

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held on Wednesday 28th May, 2014

Present:

Cllr. J. Hunt (Chairman)	Graham Horner
Cllr. S. Plumb	Pippa Palmer, from ‘Kent Orchards for Everyone’
Cllr. R. Rook	3 Parishioners
Cllr. M. Gale	Clerk, Lynda Fisher
Cllr. L. Mitchell	
Cllr. D. Wastall	

This is a Parish Meeting called as required by the local Government Act, 1972. The meeting is an opportunity for the residents of the village who are registered electors to raise and discuss any subject affecting the village. Discussion and voting on any subject is restricted to electors, residents who are not registered as electors are welcome as observers. Residents wishing to speak are requested to give their name and the name of their road or street.

1. REPORT FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR

The Chair, Cllr. James Hunt, commented that after being thrown in at the deep end as Chair last year, and having never actually chaired any meeting in his life, he had a lot to learn!

He’s looked back over the past year to see whether the Parish Council has achieved what it said it would and all he can say is that certain issues take so long to sort out! There have been some big issues in the village that the Parish Council has been working on constantly; namely the Village Hall, The Barn and problems with developers. It would have been nice to have stated that everything had been dealt with, but this is not the case. However he is confident that we will soon be having some good news soon on many of these; the Barn transfer has been agreed with the Borough Council and we’re waiting on Ward Homes to finish some remedial work prior to the hand over. Once transferred the Barn will be a great facility for the village. The new Village Hall is an ongoing project and the Parish Council is committed to making this a reality.

There has been some success with developers; the Parish Council ensured that the haul road on the Ward Homes development was removed, as per the planning condition; have continued to work with residents on issues with the nature conservation land and heard today that agreements are now in place for the Borough Council to take this on so that the residents of the development don’t pay for the upkeep as they have been doing. We’ve been successful in finally getting All Saints Close finished and the road has now had the tarmac laid. The biggest issue that residents have had over the last year has been with the Persimmon development. This is still ongoing but the Chair is confident that residents will see some sort of action soon. We have been working closely with the developer and Swale Borough Council, but unfortunately the action that needs to be taken is out of the control of the Parish Council.

Other items the Parish Council has dealt with have been:

Street Lights – Thanks to our County Cllrs. Lee Burgess and Roger Truelove for donating £4000 each towards new lights in Sheerstone. With the Parish Council putting another £4000 in the pot it means that we have now replaced nine of the old columns since 2012.

Christmas Tree – This was a great success and the Chair is still amazed at the amount of residents that come to see the lights switched on. It was great to see the community coming together to make it happen.

Section 106 Agreements – This arose as a result of our Localism meetings and caused something of an issue at Swale Council! Why £850k being held by Swale Borough Council for Iwade made front page news he didn't know! Hopefully the village will start seeing things appearing that the money is being spent on.

Donations – The Parish Council has supported a number of events and groups in the village – Halloween, the Church, Toddler Group, Iwade Herons, W.I. and Scouts.

Planning Applications – We've had just over 20 applications to deal with during the year and the Parish Council's campaign against some are now being heard – the Planning Departments at both KCC and Swale are listening more to us.

I enjoyed being Chairman this last year and it's been helped by having a great team of Councillors who are all proactive and get involved. A lot of people don't realise how much work goes in to the Council, other than the monthly meetings and the Chair would like to thank all the Councillors for their work over the last year and Lynda, our Parish Clerk, who has made sure we all behave ourselves!

When speaking to other Parish Councils and Councillors and Officers at Swale and KCC, it's good to hear that Iwade Parish Council has a very good reputation. The Chair is proud of Iwade as he is sure everyone else is.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

These were circulated and signed as a true transcript at the monthly Parish Council meeting held on the 12th June 2013.

3. PRESENTATION BY GRAEME HORNER ON 'THE BARN@IWADE'

The Chairman handed over to the Graeme, who explained that he had been invited to give a talk on the 'Iwade@The Barn' project.

Graeme gave a brief history of this former farm building, explained that it was Grade II Listed, although before restoration it had been repaired externally with some modern materials, although three of the main frames are old, as are many of the other timbers in the building. He suggested that it might have been relocated to its present site from another area, but we will never know.

Wards took the building over and as part of a S.106 agreement have re-roofed and re-cladded (with green timber which has shrunk) the building for it to then be handed over to Swale Borough Council. Prior to handing over to Swale and then to the Parish Council, Wards are undertaking some remedial work to the drains, roof and cladding.

At present it is a shell ready for use by the Trust (which will comprise of members of the Parish Council, Church and Community) that will be set up by the Parish Council who has negotiated a 125 year lease with the Borough Council so that it can be utilised for the benefit of the village and its community. Swale borough Council have imposed some conditions on the Lease, e.g. as soon as the contractors have the new burial ground in use they will have use of the toilet in the Barn, as will those attending Funerals.

Internally the Church will provide funding for the toilet; others have been persuaded to provide materials free of charge and offers of help for plumbing and electrical work have been received from within the village; the more help given the better to keep costs down.

Current suggestions for use of the Barn are coffee mornings/café, meeting place in the week for say IT gatherings/computer tuition, community groups, e.g. Book Club, Knitting Club and it can even be used for

exhibitions. There will be a need to cover the day to day running costs of the Barn, but it is hoped to keep fees to a minimum and in some cases zero.

The Chair thanked Graeme for his slideshow and interesting talk and introduced Pippa Palmer from the 'Kent Orchards for Everyone' Project.

4. PRESENTATION BY PIPPA PALMER FROM 'KENT ORCHARDS FOR EVERYONE'

Pippa opened her presentation by stating that the Kent Orchards for Everyone project will carry out essential restoration and conservation work with 15 traditional community orchards in Kent, including the one in Iwade, which is special because of its 'residents' the Noble Chaffer Beetle, the only other known colony being right across the country. So far they have received £220,000 Heritage Lottery Funding to roll out this pilot project across the Mid Kent Downs and west of Maidstone. This project will support communities in celebrating and conserving their very own traditional community orchards.

There will be opportunities for volunteers to discover Iwade's orchard heritage and learn orchard management skills whilst establishing good management practices within the community orchard. There will be an educational programme and workshops; a Warden to support the project, provision of equipment and the Heritage Lottery has also put in funding for Fruit Maps which hopefully every village will have. Every orchard will have a generic management system; there will be a specialist school project, which will include Cubs, Scouts, etc. It is also planned to have guided walks to learn about all the various forms of biodiversity. There will be a Web Hub for public access to all information and the Kent Orchard Trust will support communities and help create more funding.

Traditional orchards have declined hugely over the past 50 years or so, but remain a very much valued component of the Kentish landscape and there needs to be an investment in their future. The 'Kent Orchards for Everyone' project will focus on community owned traditional orchards, will make the investments needed and build the skills and expertise amongst the communities and countryside partnerships to assure their future management.

6. PUBLIC FORUM – No comments.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Parishioners in attendance at tonight's meeting and those who attend the monthly Parish Council meetings to raise various issues.

Finally he thanked the guest speakers for taking the time to attend the meeting and give such interesting presentations regarding their work with projects.

Meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.