

## Hunston Annual Parish Meeting

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2015 AT HUNSTON VILLAGE HALL

Present:	Parish Council	Ms L Kenney (Chairman), Mr S Baker Mr L New, Mr R Pagram, Mr S Solliss
	Parish Residents	28
	County Councillor	Mrs M Evans
	Reporter	Mr C Shimwell
	Pagham Nature Reserve	Mr T Calloway

The meeting commenced at 7pm.

#### **1. Welcome by the Chair of the Parish Council.**

The Chairman introduced herself to those who might not know her. She welcomed residents to the 2015 Parish Assembly and thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting. As you will have seen from the agenda circulated, we have a full and what we hope will be a very interesting evening.

This is the final Annual Parish Assembly before the elections in May 2015, and like 2014, we still have two vacancies. It would be really great if we can get those vacancies filled during the Election so we have enough man/woman power to get the work done. This theme will be developed later during the evening.

We have had an interesting and varied year, with some very positive achievements. The kitchen has been running successfully for 8 months and anyone who hasn't yet seen it is very welcome to inspect it after the formal part of the meeting is over. One major change has been the merger of the Village Hall Management Committee into the Parish Council. This has been done both for financial reasons but also because of a lack of people willing to come forward and help with the management. We believe it is a positive step forward for the future. The Community Club, which is an independent and self-funding organisation, will continue to occupy its part of the premises as a tenant of the Parish Council, and we look forward to a long and happy association with them.

Most people will have seen, or at least heard, about the new meeting room that has recently been constructed at the rear of the hall. This has been funded from the same Section 106 monies that we were able to use for the kitchen refurbishment. We hope to be able to have someone in the office (either the Parish Clerk or one of the Councillors) during the week, but we are still working on the finer details. We will publicise in due course when the office will be open. It will also be available to small organisations to rent for meetings. Again, details are not yet finalised, not least because the interior still has to be fitted out. Once all the works are completed. We will then advertise availability.

Can I please ask you, so that the formal part of the evening is kept as short as possible, to keep any questions you may have for the open question session at the end of the agenda. Individual Parish Councillors will be happy to talk to you afterwards, when we have some refreshments laid on for you.

Finally, in keeping with tradition, the Parish Clerk and Councillors were asked to introduce themselves, before proceeding with the rest of the evening's agenda.

## **2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28 May 2014.**

The Chairman asked for approval to sign the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28 May 2014. This was agreed and the Chairman duly signed the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

## **3. Parish Reports**

### Neighbourhood Plan

*Why are we doing it – a reminder*

Neighbourhood plans are a fundamentally anew tool to give communities more control over the type, location, size, pace and design of development in their area. They were introduced under the Localism Act 2011 as part of a range of new community rights.

A Neighbourhood Plan should be designed to sit alongside the District Council's new Local Plan. Whereas the District Council Local Plan sets policy and guidelines on a fairly generic level. The Neighbourhood Plan will be specific about your local area.

*Where are we now*

There has been some delay over the past few months due to the fact that the District Council's Local Plan has been undergoing scrutiny by a Planning Inspector. Parishes undertaking Neighbourhood Plans were advised to put these on hold which the District Council had to undertake some investigations into Housing numbers.

The hearings into the Local Plan have been completed and the Inspectors decision on the Chichester Local Plan is awaited. The Parish Council feels that the time is right now to proceed with the Neighbourhood Plan for Hunston. The initial questionnaire referred to at last years' meeting has been completed and is in the process of being delivered to every household.

*What happens next?*

The Neighbourhood Plan group needs as many residents as possible to complete the questionnaire and return it. Questionnaires can be dropped off at Kirklands Newsagents or through the letterbox at the village hall. If you prefer the questionnaire is available to complete online. Just visit the Parish Council website and click on the link in the front page.

We would ask that people complete their forms and return or submit them by 12<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The Neighbourhood Plan group will then analyse responses and further updates will be issued.

### Traffic Calming

*What are the problems?*

The Parish Council has highlighted the main problems as

- Speeding traffic
- Volume of traffic and the congestion it causes.
- Only one pelican crossing
- Narrow or no pavements on a busy narrow road

(This list is not exhaustive – just a flavour of some of the important issues)

*What have we done?*

Just because residents haven't seen any changes to the traffic problems does not mean that the Parish Council has not been working hard to get these issues addressed.

Councillors and the Clerk have met with County Council Highways Officers and Engineers to discuss the possibilities of a range of solutions. These included the removal of the centre white lines in the heart of the residential area, the installation of cycle lanes and the use of village gates. Whilst none of these options have been completely ruled out they have to pass consultation with other authorities and organisations such as Sussex Police, Stagecoach buses and the other emergency services.

To try and find a solution the Parish Council recently engaged the services of Ben Hamilton-Baillie who is a well thought of Traffic and Transport Consultant. He specialises in innovative solutions for the development of shared space principles for street design to improve safety, congestion and access. Particular experience in high street design principles, and of working with rural communities to address traffic issues in smaller towns and villages.

His presentation to residents in January was extensive and we can't possibly recreate that for you but hope that we can shed some light on his proposals.

He started by showing the slide of people using a skating rink. There are no lines in the rink, no accepted way of travelling. People of varying skills on the ice somehow generally manage to avoid each other without too many issues. He suggested that it was possible to retrain drivers to react in a similar way.

Too many signs and instructions in rural areas not only upsets the balance of the natural environment but can also at times be confusing. Lines in the road and signs can give drivers a false sense of security. Take away the signs and the road markings and drivers are left in some doubt. Drivers with doubt in their minds inevitably drive more carefully.

The proposal that was pictured in the recent newsletter was just one of Mr Hamilton-Baillie's suggestions. The idea would be to level out the road outside the shops and mark the edges – including the provision of two laybys with paving. You can see from the picture that already the road looks narrower.

Some of his initial recommendations have now been implemented in West Meon, limited to changes in surface materials. Initial speed monitoring indicates an average reduction in traffic speeds of between 3 and 4 mph for the village centre. This is sufficient to significantly improve the safety and quality of life in the village, without major implications for the 6-7,000 vehicles that pass through daily.

The Parish Council's intention is to go and visit some of the areas locally where his recommendations have been implemented before coming back and putting forward some ideas for residents to comment on.

As with all these things a fair bit of whether we can get any proposals actioned depends on funding. This is something the Parish Council is also working on.

Regeneration of the Hardcourt

The Parish Council has put in a request for the Section 106 funding for play and open areas that has arisen out of the new development at Foxbridge Drive. Applications are also due to be submitted in the next couple of months for funding from Sport England and Veolia. Once we know we have the funding in place we will be asking residents what kind of equipment they would like to see in the outside areas. We won't be able to accommodate everyone's preferences but we'll try and get a good balance of equipment based on people's preferences.

### The Parish Council

#### *The Past*

Parish Councils were first created in 1894 by an Act of Parliament. Records show that Hunston at that time had a Parish Meeting. The Parish Council was not created until 6<sup>th</sup> June 1936. Councillors were in the main retired gentlemen from the village. I attended my first Parish Council meeting in November 2005, and stood for election in 2006. I subsequently took over as Chair when Jeremy Carroll resigned after many years on the Council. Although election by the public only takes place every four years, the position of Chairman has to be re-elected internally by the other Councillors every year at the Parish Council AGM. Normally this takes place at the April meeting but as it is election year, it will not happen until May. As with all other Parish Council meetings, this is an open meeting which you are welcome to attend.

#### *The Present*

Currently there are 5 Councillors on the Parish Council, instead of the 7 we need. As I have already mentioned, the Parish Council has recently taken over as Trustee of the Village Hall. Other projects on the go include as you will have just heard include the Neighbourhood Plan, traffic calming and the regeneration of the hard court area. However, all these things don't just happen. The Parish Council needs people to come onto the Parish Council to help bring these projects to fruition. The Parish Council is your voice and the visible face of the community within the local government structure. The main difference between us and bodies such as the District and County Councils is that we are non-political. No one is elected as a representative of any political party and your personal political beliefs are immaterial to our work.

#### *The Future*

The future of the Parish Council depends on you the residents. The Parish Council needs to evolve to make it more appealing to everyone. Suggestions put forward include delegating some of the decision making to smaller committees – reducing the number/frequency of Parish Council meetings – changing the timing of some of the meetings to make it easier for people who have childcare issues or who work variable hours. The important thing to remember is that the Parish Council is your Parish Council. Its main priority is to work for the benefit of the residents of Hunston. We hope that residents will support the Parish Council by voicing their concerns, understanding the constraints under which the Parish Council operates and assisting by responding to the questionnaires and calls for assistance.

## **4. Residents Questions**

A number of questions, comments and concerns were raised about the traffic issues on the main road.

Concern was raised that there wasn't effective signage in the village that it was a 30mph speed limit and a resident thought that many drivers were not aware of the speed limit.

- Q. How long does the road surfacing last for?
- A. The recent road surfacing was expected to last about 5 years. The materials used to indicate a cycle lane was thought to last longer.
- Q. Can we have more Dog bins. There is a need for bins in the Canal car park and along the canal towpath towards Donnington.
- A. The Parish Council will look into this matter. It was thought it would be possible to put in a bin in the car park but the suggested location on the towpath is likely to be in Donnington Parish.
- Q. A resident asked about the work that had been carried out in Hunston Copse.
- A. Langmeads have put in a Portacabin and portaloos to provide facilities for activities for school children within the Copse.
- Q. A resident asked if the Parish Council had or would give consideration to narrowing the road as a traffic calming measure.
- A. The Parish Council would look at this as part of the investigations into traffic calming measures. The idea of speed tables was also mentioned.
- Q. A resident highlighted traffic signs showing pictures of snails with Drive Slowly underneath.
- A. The resident was asked to provide the Parish Council with photographs so that this could be looked at as well.
- Q. A resident asked if the Parish Council could look at the issue of parking in the centre of the village by the shops. It was becoming increasingly difficult for residents on the main road to park safely. Space in St Leodegars Way was becoming a problem and often the Foxbridge car park was full.
- A. The Parish Council agreed to look at this issue.
- Q. Will there be more Housing in Hunston.
- A. A small amount of development is inevitable. Hunston was allocated provision of a minimum of 25 houses in the Local Plan. The development at Foxbridge had taken 18 of this allocation.

There being no further questions the Chairman declared the meeting closed and the draw for a hamper was made, Tracey Fisher being the lucky winner. The Chairman then invited residents to partake of the refreshments provided.

Signed :..... Date:.....  
Chairman

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