

HIGH HALSTOW PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 APRIL 2016 AT THE MEMORIAL HALL, THE STREET, HIGH HALSTOW AT 8.00 pm

PRESENT:	Cllr George Crozer Cllr Martin Andrews Cllr Stuart Bailey Cllr Ray Collins Cllr Carl Mitchell Cllr Mrs Chris Watson Cllr Brian Williams	Chairman
	Mrs Roxana Brammer	Clerk
	Cllr Phil Filmer Cllr Roy Freshwater 6 parishioners	Medway Council Medway Council

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Gary Jerreat and Bill Khatkar and from Cllr Mick Pendergast, Medway Council.

2 **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2015**

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Munday, seconded by Cllr Mrs Watson and agreed the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 9 April 2014 be signed as a true record.

3 **ACCOUNTS**

The Financial Statement of the Parish Council's Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014 was received. A question was asked about the loan to the Recreation Hall. This was explained by Cllr Thomas, who confirmed the loan was to cover cash flow and had been repaid.

4 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman gave his report:

Today we mark the end of the first year of a four-year term of our new Parish Council. To all, I say thank you on behalf of High Halstow for your tike and effort in continuing to make our community a great place to live.

The Council employs a workforce of three to undertake the day-to-day running of the parish. Roxana our Clerk looks after all the administration and legal work; Jack and John who are both well known in the village keep our streets clean and tidy and of course thank you for the effort you individually make.

Thanks too to our contractors, Cousins Print & Design for printing the High Halstow Times and Turfsoil for keeping our verges and green areas tidy and doing the jobs we can't find volunteers to do.

So what's new this year?

The first of the new bus shelters is now installed in Christmas Lane and I think you will agree it goes a long way to enhance the rural feel of the village. Thanks to Brian for heading up the steering committee. Let's hope it's not too long before the other older shelters are renewed in the same style.

The completion of a new all-weather path from The Street to Ruggles Close has had a mixed response. All agree, I believe that it is a good idea and in the right position although some perhaps think we should have gone all the way and laid it in tarmac. Who knows what this coming year will decide? Thanks again to Brian for heading up the steering committee.

The defibrillator is now installed on the front wall of the Doctors' Surgery. Thanks to Steve Joyce in sourcing and help and offering to train villagers in its use. Thanks to Stuart, Martin and Ray for installation. I feel safer already; let's hope it's never needed.

The zebra crossing in The Street is just finished with new railings to the school side of the road and plenty of road markings to warn drivers of the approaching hazard. May I remind parents when dropping off and picking up their children that the crossing, in its entirety, is there for the safety of their children and as such parking within the safety zone is not allowed. Thanks to Justine and friends for their petition and persistence. Special thanks too to Phil Filmer for pushing the proposal through Medway Council.

We must of course not lose sight of all the maintenance work that goes on throughout the village. The upkeep of the flowerbeds around the village signs by the Gardening Club; repairing fences, gates, swings and signs; painting and decorating at both our halls; the ongoing refurbishment of the Recreation Hall (now just starting phase 4); the upkeep of our Cricket Club and grounds – all these are extremely important and take a tremendous effort by all those who volunteer. May I thank all those involved and on your behalf say “we really do appreciate the time and effort you put in”.

There are a lot of people who will not get a mention tonight but without whose efforts our clubs, societies and village events would not happen. So thanks to:

Relief in Need (just think for a moment what relief in need is and understand it was started by a person like any of us from the village who had the foresight to realise that there are folk who perhaps through no fault of their own are found in need of support); The Church and their prayer chains; Youth Club; Cricket Club; Gardening Club; Walkers; Drama, Investors Club (maybe now offshore?); Fishing Club (maybe now at sea?); the RSPB Thursday and Friday working groups (maybe down in the woods today?) and others that I can't bring to mind. All this and I haven't mentioned the businesses that contribute too. Perhaps foremost in people's minds are the village shop and village pub. Please continue to support these and all local businesses. They are adding value and opportunity to the community and are integral to village life.

There are not many opportunities to bring all these together at one time. This year the Queen's 90th birthday may just do that. And hey! There you go!! – there's another committee working in the background supported by the Parish Council organising a collective event for us all to share in and celebrate together.

Let's not forget either the administrators of our Facebook page, Tony, Wendy and friends and of course Gary for the website.

Once upon a time each and every club and society in the village would report to this meeting once a year. Sadly that does not now happen. I can understand that the

pressures of everyday life probably makes attending or writing a report to submit, a bridge too far. But it would still be great to know a little more about you all??

We should not lose sight of and should perhaps reflect on the quality of life we have here on the Peninsula. Not a million miles from London in a relatively cheap idyllic rural setting on one of the most protected estuaries in the world and in the bosom of a thriving community. I for one count myself as very fortunate.

Thank you.

5 MEDWAY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Filmer said that there were new ways of obtaining funding and in the previous few months Medway Council had been successful in gaining £32m. £10 - £12m had been granted to improve the bottom of Four Elms Hill and the roundabouts between there and the Medway City Estate. He said that Cllr Crozer was correct in what he said about developers – Taylor Wimpey had been refused on a planning application in Hoo. It needed to be the right building in the right place. The Director of Regeneration, Robin Cooper, had been appointed to run the Ebbsfleet Garden City project. Cllr Filmer said he had met Land Securities and said he hoped that if they had enough in hand at Ebbsfleet, Lodge Hill would be put on the back burner. Over the last few years there had been good parish councils to work with, but they had to be mindful of what would be coming along in planning.

Cllr Crozer asked if the slip road at Four Elms roundabout was connected with Lodge Hill. Cllr Filmer replied that no money was guaranteed. Of the £32m, some would go to Strood town centre, Strood station, some projects in Chatham and other projects. Cllr Thomas asked if low cost housing would be provided in the town centres. Cllr Filmer said there was a chance to upgrade old properties, but once the fund was spent, there would be no more.

Cllr Filmer concluded by saying that recycling was up to 46% - 50% of waste and the waste collection had 94% satisfaction with residents.

6 REPORTS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

a Ladies Badminton

Margaret Whitebread gave her report:

We have 11 members with only 2 or 3 coming from the village. Sadly we are an ageing group with one member over 80 so it would be good to see some younger players. All standards of player are welcome. We meet between 2 and 4 pm on Tuesdays in the Recreation Hall. Cost is just £2.50 a session which includes tea or coffee. Socially we go out for a meal once a year.

b Friendly Club

Margaret Whitebread gave her report:

We have an increased membership of about 30 ladies and gents. Sadly one or two of our members are struggling with health problems. We have 7 meetings each year, 3 minibus outings to various locations, an annual dinner and the chance to go on a coach holiday, door to door. This year it is to Scarborough. We meet in the Memorial Hall on

the 4th Wednesday of each month from 2 pm for 2 hours. Meetings vary, with craft, table games, bingo, bring and buy, quizzes and sometimes a speaker. The annual membership is only £3, with a payment of £1 each hall meeting. Anyone who would like to come and see what we get up to would be most welcome.

c High Halstow WI

Margaret Whitebread gave her report:

We have seen a slight increase in our membership to 24 ladies but would love to have more join us. Reports of our activities are nearly always in the High Halstow Times. We have 11 meetings a year usually with a speaker. We have a thriving monthly lunch club, trips to the theatre and visits to places of interest. The WI gives women the opportunity to hone skills in subjects such as craft, home economics and public affairs and much more. We have our own college in Oxfordshire which offers 3-5 day courses all through the year and cover an amazing range of subjects from Astronomy to Ulelele playing. Meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30 in the Memorial Hall. As a visitor a charge of £1.50 is made which naturally includes tea/coffee and cake.

a Youth Club

Chris Peek gave her report:

High Halstow Youth Club is celebrating its 22nd birthday in April. The Club is for local children aged 9 and upwards and meets each Tuesday (term time only) from 7pm till 8.45pm in the Recreation Hall. New members from the waiting list are invited to join at various times throughout the year as spaces become available. We encourage parents to give us the names of their eight year olds so that they can be put on the waiting list. The same popular activities continue to be offered at the club but we have also introduced some new ones throughout the year. There have been some themed evenings (eg. Halloween, Comic Relief, karate, indoor sports) along with the usual football or basket ball in the hall, table tennis in the 'green room', and also various craft activities. Children can 'dip in' or 'dip out' of each activity as they choose to. These activities can only be offered if there are enough adult helpers to supervise the different areas. Unfortunately the number of adult helpers has dropped lately, so there have been occasions when areas of the club have had to be closed.

The tuck shop is open each week from about 7.30 and continues to be very popular. We try to ring the changes with the sweets that we stock; also we take note of what the children like and are willing to pay for. We do not sell lollipops or bubble gum and we are careful about products containing nuts.

For the third year running the club took part in the Christmas Tree Festival in December, when all the tree decorations were hand made by the children.

Now that the clocks have changed and the evenings are lighter we hope to start letting the children play outside on the recreation ground. Again this depends on having enough helpers as the inside of the building will still need supervision. This has been the biggest challenge for the club during this year so we are always on the lookout for new volunteers. We work on a rota system and each volunteer decides for themselves how frequently they would like to come and help. If anyone reading this feels that they could help, please get in touch; we will arrange for you to visit the Club and we can have a chat about what sorts of things you might want to be involved in. We will

arrange a DBS check for you (used to be called a CRB check) and also various training is available (free of charge to volunteers).

We are now hopeful that new people will come forward to enable the club to be open each week as it is such a worthwhile meeting place for local young people. Even if you can only offer a few hours each month please get in touch and arrange to visit. Also, if you have a particular skill that the club's youngsters might benefit from please let us know.

Thank you.

Chris Peek 01634 252604 (email chris.peek@lineone.net)
Cat Archer 07749 178530 (email carcher1391@gmail.com)

b Memorial Hall

Ann Smith reported that the Memorial Hall had healthy bookings and finances.

Written reports from other organisations would be included in the next issue of High Halstow Times.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a First Responder

Steve Joyce said he was a First Responder for the Ambulance Service. He said that Isle of Grain had a public access defibrillator and said he thought High Halstow should also have one and wished to put forward the idea.

b Recreation Hall Event

Cllr Thomas said that the Recreation Hall Committee was considering holding an event on August Bank Holiday Monday to thank everyone for their support for the hall.

c A2 Lorry Parking

Cllr Andrews raised the problems with lorries parking on the A2 at Cobham.

d Overflying Aircraft

Cllr Mrs Watson said she had noticed more aircraft flying over the village and they appeared to be flying lower. Cllr Crozer said there was a mobile phone app which would give the height and that anything lower than 1,500 feet should be reported.

The Chairman thanked Parish and Medway Councillors and parishioners for attending and Cllr Mrs Munday for preparing the buffet and closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

SignedChairman

On theday of2016

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