

CROOKHAM VILLAGE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 7 APRIL 2003 AT 7.45 PM IN
THE W.I. HALL, THE STREET, CROOKHAM VILLAGE

In accordance with the Local Government Act the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr. Simon Ambler, presided.

Present: County Councillor C.A. Leversha
District Councillor B.J. Leversha

Members of the Parish Council
Residents of the Parish of Crookham Village

Refreshments were provided from 7.15 pm with the compliments of the Chairman.

1. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 8 April 2002

These were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Jackson and seconded by Mrs. Kay and were signed by the Chairman.

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman began his report by saying before moving on to his report he would like to thank his fellow councillors and the many volunteers who help.

As a Parish Council, we have to deal with a very wide range of issues, from complex and obscure accounting regulations to the best type of hedging to plant in a specific location. With the best will in the world, we cannot be experts in everything and the help and expertise of our dedicated band of honorary advisers has once again proved invaluable.

In particular, I should like to thank the following people:

Tony Farmer, now in his 27th year as Treasurer, who continues to produce the accounts for your council. He keeps us on the straight and narrow to ensure that we don't fall foul of the ever increasing burden of new financial regulations.

Paul Dickinson, our Planning Consultant, who has provided invaluable help with the finer points of planning regulations.

Patrick Grace, our consultant on flooding and footpaths, easily identifiable travelling round on his bicycle as he spends his time monitoring the river levels in the area and liaising with the environment agency on our behalf.

Phil du Gay, our internal auditor, who has helped us comply with the latest administrative burden thrust upon us this year.

Connie Martyn and Jean and Alan Symes for their care of the Crossways flowerbed, which always looks beautiful.

Ann Kay, who represents us on the Cottrells Almshouse Trust and the Fleet, Crondall & Crookham Welfare Trust.

Stan Knight who, represents us on the Memorial Hall Committee, he also puts us straight on points of historical accuracy and the correct pronunciation of local names.

And last but not least, our heartfelt thanks go to our overworked Parish Clerk, Carol, who amongst her many tasks, ensures that council members are kept fully apprised of the ever increasing burden of legislation with which we must all comply.

I should now like to move on to your Parish Council's activities over the last year :

Transport

The Countryside Agency has offered a Rural Transport Grant to all parishes in the country. Your council has signed up to consortium comprising of parishes within Hart District. This Grant means that the Countryside Agency will provide matched funding to enable two mini buses which will provide Rural Links and Transport to Hospitals. Whilst there is still much to do, we are optimistic that the service will be running by July.

The details of the new services have still to be finalised. As soon as this is done, we will publicise the details throughout our area.

Traffic Calming

It may seem that we have not made any real progress on traffic calming this year, but we are finally nearing the end of the trial period. You may not have noticed, but as the trial has gone on there have been subtle changes, each in response to public feedback and safety issues. Each time there is a change, the County Council Highway Authority monitors the effect for a period of time.

We are now nearing the point where we will be in a position to make a decision as to which parts of the trial are effective and desirable and which parts should be discarded. This will be done with full public consultation where the results will be presented and your comment invited.

Londlandes Footway Lights

In response to public demand, we have provided low level footway lights to aid the safety of walkers along the open land beside Zebon copse. Unfortunately, within a very short period of being installed, these lights were vandalised.

Whilst one of the functions of your council is to fund environmental improvements such as this, we would also ask for public support in maintaining these facilities. If you witness any act of vandalism, please telephone the police immediately.

Youth Facilities

We are aware that there is a potential demand for youth facilities within the parish as, at present, the nearest youth group is based at the Point in Fleet. Our investigation has shown that there is a particular need to meet the requirements of children in the 9 to 14 age group. We are exploring the possibility of providing a facility based at the Velmead Community Centre and are working with the Hampshire Youth Service to formulate a plan.

If this project is to succeed, the key element will be community involvement. We have found that all youth projects need two key factors for success, provision of the correct facilities and a keen and dedicated group of volunteers to help run those facilities on an ongoing basis. So anyone keen to be involved in this project, please contact any member of the Parish Council.

Planning

The most well publicised case this year has been the Redfield's Inquiry. Although not actually in our parish, the loss of this local amenity would have had a significant impact on our area. We gave both financial and moral support to the Bowenhurst Redfields Action Group (BRAG), who successfully opposed Redfield's application to relocate to Bowenhurst.

Your council is also taking an active role in the consultation process for the development of a plan for the building of around 1,100 houses on the Queen Elizabeth barracks site. We have been consulted on this plan since this development will put a considerable burden on the infrastructure of our area.

We continue to be actively involved the proposed changes to Malthouse Bridge. The latest proposal is to put a separate footway on the south side of the bridge, although we have no details as to how this will be achieved.

Boundary Review

The boundary review, which took place in July 2000, resulted our Parish being split between two District wards: Church Crookham West and Crondall. The Parish itself, has also been split into three separate wards, Crookham, Zebon and Netherhouse Moor. The first parish elections under these new wards will be held in May 2004. We have used the opportunity created by the boundary review to ask that the geographic anomaly whereby the end of Nether Vell Mead is outside the Parish be 'tidied up'.

S106 Planning Gain

We are continuing active negotiations and are still committed to ensuring that the spirit of the original agreements, whereby the money should be spent on leisure facilities for the benefit of the residents of Zebon Copse, is upheld. Progress appears to be slow but we are still talking.

Web Site

In an effort to move with the times and ensure that Crookham Village has put its mark on cyberspace, we have launched a web site. This saves you standing out in the cold attempting to read the bedraggled notices and minutes on the boards (assuming they don't get pulled off before you get to them!).

Our web address is crookhamvillage-pc.org.uk, not as you might have expected [.gov.uk](http://crookhamvillage-pc.gov.uk). The reason for this is the high cost charged by the government agency for registering [.gov.uk](http://crookhamvillage-pc.gov.uk) domain names. We felt strongly about this point and put a motion to the AGM of the Hampshire Association of Parish Councils asking that this charge be reduced. Although the motion was passed almost unanimously, I am still awaiting notification from the Cabinet Office that our proposals are to be accepted!

He invited questions from the floor but there were none forthcoming.

3. District & County Councillors Reports

Cllr. Mrs. Fullbrook thanked the Chairman for inviting her along this evening. She explained that her part of the parish was Zebon Copse and would speak specifically about her ward. She advised that Mike Poulton was the other ward member. She said that the majority of their work was involved with planning and issues which cropped up with residents. Cllr. Fullbrook said she was involved in the Section 106 monies and hopes to have some good news in the not too distant future and certainly by the next APM. The other great issue was the QE Barracks development which would impact on the district. Two of the biggest things she had been involved with was the launch of Operation Hartbroke, whereby the Government were going to take £600,000 from us and send it

north – we have won a reprieve for 12 months but will have to fight the battle again next year. As part of the team she had been involved with delivering the 2.5% Council Tax increase for Hart. Cllr. B. Leversha said he had hoped that Cllr. Lambert would have been present to speak on the QE Barracks brief in his capacity as Chairman of the Development Control Committee. However, he was able to report on the Inquiry for Redfields and he had spent several days at the Inquiry and had spoken at the end and had picked up on various minor issues which the Inspector had picked up on. Travellers, unfortunately there had been an invasion of travellers last year on Alf White's land and Alf had had to go to Court to try to get them removed but the police had been powerless to help. The travellers had been in the area specifically for work at the air show. After they had gone Cllr. Leversha had visited the site and been appalled at the amount of rubbish left – guttering, garden rubbish and the debris associated with odd job works. He had involved our MP James Arbuthnot who had tried to get help from the Minister but to no avail. He explained that all the blockages in front of farm gates were there to prevent travellers invading. The last issue he had to report on was the tree cutting in Hitches Lane which he had

Cllr. C. Leversha reported on the 15% increase in Council Tax which HCC had to imposed in order to continue to deliver the services residents currently enjoy. £48 million pounds has gone north and she dealt with the Hands off Hampshire campaign, and the Community Transport Scheme of which she was extremely proud.

4. Trustees & Appointees Reports

Mrs. Kay spoke to the Welfare Trust which allocates a small sum of money to the needy of Crookham village, Crondall, Ewshot and Fleet but numbers have gone down over the years. Last year they gave 24 donations of £20 and 7 went to Crookham village

The Mummers donated 390.12 this year and this is the mainstay of the funding of the trust. The Almshouse trust – there are 14 flats there – 12 single and 2 double – there have been two changes of occupancy this year and the maintenance charge is £32.50 a week for the single and £26.25 and they pay their own electricity etc. They

Mr. Knight spoke about Crookham Memorial Hall, built for the whole area, it belongs to Crookham Village and Zebon Copse as well as Church Crookham. Most of us will know that QE Barracks is proposing a new community site and the trustees have met with the developer and HDC and suggested that the money might be better spent on a new Memorial Hall. They are asking for a bigger hall and more land, they haven't decided about the Willis Hall, they are divided about it. He believes that a bigger hall could have several large rooms and they look forward to something bigger and better in the same area with more parking spaces.

5. New Village Hall

The Chairman advised that this has been going on for some considerable time, for longer than he has been a parish councillor. It was felt appropriate to put this on the Agenda because we have reached a point where we need some constructive feedback as to where residents want us to proceed.

He explained the background to the present WI hall and the fact that it was There is an added sense of urgency for another hall because of the UCS which identified this land and adjacent land for the building of 10 houses. Whilst inclusion in the UCS is purely a recommendation by the consultants and there is no guarantee that planning permission would be granted. The WI hall is on a 6 months renewable lease and custom and practice has shown that if it is identified in the UCS p/p is likely to be granted. At present we have an offer from the CSSC to demolish the flat roof room and at the back of the Club build a new hall slightly bigger than this. If the project is to go ahead one of the needs is a business plan – who would use the hall and how much would it be used – we need this feedback from the public. One of the people who has been leading this project, it is not just the cvpc, it is also the CVA and Dr. Reader has been involved. He invited Dr. Reader to speak. He asked for ideas for where we go from here. Whilst we all love the WI it still remains a WW2 army hut with inadequate toilets and kitchen and it is too small. What

will happen when this hall closes – if we do not start thinking about the future we will have nothing. The CSSC offer to build on the car park has come about as a result of an offer of land at the rear of the car park from the White family. If residents are supportive we can then go out for funds. We would need a committee to run the hall. Who uses the hall,

The WI, CVA, twinning, community events, horticultural, clubs, private parties. The Community Centre at Zebon Copse is booked solid and the Memorial Hall is also too far to reach except by car. There is nothing in Dogmersfield and Winchfield is also a car journey away. The support of the residents is needed if the project is to go ahead.

The Chairman said that lots of people had come to the Parish Council meetings and said that things are going on which they do not know about and that is why it is being spoken about tonight. He then invited participation from the floor.

A question about the lease was asked and it was confirmed that it had to be renewed every 6 months. The car parking – people will drive here as much as they drive to other halls – is there enough. The Chairman said there was a ratio of car park to size of building which HDC were going to advise on. A question was asked about the UCS which identified this area of land and says that replacement of this building could be provided within the area of land identified. The Chairman confirmed that this was correct. Mrs. Kay said from the WI point of view they had been assured by the owner that the WI had this as long as they liked. Mention was made of the ransom strip and the Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council intended to keep a very firm grip on this. Debate then continued on the ransom strip and the Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council had not discussed this. Dr. Reader spoke about how much the White family had given to the village over the years and explained how the offer of land to the rear of the car park had arrived – we need to know whether residents want a village hall. A question was asked on how the management of the new hall would be run and the Chairman explained that the village hall would be separate but that if there were functions which required a bar then the structure would be built in such a way that a link to the club bar would be available. Another question was what use was made of the hall by local people, it was believed that it was fully utilised but this information was held by the WI. The size we are hoping to new build is 60% - this would take between 80 to 100 people. The Chairman explained that there were no plans until we know whether there is support from residents. Cllr Jackson then reminded residents that we wanted to know what they would use it for.

Children's parties, private parties, horticultural talks

The point was made that people were very complacent because we are sitting in a hall at the moment, if we did not have it opinions would be very different.

The Chairman said that uses, demand etc would all have to go into the business plan but before that happens we need to know if it is supported. The majority of residents supported the idea of a hall. Patrick suggested that the way ahead was to develop the business plan which would show usage and then the Parish Council could come back to the residents again and suggest a way forward. Cllr. Leversha B, said that when he had been the ward member for Zebon Copse the biggest gripe was that the community centre was booked for months ahead.

6. Consider Resolutions of which written notice has been given.

No resolutions had been received.

7. Any other business

Letters of complaint were received about the traffic calming and the Chairman said that the trail was now reaching a close and Councillors would be looking at all the letters and findings and would go out for public consultation before a final decision is made on a permanent scheme.

A question was raised about Malthouse Bridge and the Chairman confirmed that a planning application had been submitted for railings on the parapet – this was necessary because of safety issues. As a listed structure the relevant bodies had been consulted and had approved the railing. The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.