

Stanton-upon-Hine Heath Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Stanton-upon-Hine Heath Parish Council held on Tuesday, 6th May 2014 at 7.00 p.m. in the Stanton Village Hall, Booley Lane, Stanton.

PRESENT: Councillors S. Chapple, Mrs. C. Crackett, Ms. N. Gray, D. Fildes, Mrs. J. Knight, A. Orme and C. Warren

Also in attendance: Shropshire Councillor Mrs. K. Calder, four members of the public and the Parish Clerk.

In the Chair: Councillor C. Warren

Action

A01.14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from M. Cauchi from RAF Shawbury and PC Mick Sturland.

A02.14 Chairman of the Parish Council's Report

The Parish of Stanton upon Hine Heath & High Hatton has enjoyed another busy year with plenty of activity to keep us all busy. Planning has of course again been an important topic with a number of potentially significant applications to consider. We have responded, I believe appropriately and after careful consideration, to many planning matters. The local knowledge, experience & common sense of colleagues and members of the parish has been called upon often & I would particularly like to record my thanks for all your support with this. There have been some major frustrations with lack of authority to take desirable action or on occasion ability to successfully influence others. Some valuable training in the field of planning has been accessed individually by members, however there is still a regrettable lack of training from our colleagues in planning at Shropshire Council.

The minor highways grant allows us to do some valuable but limited work, anything more needs action by Shropshire Council. The constraints of budgets, and sometimes a very short term view, has prevented or delayed much needed work locally. Particular examples include the flooding at High Hatton. I have no doubt that we will return to this as a Parish Council and not rest until a satisfactory conclusion is reached by whatever means available.

Good work has gone on in many areas of village life. It is pleasing to see some new vigour in the Village Hall, after a difficult period, and some new blood in support of the Church as well.

The Parish Magazine remains a vital tool for communication and cohesion in the Parish and I am very grateful to Sharon & Jackie for shouldering this ongoing task. Again it is good to see new ideas and a huge amount of effort being put into its production & distribution. It has however proven impossible to get 100% delivery coverage using hard pressed volunteers despite everyone's very best efforts.

Out of this difficulty has emerged an excellent new village facility – our new Parish Council website. We are fortunate to have a local resident – Peter Acs develop the site for us in conjunction with Jackie & Claire. We must now keep it live & up to date with Parish matters. It also serves to supplement the Magazine and to make meeting agendas & minutes more readily available. If you haven't already, make it a favourite & contribute your ideas for it's content.

It is particularly good to have new blood within the Parish Council, with Nuria rapidly volunteering in many areas, for example Emergency Planning & Rivers Action Group. I think we have a well balanced team & I am sure we will continue our efforts to get improved involvement in High Hatton and others areas outside of Stanton itself.

The recent storms & power cuts in February highlighted the need for emergency planning work and I am sure we will be better prepared to cope in the future. I was particularly pleased to see the good practical work done by many individuals in the Parish to help their more vulnerable neighbours in a crisis and would like to publically acknowledge & thank everyone involved.

One of the key priorities for development is Broadband and whilst the process is endlessly frustrating, I am pleased that we have Claire to push for us at every opportunity.

Our ongoing co-operation with local businesses, the farming community, the RAF, our local Police force and other agencies is invaluable & I hope to see this grow in the future and extend further in terms of co-operation with other local parish councils.

Stanton Parish is a good place to live and I am encouraged by the enthusiastic support throughout Parish life with many new & important initiatives. Change is inevitable & I believe that with a strong Parish Council much of this change can be better managed for the benefit of all the community. Examples of this include the Defibrillator, which we all look forward to receiving shortly and the Rivers Action Group that has plenty of work to do this year.

I have enjoyed my 2 years as Chairman, although I confess I am looking forward to handing over, hopefully very soon. I would like to thank you all for your advice, friendship and support, often sought & always freely given. Both Karen & Edward have a special place in this but I have valued all your viewpoints. None of what we do would succeed without this.

Chas Warren

A03.14 Parish Accounts

The Parish Clerk reported on the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2014; which can be summarized as follows;

| | Year ending | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | 31 March 2013 £ | 31 March 2014 £ |
| Balances brought forward | 14129 | 17458 |
| (+) Annual precept | 8151 | 7815 |
| (+) Total other receipts | 1815 | 653 |
| (-) Staff costs | 1407 | 1407 |
| (-) Loan interest/capital repayments | 0 | 0 |
| (-) All other payments | 5230 | 6151 |
| (=) Balances carried forward | 17458 | 18368 |
| Total fixed assets | 14677 | 14677 |

A04.14 Shropshire Council Report

Awaiting report from Shropshire Councillor Karen Calder.

A05.14 Neighbourhood/Rural Watch Scheme Report

The Neighbourhood & Rural Watch schemes have continued this year as in previous years. The main means of communication is via email to local co-ordinators (who then talk to neighbours & friends), periodic meetings in the Stanton Arms, telephone calls and occasional short items in the Parish Magazine.

Fortunately we live in a relatively low crime area and benefit from alert neighbours who keep a watchful eye on anything suspicious.

We do need to be vigilant and aware of suspect vehicles, poaching, thefts from out-buildings, oil thefts & vehicle crime. Increasingly crime is moving to hidden “scams” online, by phone & in person. We all need to be particularly on guard for these insidious crimes.

We have continued to enjoy & appreciate the support of PC Mick Sturland & his team of PCSOs. However this year Mick has taken on additional responsibilities and therefore has not been able to spend as much time in the Parish. Therefore it is all the more important that we are all vigilant.

The Police boxes continue to provide a means of communication, although there has been some minor ongoing vandalism. Our next meeting is on Monday 9th June at 7.30 pm in the pub. All are welcome, as are additions to our email circulation list.

Please remember if it makes you look, or think, twice, it is suspicious & must be reported urgently.

Chas Warren

A06.14 Stanton Village Hall Committee Report

Following the AGM in April 2013 the committee decided that regular fundraising events were not being well supported and that a review of the way the committee worked was needed.

It was decided that for the next financial year we would:

- operate largely as a Management Committee rather than fundraisers.
- arrange a free cheese and wine evening to gather parishioners ideas about their views on village hall events
- carry out a planned fashion show evening and run a coffee morning in the Spring
- not run the harvest supper as before but support the church by not charging for the hire of the hall.
- ask the Treasurer for a financial review after 6 months to ensure funds were still adequate to pay standing orders and expenses incurred
- meet bi monthly rather than monthly

The cheese and wine evening was held on April 19th

Attendance was average and ideas for events and activities were suggested. Some ideas were impractical due to storage space and insurances. There were thoughts on running some craft events such as sewing bees, flower arranging etc. but no further requests have been made by individuals wishing to set up such activities.

We perhaps need to clarify that as a committee we long to see the hall being used by the community but we do not have the time or desire to be running the events.

A fashion show by Wisteria Lane was held on 16th May. This was a great success and due to the generosity of the shop a grand total profit of £570 was made.

The hall is used regularly by the dog training group, Shawbury Players young actors and for Parish Council meetings.

We have also seen a small increase in private hire for parties and gatherings.

In April we held a coffee morning with an Easter theme. This seemed to be enjoyed by everyone and raised a total of £195.

The billiard club, which is attached to the hall continues to operate. The committee is in the process on ensuring that with rising energy costs the club is paying its way. There is no hire charge and money is currently collected via a slot machine in the billiard room. Concerns have been raised that the annual income from the club may not be covering their energy bills.

The interim treasurer's review indicated that without fundraising events there will be a shortfall of income of around £500 per annum based on current costs.

As a result the committee approached the Parish Council for support and the PC have agreed to pay the Hall's insurance policy for the next year in the first instance.

During the year the hall has been professionally redecorated and further repairs have been completed. The skirting area around the stage has been renewed and the old heater vent removed. Damp patches in the ceiling above the stage have been addressed both inside and out and a new light fitting is imminent. Various other DIY tasks have been carried out – many thanks to Ashley Orme for those.

In December I met with a volunteer from the Shropshire RCC to clarify my role and responsibilities as a new Chairman. This was a useful meeting, not least in demonstrating that many village halls are in similar circumstances.

Priorities for next year will be discussed at subsequent meetings. I think the committee feel that the main focus should again be on better communication of the Hall's availability and hire potential, plus a limited number of fundraising events. We would also urge anyone interested in setting up a craft or interest group to get in touch.

Finally a sincere vote of thanks to all the committee for their attendance at meetings, preparation of minutes, reports, phone calls, cleaning, preparing the hall, poster making, and distributing, husband and family harassing for DIY, plus their financial contributions to the hall through donation of prizes, purchase of raffle tickets etc.

Sue Young

A07.14 Stanton Church Report

Church services have been held on a weekly basis at St. Andrew's Church throughout the last year. Other than the Christmas Carol Service (32) and Easter Day Service (27) congregations have varied in size between 7 and 21. The Revd. David Humphries continues to take Stanton Church Services. Membership of the PCC has increased from 6 to 8, some much younger members. This is most encouraging, and vital to the future wellbeing and upkeep of the Church. Work has begun on the foundations of the wall, which will be followed by reconstruction of the wall itself. The churchyard contractor, Ian Wellings, continues to do excellent work grass cutting and general keeping the Churchyard in good condition. We are again grateful to the Parish Council for their assistance in this respect. At present there are spaces for two graves on the lower level to the North-East of the Church. There is further limited space on the South side of the Church which will then be used. The need, however for a review of the situation regarding a future Parish burial site is now becoming quite an urgent matter.

Barney Griffiths

A08.14 Parish Magazine Report

We are now printing 180 copies at a much reduced printing fee of £17.50 each month.

I have had favorable feedback regarding the formatting and content. Thank you to all those who have taken the time to comment.

The magazine now includes all Agenda, Dates of Meetings and a version of the minutes of the Parish Council Meetings.

There is a steady turnover of advertisers and there are currently some spaces available.

More people are happy to receive the magazine on line but we need to increase this method of distribution and Hazles Farm Children's Nursery has offered a bottle of wine in the prize draw this month to anyone who takes up the option to receive the magazine by email.

The magazine carries information regarding the church and village hall, events in the village and nearby as well as RAF Shawbury.

In future it would be useful if the Chairman of the Parish Council reviewed the magazine before printing and possibly emailed it to recipients.

Sharon McLaughlin

A09.14 Broadband Report

Shropshire Council has established the Connecting Shropshire project which will bring fibre based broadband to areas where it is not economically viable for providers to do so. No definitive information is yet available on the exact areas that will be covered by the project, although the Shawbury exchange is due to be part of the roll out this summer. I have made a link with the Shropshire and Marches Campaign for Better Broadband in Rural Areas which is campaigning to bring faster services to all parts of the county and will keep the parish council informed of any way in which we can influence the process. We will ensure that we follow up the whole of the Stanton and High Hatton parish and seek information on all three exchanges that serve the parish.

Claire Crackett

A10.14 Parish Website Report

The Stanton Parish Council website is now up and running. Claire, Chas, Edward and I myself have received training from the website creator and are able to make changes to text, add downloadable documents and create links to other websites. Edward will be posting the agendas and minutes, I will be adding the newsletter and changing the news section monthly and Chas has agreed to make changes as and when needed, as Claire will also do as required.

The website is a simple design and the aim was to create something easy to maintain but informative. I think we have achieved this and would like to thank everyone involved in helping it get off the ground.

Jackie Knight

A11.14 Rivers Action Group Report

Following the last two years extremely heavy rain and discussions with both the Environment Agency & Shropshire Council, the new Rivers Action Group has been formed this year for the first time.

The poor condition of the River Roden, with many blockages, caused largely by fallen & growing trees in the river bed, together with a complete lack of effective maintenance over the last 20 or so years has been recognised. Local landowners have, I am pleased to say, been very supportive, as have both Shropshire Council & the Environment Agency.

A meeting took place last week to survey the river as it runs along the boundary between our Parish and Moreton Corbett & Weston under Redcastle. This was attended by Nuria, Simon, Ian Ankers (on behalf of Griffiths – our biggest local land-owner) and myself.

This followed a recent full survey of the entire length of the River in the Parish by Simon & myself, from the water.

A plan of action to remove trees from the river, using volunteers from the Parish, and supported by land-owners has been agreed in principle. There is probably too much work to complete in one year, so this will be an ongoing activity. However some priorities for initial action are identified, some work has started & much more is needed.

Elwyn Griffiths and his team have been extremely supportive & I have just heard from him that clearance of the river from Stanton Bridge to Papermill Bank will start in about 3 weeks.

We do however need more keen volunteers please to assist with other sections of the river.

Chas Warren

A12.14 Emergency Planning Report

Awaiting report from Councillor Nuria Gray.

A13.14 Public Transport/Community Cars Report

Shropshire Council community car scheme assists local people to make essential journeys such as visits to medical centres, dentists, visit friends or family in hospital and for shopping trips and visits to e.g. bank, post office. All journeys must be booked in advance by phone and the passenger is charged at a standard rate of 25p per mile. Shropshire Council provides a subsidy so that volunteer drivers for the scheme receive 45p per mile (the maximum payable under inland revenue rules). Drivers have to undergo a DBS check (which was called CRB), which is free. There is no obligation to be available to drive and the co-ordinator will contact volunteers to see who is available. Now that Stanton no longer has a bus service and local taxi firms are busy at school times and do not run in evenings, this will be a vital link for those who do not have access to transport; including anyone who has had an accident and so cannot drive or anyone whose car is in the garage. For more information and to volunteer, please contact Claire Crackett 251805.

Claire Crackett

A14.14 Police Report

About your team

Safer Neighbourhood Teams work with local people and partners to identify, tackle and solve issues that matter to the community where you live.

Making neighbourhoods safer by cutting day to day crime and anti-social behaviour is at the heart of keeping people in West Mercia safe. Thanks to an investment in mobile tablet style computers, these will enable officers to spend more time on patrol on the street and in neighbourhoods.

Officers will continue to come to people when they need them and provide a high quality service however you contact us - in person (on the street, at community bases and at partners and communities together [PACT] meetings), on the phone or online.

Update

Your SNT have now settled down to the new way of working. Using a tough laptop workbook, we can access all of our IT on the move meaning less time back at the station. The PCSO's, have new extended powers such as dealing with truants from school, cycling offences and licensing. We also have a Blackberry phone whereby we can Tweet on the beat! If you're on Twitter, why not follow us @MDraytonCops. If you're not familiar with Twitter we can still be contactable via e mail, calling 101 or simply pop into Market Drayton police station.

Vulnerable People workshops

PCSO Nic Parry has worked really hard since January, to put on and promote a multi agency event aimed at highlighting a range of issues to vulnerable adults in our community. Mainly targeting the elderly and infirm as well as disabled and other vulnerable groups, the event involved the SNT, Shropshire Council, Shropshire Fire service and Social Services. Other agencies such as Dept for Work & pensions, were also involved. Held at Festival Drayton centre in April, over 60 people attended whereby workshops were given on a range of topics from bogus officials to benefits entitlements, the workshops were a resounding success. So much so, that another one is planned soon as we ran out of space! Well done Nic!

PC Nick Sturland

A15.14 Tree Report

The Shropshire Council Tree scheme has again run this year, with trees being requested online via the Shropshire Council website in the autumn, for delivery in February. Details were promoted in the Parish, but as applications must now be made individually, rather than being aggregated as before, I am unable to report on the total numbers for the Parish. I can only advise that everything seemed to go smoothly, receiving good quality trees, canes & guards in February, most of which seem to be doing well.

I believe the scheme will run again this year and so I would encourage everyone to take part, even if you only plant one tree – that alone will help to improve our environment.

I was also able to attend a training event about ancient & veteran trees. Whilst we have not yet identified any that meet the appropriate classification in the Parish, some useful general information was acquired. In particular we should all try to remove as much ivy from living trees as possible.

The storms in February took quite a toll, with Hazels Road and many local footpaths being closed by fallen trees. Most of these trees have now been cleared, by a mixture of professional & volunteer effort, however one path still needs some work. The roadside part of Hazles Wood is likely to be clear felled in the near future, so it is important that we encourage the planting of as many new trees as possible to replace those lost.

Chas Warren.

A16.14 Play Area Report

In July, the play area will have been in place for 3 years. It has been, and continues to be used regularly by the local children. In this time there have been very few problems reported to me. Dog mess, has at times been a problem, but after an article was put in the newsletter, the situation does not seem to have been so bad. I had one resident complain that children had been knocking on his door and running away on a few occasions in the early evening, but having waited by his door and caught them in the act, this has stopped.

Having agreed initially to carrying out visual inspections of the park, I suggested last year, as the park had now been used consistently for a couple of years, it may be time for a more formal approach to inspections and maintenance. It was agreed at the last Parish Council meeting that Shropshire Council would take over and carry out 10 routine inspections and 2 maintenance inspections per year.

Overall, I am very pleased with how the park is being used. Apart from the occasional littering, the local children treat it with respect and other than the one issue mentioned above, the local residents have not reported any problems.

When ideas for the park were originally discussed, plans for a bike track were proposed as well as the installation of a basketball hoop. At the moment I am proposing we allow this idea to remain dormant, as we have reached a position with the children and local residents of a happy balance. I would not wish to unsettle that at this time and propose that we keep it in mind for revisiting in the future.

Jackie Knight

A17.14 Footpaths Report

We are fortunate in the Parish to have many miles of accessible pathways and bridleways with plenty of opportunity for circular walks in the beautiful North Shropshire countryside. The successful maintenance of the pathway system is supported by landowners and farm managers sympathetic to the enjoyment of the countryside by all. In the last year we have had to write to only one landowner to encourage them to reinstate public rights of way where these have been obstructed by crops and electric fences; we continue to monitor the situation.

The Parish paths are generally in good order, notwithstanding the seasonal effects of adverse weather, and have been the subject of upgrades over the past year to include:

- a) Installation of gates;
- b) Revision and upgrading of stiles;
- c) Installation of new stiles;
- d) Way-marking, path clearance and major maintenance including several days of work by volunteers with chainsaws to clear rights of way obstructed by fallen trees following winter storms.

The improvements to the Parish paths would not have been possible if it were not for the hard work and dedication of Mr Chas Warren and a recently re-enforced group of local volunteers. Shropshire Council has also been instrumental in enabling the improvements by providing advice, equipment and Rights Of Way enforcement action where needed.

We will continue to look for opportunities to improve the pathways and plans for the next year include:

- a) Design and production of online guides to some of the popular walks in our area; the first of these will shortly be available on the Parish Council website (www.stantonparishcouncil.org.uk).
- b) Continuing clearance of the main channel of the River Roden to reduce the risk of localised flooding after heavy rainfall.

I should like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to local pathway volunteers, landowners and to Shropshire Council for their continued support in helping protect and maintain these valuable rights of way.

Simon Chapple

A18.14 Village Defibrillator

Last year we identified the need for a defibrillator in the Parish and based on the experience of other schemes in the area, in particular the Myddle HeartBeat Scheme, we formed a management committee in January 2014. The committee is made up as follows:

- a. Chairman – Dr Simon Chapple
- b. Secretary – Mrs Sheri Warren
- c. Treasurer – Mr Stewart Flood
- d. Member – Mrs Lucy Dalzell
- e. Member – Mr Steve Unsworth

The management committee has successfully secured £750.00 funding from Shropshire LJC and matched funding of £750.00 from Stanton Parish Council. While we are yet to receive funds we have nonetheless been successful in our application for an AED using the British Heart Foundation Public Access Defibrillator scheme and held a successful first day's training for 20 volunteers on 8 Mar (Fig 1) supported by West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Once funding is 'in the bank' the next steps for the scheme are:

- a. Order AED from British Heart Foundation.
- b. Order and install heated secure AED cabinet at the Stanton Arms Pub.
- c. Organise refresher training for volunteers on the Scheme's actual AED.

Explore an automated telephone cascade system for use by West Midlands Ambulance Service. Devise a map of the local area with list of residents, addresses and post codes to assist volunteers who may be responding to emergencies in the future. This work will be completed along with the Parish Council's Emergency Sub-committee. Organise a second training day.

We should like to thank the residents of the Parish for their enthusiasm in supporting this important piece of work and look forward to establishing this vital capability.

Simon Chapple