

ALLHALLOWS PARISH COUNCIL**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDESDAY 22 JUNE 2011 AT ALLHALLOWS VILLAGE HALL, STOKE ROAD, ALLHALLOWS AT 7.15 pm****PRESENT:**

Cllrs John Lambourne, Vice-chairman, John Luck, Alan Marsh, Mrs Wendy Myers and Mrs Noleen Skudder; Mrs Joan Thomas and Mr Richard Bradford, Bourne Leisure; Mr Carl Adams, Action with Communities in Rural Kent and 23 parishioners.

1 APOLOGIES

An apology for late arrival was received from Cllr Mark Skudder, Chairman, who was caught in traffic on the M25. Cllr Skudder finally arrived after the close of the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs Yvonne Forrest; Cllrs Filmer, Irvine and Watson, Medway Council; Mr Dave Wallace, Stoke Allotment Association; and PCSO Dave Potten.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in 2010 were unavailable.

3 ACCOUNTS

The Financial Statement of the Parish Council's Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2010 were unavailable but had been signed by the Chairman and Clerk in April 2011.

4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-chairman read the Chairman's report:

As many of you will know, I became Chairman of the Parish Council in May of this year. Prior to that, I was one of the Parish Councillors and have been a Parish Councillor since 2005.

This last year has seen a number of different outcomes for the Parish Council and the village. There has been some controversy and some animosity amongst councillors, as well as a lot of positive activity. There has also been interest from the local Press, and from neighbouring councils as well as Medway Council and other interested parties. In May of this year, there was an election that changed the shape of the Parish Council, with 4 new councillors joining the Parish Council.

I would like to focus on the positive activities for the last year. Some successes are as follows:

- A second Kick Wall was installed at the Playing Field, opposite the first. This allows and encourages games of football.
- A major Play Park for 8s to 13s was installed at the Playing Field, this April. This is proving very popular and provides this generation of youth with much needed activities, that have been lacking for previous generations.
- The Youth Club started in January last year and has been a resounding success. The Brimp Youth Centre will soon see new fencing and a small Football Arena installed. The Scouts should also soon be using the centre regularly. We also hope to see an Over 50s

age group club starting up there. The Over 50s club would have access to all of the same facilities at the Youth Centre, during the day.

- The allotments continue to be extremely successful
- The Village Hall is very popular and is regularly booked, with various groups and activities.
- The Cross Park Project is progressing well. Over £18K of Parish Council funds were awarded to the project last year, to help kick start the project. This year, the Association has received a grant of more than £45K from Biffa.

There are a number of groups in our village that meet on a regular basis and provide support, enjoyment and company for many residents, young and old.

All of these projects would not succeed without the will, the effort and the enthusiasm of all of the volunteers behind them. Week after week, month after month, there are people investing time and energy, for the betterment of others. This evening gives us a chance to hear the reports from some of those groups and celebrate their progress.

Going forward, I would like to see the Parish Council as proactive and as supportive as possible, to all worthwhile organisations in the village. I am encouraging the Parish Council to listen hard to the comments and ideas of members of the public. Once we compile that feedback, we should then look to see what the residents see as the priorities that the Parish Council should be looking to address. For example, over the last few months, there has been more and more talk of the need to improve the cleanliness of the village. As a result, the Parish Council will be looking to increase the amount of cleaning that goes on in the village. I would also like to see the establishment of monthly Project Days, to tackle specific areas within the village. A Project Day would consist of volunteers meeting up once a month, on a Saturday, and spending no more than 90 minutes, cleaning up a particular part of the village. They would then meet back at one of our buildings (such as the Village Hall, the Cross Park Pavilion, or the Brimp), whichever is appropriate. They would finish by having a cup of tea or coffee and a cake. This simple process really does have a dramatic affect on developing a sense of community, and a sense of community is what many people would like to see improved upon, in this village.

My thanks go to all those volunteers throughout the village who are working in any way, for the good of others. Thank you and well done.

5 MEDWAY COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr Filmer's report was read:

It has been a challenging year for Medway, as the government introduces its reductions in public spending. This has meant that your local council has had to make £29.5 million of reductions over the past year.

Medway Council has managed to achieve this difficult task whilst maintaining front line services. Council tax has also been frozen, which means that we have yet again maintained the lowest council tax in Kent, which is around £130 less than the average across the county.

In its budget for the forthcoming year, the council has proposed a number of new initiatives to help residents, including free swimming for over 60s and under 11s. There are also plans to improve the transport arrangements for young people in Medway by moving towards a Freedom Pass scheme. Currently the Council offers a half price bus scheme for students up to the age of 18, and this is soon to be enhanced.

Unlike elsewhere in Kent, Medway Council is maintaining the 9 am start time for concessionary bus pass holders. Other local authorities are moving to a 9.30 am start, but residents will be able to begin their journeys at 9 am in Medway and use their passes up to the last bus at night.

To encourage more people to visit our high streets, the council has frozen car parking charges once again and offered free parking on the run up to Christmas.

The regeneration of Medway is continuing, with the new bus station in Chatham nearing completion. Construction on Rochester Riverside is soon to begin and the redevelopment of Medway Park has been completed, transforming it into a regional centre of sporting excellence.

Last year, Medway saw its first international sporting event, with the Modern Pentathlon World Cup taking place at Medway Park. This year we will host the Modern Pentathlon European Championships, an Olympic qualifying event. We will also host teams training for the London Olympic Games next year.

2012 is going to be a year of celebration for Medway with the bicentenary of Dickens' birth, the 200th anniversary of the Royal Engineers in Medway, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics, which Medway is well placed to benefit from.

The Council has invested in its green spaces, and four of our parks have been awarded Green Flag Status – an award that recognises and rewards the best green spaces in the country.

6 REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

a Guides, Brownies and Rainbows

Cheryl Roussel, Brown Owl of the Brownie pack, reported that it had not been a very good year for the movement. The Rainbows leader had resigned, as had Glenda Davis, Guide Leader. The Brownie numbers had dropped to 6 but since January this had increased and there were now 8 Rainbows and 16 Brownies. Mrs Roussel's assistant would become the new Rainbows leader. She then outlined activities carried out by the Brownies.

b Village Hall

Glenda Davis reported it had been a successful year. The roofing problems had at long last been resolved. They had 4 new committee members. The Royal Wedding party had been a great success. Mrs Davis thanked the committee for all their hard work.

c Pre-school

It was reported that numbers were at an all-time low. It had been a busy year. The free funding places had been increased and they had developed links with the primary school. They had held a "toddle-waddle" in aid of Barnardo's. The future was unsure because of rising costs and fewer pre-school age children in the village.

d Cross Park Association

Shirley Melly reported that since 2009, electricity and water had been provided, trees planted and the building was undergoing refurbishment. Stage 2 would be the car park.

e Bowls

Shirley Melly said they did not have enough registered members to enter the Kent League.

f All Saints Church

Churchwarden Kathy Whybrow had submitted a written report:

There is change coming to the Churches on the Peninsular following a request from Rochester Diocese for a review of the Deanery. We cannot sustain the number of churches with dwindling numbers of worshippers and finances. Grain and Stoke do not have a minister and the vicar of Hoo has recently departed to join the Army as a chaplain. This at present leaves the Rev. Stephen Gwilt at High Halstow with Allhallows and St Mary Hoo and Rev. Edward Wright the Vicar of Cliffe and Cooling.

While the review takes place we are trying to set up Friends of All Saints Church, which will consist of parishioners who are worshippers and those who may just be interested in the History of the Church or who do not want to see another local amenity disappear from our Village.

We are planning a Church Open afternoon on the 10th September commencing at 2.00 p.m. so please come and support your church.

On a happier note we would like to report that Little Gems which is a youth group for KS1 children which we run at the Primary School is thriving with regular attendance of 16 – 20 children. The Ladies Friendship Group which meets monthly is also growing in numbers and enjoying regular outings and activities. The Nearly New Shop held in the Church on Monday afternoons still continues to do well with many people coming to bag a bargain.

We were well received at Kingsmead Park when we recently went Prayer Walking and hope that we were able to bring comfort and help to the residents. We would once again like to thank the kind gentleman from Kingsmead who treated the gates on the Church and Graveyard.

We would also like to thank Colin Davis for the superb job he is doing to keep the grass under control in the Graveyard and extend our thanks to the Parish Council for the £200 grant towards the cost of grass cutting.

g Youth Club

Cllr Mrs Skudder read her report as follows:

This has been a very busy and very successful year for the Youth Club. We have been running for 17 months and now operate on three nights a week. Street Dance on Monday, two sessions of Youth Club on a Tuesday, one for the 8 to 12's and the second for 13's and over plus a session on a Friday night for 13's and over. The Youth Club is staffed entirely by volunteers.

Youth Club is very popular and on a Tuesday evening we regularly attract over 70 young people. We have had very positive reviews from outside agencies including the Police who report that call outs to the area greatly reduce on a Youth Club evening. Our PCSO, Tabs McGowan has been very supportive of the Youth Club and has visited on many occasions.

We ran a summer programme last year, which was well attended and the young people recorded and produced their very own rap! We had a visit from Santa and his helpers at Christmas, which was great fun. In February we took a group of the older young people to midnight ice skating which was organized by Kent Youth.

We have been extremely lucky to receive generous donations from Alstom and their suppliers to the tune of £13,500 for a multi use sports arena, which should be in place by the end of July. We are also very grateful to Jack Newton, Site Manager at Grain Power Station for

arranging for Keaveney Contractors to supply and build two access ramps with railings to the building. Keaveney have also started the repairs to the access road to the Brimp. We are very grateful to them for their generous support of our project.

Our PCSO Tabs MacGowan was instrumental in getting the ball rolling with fundraising for the arena and will be involved in football training in the future – thanks Tabs.

We have been successful with other funding applications this year. We would like to thank the EON Community Fund for £980 towards heating and the Variety Club of Great Britain for £505 towards equipment.

Last September a number of volunteers gave up their time for a ‘Do up Day’ at the Brimp. Lots of improvement work took place and it was a fun day too which ended with a BBQ. Thank you to all the volunteers who gave up their time. We would also like to thank all the young people who support the Youth Club, their parents and guardians and all the local people who have shown their support during the past year.

Unfortunately the Youth Club was closed for four weeks earlier this year, but this has not deterred the volunteers or the young people that attend every week.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for granting the Youth Club a Licence at the Brimp and for paying for the electricity.

So what next? On 5th July, under the umbrella of Youth Club, an Over 50’s Social Club is being launched. Scottish Power have provided funding for both Public Liability and Employers Liability Insurance plus advertising, and we are very grateful to them for their support. We hope the Over 50’s Club is as popular and successful as the Youth Club!

We are planning to run Youth Club throughout the summer and also run an additional summer programme on 18th, 19th, 25th and 26th August.

Our final thank you must go to all the volunteers who give up their time on a weekly basis to help run the Youth Club. We have a strong team of volunteers, including a number of Senior Members who volunteer at the junior session. To give you a rough idea of how much volunteering takes place at Allhallows Youth Club, last week approximately 71 hours of volunteering were accrued. This ranges from helping run sessions, to shopping for tuck shop supplies to cleaning, which does include cleaning the toilets!

Everyone is welcome at Allhallows Youth Club and we encourage visitors, especially from the local community. If you would like to get involved by volunteering at the Club please come along and speak to one of the Leaders. Thank you.

7 OTHER BUSINESS

a Precept

Mr Morrad raised the matter of the increased precept for the current year and stated he hoped the new council would justify this in the magazine and also consider how it might be reduced next year.

b Absence of Clerk

Mr Wood said he had heard that the Clerk was suspended and asked the reason why. The Vice-chairman read a statement prepared by the Chairman in the eventuality of such a question being asked:

The Clerk is currently off sick and concurrently suspended from duties.

With regard to the 2010/11 Accounts: the books and Audit Commission Annual Return form were collected by the Clerk from the Internal Auditor, after the Clerk was signed off sick. This was against the instructions from her line manager (the PC Chairman). The Internal Audit has not yet taken place. It is not known if the accounts for the year to 31 March 2011 have been prepared or not. An extension for the submission of the Annual Return has been allowed by the Audit Commission, who is the Council's external auditor.

The Clerk has not handed over the books, accounts or annual return form to the Council, despite several requests for her to do so.

The matter is currently in the hands of the Parish Council's solicitors.

8 BOURNE LEISURE

Joan Thomas introduced herself and said that she had been working in support of the Manager, Richard Bradford and would remain with him until the end of the year.

The Vice-chairman then introduced Carl Adams, of Action with Communities in Rural Kent

Mr Adams spoke in general terms of the work of his organisation and then in depth about parish plans. These identified needs of a community and could be used in planning.

The Vice-chairman thanked Mr Adams, councillors, other guests and parishioners for attending and closed the meeting at 7.55 pm.

SignedChairman

On theday of2012