Good attendance at meetings where there has been a speaker, with some very interesting topics.
- A well attended Big History Day in September, with another planned for September this year.

- Another Walk Through Time. The last one was along the Eythorne Road with the next one in June being in Coldred.
- Obtaining Historic England recognition of Three Barrow Down, aka Rubery Butts as an historic site after a visit which showed damage to the barrows from motorbike riders. A discussion with the landowner has given permission for us to investigate possibly fencing these off to prevent further damage and funding is being investigated.
- The Oral History Project has now commenced with old-term villagers appearing willing to share their knowledge of times past in Shepherdsweil. We are working on getting these onto our website to share with everyone.
- The Society's website has continued to evolve and has new items added meaning that it is a good idea to keep visiting it for the latest photos or information.
- The archaeological dig in Reed Meadow was completed over the summer and interpretation of the sherds and other finds is currently being undertaken, including carbon dating. Presentation of this will be given upon receipt of the report/s.

Finally, the History Society would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued support in our endeavours and encourage villagers from Coldred to become more involved.

## **12. Neighbourhood Watch (A Hunter)**

2016 was my first full year of looking after Shepherdsweil and Coldred Neighbourhood Watch. During that time I've grown the scheme membership and in addition to email cascades we now have an online presence on both Twitter and Facebook as well as updates in Shepherdsweil News magazine.

My thanks to the PCouncil for the purchase of NHW signs which are prominently placed around the villages as well as having monthly updates placed as a standing agenda item.

2016 was a very busy year with a disproportionate amount of burglaries in the village with a number of repeat victims.

Two different sets of perpetrators were caught and brought to justice. One being a youth from the area, the others being adults away from the area. It's clear that the affluence combined with our rural location virtually equidistant between Canterbury and Dover makes us a prominent target.

A number of these events could have been prevented by locking and securing doors or making minor changes to strengthen physical security. If any residents would like a security audit please contact me or our new local PCSO.

Talking of PCSOs, Tom Tucker-Smyth has moved areas due to some changes invoked by Kent Police. My thanks to him for all his efforts during the years he was our

dedicated ward officer. PCSO Amy Youden is the new officer. I hope to meet with her soon.

The other area of growth was online fraud/phishing emails and support was provided to a number of residents who became victims. This included securing their computers and helping them lodge fraud claims with their banks for refunds/replacement cards and reporting to action fraud.

I can be contacted on 01304830010 email [shepcoldnhw@gmail.com](mailto:shepcoldnhw@gmail.com) and Twitter @shepcoldnhw

### **13. Shepherdswell Village Hall Committee (Cllr C White)**

As you all probably know the hall was opened in 1991 after a lot of fund raising/grants raised by villagers to provide the new hall for the village. The hall is run by Trustees (The Management Committee) and made up of representatives from most organisations/clubs from the village using the hall. This entitles these clubs to have use of the hall at half price for their meetings/functions. As with most organisations we have the much needed Chair/Secretary/Treasurer who have a very busy time with the rest of the committee in the smooth running of the hall. The maintenance of the hall is an ongoing affair and now that the hall is 26yrs old, more and more needs to be done to keep the buildings to the high standard expected. Recently a new boiler has been installed, new windows and fire doors to the far end of the hall and also a new side entrance door. Locks to the front door have proved troublesome and required more attention and cost. Decoration is also an ongoing affair, but our decorator is brilliant and keeps on top of it, however it all costs. Parking has often been a problem for the hall with insufficient spaces, especially for the larger meetings. This has been rectified to some extent by the new village hall car park provided by the Parish Council for the use of hall users only. A chain and lock is in use for the purpose of segregating the car park. Lighting has been provided in the new car park by the Parish Council which was much needed for safety reasons – with the help of some fund raising by some village associations.

The Hall Committee is at present in negotiation with the Parish Council regarding a new 30yrs lease.

You may wonder how the committee managed to do all the maintenance work mentioned above – we do try to get grants when available but other than that it is by income from the hiring of the hall. We also try to keep the rental of the hall at a reasonable price to encourage as much usage as possible as after all that is the purpose of the hall.

The new challenge is the LED lighting and insulation of the loft space in the main hall. This is necessary as the old tube fittings are getting more and more difficult to obtain hence the need for change and update.

As you can see the Management Committee is very busy organising and running the hall to a high standard and is very lucky to have a very responsible booking person and conscientious caretaker.

### **14. Reed Meadow Allotment Association (B Brenchley)**

Looking at our presentation of that time, I see we noted that our story started with the Parish Plan of 2010 – 2012. This was followed in 2014 by the purchase of Reed

Meadow by the Parish Council. This of course represented a very significant step towards the provision of allotments.

So has happened since that time?

Reed Meadow Allotment Association was formed in spring 2015, followed by yourselves setting up the Allotment Working Party to deal with us .

We hoped to be on site that autumn, preparing for the 2016 growing season.

As we know things did not quite work out that way, with the History Society performing much interesting work during the summer of 2015 and again in 2016.

However this time was not wasted (wasted in the context of the allotments, I know it was not wasted by the History Society!).

Our Management Committee met a number of times to discuss aspects such as planning permission (of which more anon), car parking, plot layout and site preparation (the hedge on the Network Rail boundary, weed killing, ploughing, tilling, fencing) etc. Similar discussions also took place with your Allotment Working Party. We thank you for the work you did during this period, especially authorising aspects of the site preparation work.

Progress accelerated in the autumn of 2016: most significantly, the nature of the relationships between the Parish Council, the Reed Meadow Allotment Association and the plot holders was discussed. After sterling work by the Allotment Working Party and our Chairman, the lease, sub-lease and allotment rules were agreed and signed in February 2017.

Following this milestone, the site was fenced and gated, leaving us to finalise the site layout, and mark out the plots and walkways. We also placed an article in April's Shepherdswell News which you no doubt have read.

In many respects this completed the vast majority of the 'set-up' work, at the conclusion of which (one might say) we hit the ground running.

The waiting list, built up during 2013, 14 and 15 was attacked with gusto. Plots were allocated to all those on the waiting list during February and March this year. Once allocated their plot, our plot holders set to work with a will, and much digging and tilling has taken place with the aim of getting something planted for this growing season.

Councillors, you will see the result of these labours if you care to visit the site.

A closer look will reveal the appearance of a number of green shoots (potatoes, mange tout etc) while the proliferation of canes points to a (potentially) bumper runner bean crop.

Here I just note that while the majority of the work has focussed on vegetables, some fruit bushes have also been planted as well as a few flowers. And we even have a bug house. There is therefore, some variety in the use being made of the plots.

In addition, we have already had one successful harvest: a large number of stones, which have been used to edge beds and plots.

The work so far has revealed a paucity of worms – indeed they seem to be non-existent. So as we take care of the flora, we hope that the fauna will follow - although this may unfortunately include rabbits.

On the few occasions when we have paused to reflect, there is perhaps a feeling that this is in the nature of an experimental year, as we watch to see which plants and vegetables are best suited to the soil.

To complete the picture, I would select two issues which are exercising our minds at the moment.

Firstly, I know you will be discussing a planning issue regarding sheds later in this meeting.

Secondly, we are all acutely conscious of the lack of a water supply (noting that since we have been on site rainfall has been practically non-existent). Indeed you will see a number of water butts already on the site.

To conclude, let me give you a few statistics.

We have satisfied the demand for plots: the waiting list of 14 applications (2 dropped out) and 2 new applications received this spring. This includes one 'community' group.

Occupancy is about 75% of the available 'plot space' (I know our Chairman is preparing an accurate figure for our Parish Clerk).

Bernards Gardens and Eythorne Road are the best represented roads, each having three plot holders.

And now an advert: we still have a few plots available, ranging in size from 75 sq metres to 160 sq metres. Please contact me.

It only remains for me to thank the Council for your support and the opportunity to present our views. Most importantly we must thank the Allotments Working Group (Geoff, Tony and Alan, supported by Steve Durbidge) for all your help and work.

I'll now issue the usual disclaimer. I offer apologies to the Council and the Allotments Working Group if I have misrepresented or misinterpreted anything. All mistakes are, regrettably, mine.

### **15. The Post Office (V Cobb)**

Thank-you to the Parish Council for the opportunity to spread information through this report and its inclusion on the Parish Council website.

Also many thanks go to our District Councillors for their support and efforts made to look into ways of maintaining a P Office service in our community. Mr David Folle, CEO of Dover District Chamber of Commerce has met with the P. Office CEO and senior officials to make the case for a continued service. Sharon Davis from Action for Rural Kent is also involved in supporting our efforts.

Charlie Elphicke MP has been active on our behalf, having written to both the P. Office and the Co-op. The response he received from the P.Office is mostly positive in expressing their commitment to a service in Shepherdswell, however one sentence highlights the precarious nature of this future service. It states:

"Future provision of services will reflect customer numbers and usage in the local area and we may take the opportunity to establish an alternative type of service if it is determined to be suitable for the existing demand".

We would urge all residents to use the new outreach service when available as it will impact on any future availability of a P Office service.

No response has been received from the Co-op.

Whilst ongoing preparations are being made to provide an Outreach service, it is our plan to continue to work towards a long term fuller service.

A number of venues for Outreach have been put forward to Cheryl Sitch the P Office Network Operations Manager, who has already contacted the East Kent Railway Chief Executive, Matthew Plews and Bob Edmonds, Secretary of the Village Hall Committee.

It is our understanding, unfortunately, due to the Monday closure of EKR, this venue seems not suitable. It is unfortunate also that a compromise could not be found. EKR have been consistent in their offers of support to our community.

The Village Hall may be an acceptable venue provided costs are not prohibitive.

A Postmaster has been suggested from Aylesham as being able to operate an Outreach branch at Shepherdswell and further venues are being explored.

We wish to take this opportunity also to thank the Parish Council for having met the cost of a meeting held in the Village Hall and to ask that they will continue to support the Action Group in this way.

The Action Group plans to produce a flyer providing information on the new service and what it will offer. Again we urge everyone to make full use of the Outreach Service to keep our local need to the forefront of the attention of the P Office.

### **16. Speeding Traffic Coxhill Road**

A local resident raised this issue which was dealt with by Cllr G Lymer KCC.

The meeting finished at 2008hrs

