

WONERSH PARISH COUNCIL

Record of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday, 26th April 2007 at 7.30pm at Blackheath Hall, Blackheath

Present at the meeting were Mr R Bawden, Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr M Harding and Mrs C Howard, Vice-Chairmen of the Parish Council, Mr P Betlem, Borough Councillor for Wonersh and Blackheath, and Councillors Mrs L Healy, Mr Peter Neve, Mr N Morris, Mr A Shareef and Mrs B St. John. In attendance County Councillor Dr A Povey, Surrey County Council, Mr M Band, Waverley Borough Councillor for Shamley Green, Mrs Frere, Chairman of Wonersh United Charities, Mr P Enticknapp, Wonersh Village Shop Committee, PC Soulsby, PCSO Barker and Mr A Golden, The Surrey Advertiser and 45 electors were present.

1. Welcome - The Chairman welcomed the electorate and explained that it is a legal requirement that there is an annual assembly and the Parish Council Chairman chairs that meeting. He explained that it is the Parish Council who approves the minutes of the meeting and last year's minutes were approved at the meeting immediately following the Annual Assembly. He pointed out that the annual Assembly is not a Parish Council meeting but a meeting of the electorate where residents can raise matters that they wish to discuss and perhaps even to celebrate local events.

The Chairman introduced the agenda and drew the meeting's attention to spare copies of the annual newsletter should anyone not have received one. He told the meeting that the Village Design Statement had now been formally adopted and that this should be considered when planning applications are being made. Every household should have received a copy.

The Chairman thanked Councillor P Betlem for all he had done as he is not standing for re-election this year. He also informed the meeting that the Parish Clerk had tendered her resignation but was staying in position until a replacement was found. He thanked her for her work with the Council.

2. Apologies - Formal apologies were given from Mr & Mrs Powell-Jones, Dr Catherine Pike, Mrs Anita Morris and Mr & Mrs Harris-Hughes

3. Report of the work of Wonersh United Charities – Mrs Frere, Chairman. The Accounts had been distributed to those present. After audit by Patrick Bloss, to whom the charity is extremely grateful, these accounts have been submitted to the Charity Commission. The number of beneficiaries remains static at 35 with four distributions during the year, in March, June, September and Christmas.

There has been a change of Trustee during the year with the current Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr R Bawden, taking the place of Mrs C Howard. They were also pleased to welcome Rev Sally Davis, the new vicar at Shamley Green, to their meeting in November. They are hoping that the Rev Ian Scott-Thompson, the new vicar in Wonersh, will also be able to join them at their meeting in July.

Smith's Charity had once again supplied the main part of their funds with donations from Wonersh Parish Council and Shamley Green PCC. They are a local charity and the beneficiaries are local people. Mrs Frere thanked the electors and the Parish Council for their support.

4. Report regarding Wonersh Village Stores. - Mr P Enticknapp reported that the shop is going from strength to strength. Since the last Annual Assembly, the café has closed so there was no paying tenant for around 17 weeks, losing £1600 in rent. This will have an effect on future year's loan repayments.

There is still a problem with water ingress and more money will need to be spent on this in the future. This year's loan payments will be made in May. Future years' payments may be delayed, due to loss of rent and the changes in Corporation Tax.

The company has not yet been handed over to the Wonersh Foundation, which was set up three years ago. This will happen later this year.

Accounts of the company were available.

5. Parish Plan - Three working groups have been collecting and analysing data in each village and drawing up Action Plans based on these data.

Mr Morris gave a report on Blackheath, thanking Louise Osborne and Colin Hayward with the statistical analysis of the questionnaire. 44 households returned a questionnaire, a return rate of 34%. Mr Morris went through the variety of topics that had been covered by the questionnaire and suggested that, if anyone wanted to see the full analysis and Action Plan, there were copies available. The Clerk would send those to anyone who gave her their address.

Topics in the Action Plan included local environment issues, a village Christmas tree, public transport, the appointment system at the doctors' surgery, raising the profile of the PCSO, and the web-site of the Parish Council. Several of the issues have already been addressed. Mr Morris has asked the Village Society to put the Action Plan on the agenda of the next Village Society meeting as there are points in the Action Plan which could be taken forward by residents.

Mr Morris ended by asking volunteers to step forward from the community as projects such as Parish Plans are better served by residents than by the Parish Councillor. Mr Morris drew the meeting's attention to the proposed Parish web-site and asked the meeting's permission to take photos of this meeting for possible inclusion on it.

Roger Penny spoke on behalf of Shamley Green. Out of the Action Plan has come new ways of communicating – the format of the parish magazine has changed. There is the hope of having a village notice board, the Shamley Green web-site has been invigorated.

Under the heading of environment has come a Commons Audit under the leadership of Sarah Henderson including the issue of pond maintenance. There is interest in forming a conservation group in the village and there will be a litter campaign later this year.

Under the social side, a tennis club has been formed, an art workshop took place last Autumn. Activities for young people are being considered – PC Soulsby is involved, the Arbuthnot Hall has offered a venue and funding as has the Village Society. The main problem is leadership. A new fete committee has been formed. The main success on the social side has been the formation of a Garden Club

Road safety is an issue and a pilot Community Speed check was set up in Shamley Green and seems to have been successful. The more villages that do this, the greater the impact. There is a code of practice for the contractors carrying out the work at Longacre School and this is working. The reinstatement of the footpath between Shamley Green and Wonersh is a pressing problem.

There is concern about the future of the village shop. There is a new playgroup opening soon and the school has a new lobby area opened. Many actions have come out of the Plan.

John Williams presented the action plan for Wonersh. The three main points are social – fetes, summer garden parties, village Christmas party. A Village Society seems to be the best way forward for that but this needs volunteers and he invited the audience to think about this.

Open spaces is another issue and will be covered in Sarah Henderson's report
Speeding and traffic management is another matter that arose

David Beevers suggested that a committee should be formed to tackle traffic and speeding problems in the village. Over half the deaths on British roads occur on rural roads. He invited people to come forward for this committee.

6.A report from Sarah Henderson, Waverley Ranger. - Sarah Henderson, Sarah Henderson presented the Commons Audit procedure and how this process had been activated. Volunteers having been logging items on the commons in order to work out a programme for change and raise the standard of the commons which can then be maintained.

She asked people to look at the display set up at the back of the hall and to feed back comments on a questionnaire. The comments of the residents are very important.

About 10/12 volunteers have done all the work in Shamley Green. It is hoped the programme will be completed this year and the beginning of next year.

There has been interest from residents in Wonersh so Sarah is looking for volunteers to do the same thing on Wonersh commons. Graham Coates will take names from interested people.

7. To discuss local parish matters –

PC Soulsby introduced himself and introduced PCSO Michael Barker. He explained the differences between a police officer and a PCSO and how they both work in partnership with the community. Although Surrey police reach their targets, their budget is cut every year and they have done well to increase community policing and introduce more PCSOs. There are a number of local projects such as the Neighbourhood Panel at Garden Close, Shamley Green. He emphasized the need for interaction between residents and the police and PCSOs

The Chairman said how lucky the area is to have PC Soulsby and PCSO Barker.

Councillor Betlem asked the meeting to consider the needs of both the community and the Shamley Green shop proprietor in the question of the future of the village shop and post office.

A question was asked regarding the increase in benches outside the Red Lion. Sarah Henderson replied that WBC leases a small area to the pub and the license is for 10 tables. WBC is dealing with it.

An elector spoke about the problems of young people needing activities. The Residents' Association and Tony Hodgson is trying to get a grant for a youth club and the possibility of a qualified youth leader.

The same resident can find some old tythe maps which may help with finding the

route for a footpath between Wonersh and Shamley Green.

The Chairman pointed out that Borough Councillor, Michael Band and Dr Andrew Povey, Surrey County Councillor were present at the meeting to answer questions.

Councillor C Howard thanked the police for all their work. She told the meeting that the Parish Council meets every second Thursday in the month at Wonersh Sports Hall and that there is a spot for electors to come and speak.

A resident from Blackheath asked about the Star Energy gas exploration – the Chairman replied that the application has currently been withdrawn. Mr Morris told the meeting about the Liaison Group for Star Energy. The indication for drilling on Blackheath Common has receded but the indication is they will drill from Albury 1 site. The recent application was withdrawn because the drill had not been delivered to the UK so they had not been able to do noise testing. It is now in the UK and they will be carrying out tests and re-apply. The Liaison Group is continuing to meet. The best source of information is the Save Blackheath Common web-site.

A resident from Wonersh asked about the re-siting of the bus shelter. She feels it is causing a blind-spot and there have been young people hanging around in it at night. The Chairman explained that there was a survey of bus users which indicated it would be better used in Blackheath Lane. The police were also consulted about it, inspected the site with SCC Highways and approved the position. The Parish Council was not aware of the problems caused by young people and the Chairman thanked the resident for bringing it to the Council's attention.

A resident of Blackheath commented on the difficulty that the road narrowing pinch point outside the village hall was causing to her as it is difficult to get in and out of her drive. She would like it taken away or moved down the road. The Chairman pointed out that the measures had been taken after extensive consultation with the village. He acknowledged that this may result in some inconvenience for a minority of people. Mr Morris reinforced that all residents were given a chance to voice their views.

The same resident wondered if there was any chance of getting a bus from Blackheath to Cranleigh one day a week. Mr Morris is communicating with the bus companies and SCC about this matter. It is in the Blackheath Action Plan.

Another resident pointed out that a considerable minority were opposed to the middle pinch point outside Blackheath Village Hall. He is concerned that it channels traffic too close to the village hall and thinks it should be further down the road. The Chairman suggested that it would be prudent to wait until the results of the traffic data Collection in June.

The Chairman then closed the meeting. He invited everyone to partake of the refreshments and to take the opportunity to talk to County, Borough and Parish Councillors

A record of the full minutes of the Annual Assembly are available from the Parish Office.

Signed: Chairman. Parish Council.

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