

HERTFORD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on
Monday 6 March 2006
at the Mission Room, Vicarage Causeway, Hertford Heath

Present:

Mary Bourne (Chairman)
Bob Akers
Andrew Crumpton
Trevor Goodingham
Alan Horswill
Gillian Thornton
Carolyn Morgan (Clerk)

Also present:

County Councillor Mike Tucker, and three members of the public.

A. Hertford Heath Nature Reserve

Jackie Clark, Volunteer Warden for the Reserve, explained that students from Capel Manor were doing a lot of work on the Reserve to thin out trees on the Goldings side of the wood to allow more light to penetrate to increase the diversity of plants, etc. She said that it was mainly silver birches that were being removed but some oaks had been taken out as well. There were too many trees and not enough clearings. She was aware of concerns about fly tipping, etc and the Wildlife Trust was installing bollards and a dead hedge to prevent any occurrences.

Bob Akers spoke for many villagers when he said that if it was felt that too many good trees were being cut down when dead trees were being left in situ. Jackie explained that dead trees were good for insects. The Chairman told the meeting that she had approached both parties and passed on the comments of the village that the students had been over zealous. However, she added, the benefits could be seen already in the bluebells and wood anemones. Mary added that she felt that the bollards by the burnt oak were not close enough to stop quad bikes.

Jackie said that there were no more plans to work in that area but that maybe similar works would be carried out in Balls Wood. All work by students was under supervision and at the direction of the Trust warden. She said that there was a core of six volunteers for working parties and that the Trust relied on the heavy work being carried out by students and other groups.

The Chairman thanked Jackie for coming to the meeting and expressed the Council's appreciation for all the work being carried out on what is a great facility for the village.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were formally accepted from Lynn Bonner, Martin Nash and Alison Scarll. Apologies from William Ashley and PC Scott were noted.

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were none.

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 6 February 2006

Subject to two minor typographical errors, these were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

(i) Provision of transport to Presdales

The meeting noted that Sarah Vize was unable to come to the Annual Parish Meeting and was passing the Parish Council's comments on to the relevant department.

5. Police matters

Trevor Goodingham reported that the mobile police station would be by the Village Hall in future instead of in College Road.

6. County and District Council matters

(i) County Council

Mike Tucker advised the meeting that there was a vacancy for a co-opted governor at the JMI. He also advised that the County was looking at providing enforceable zigzag lines by the school.

He reported that the future of local government was being looked at again and that the Government had indicated that the status quo was not an option. It was thought that the 2007 District Council elections might not happen.

He further reported that a rise of 4.95% in the County's council tax requirement was planned with extra expenditure on libraries and with £10 million being allocated to road improvement.

7. Reports

(a) Chairman

None

(b) Planning Committee

(i) Applications received

The following applications were considered and no objections made:

- * 45 Mount Pleasant: Wooden shed to replace former garage
- * Lavender Cottage, Downfield Road: Detached garage

(ii) EHDC decisions

The Council noted the following decision:

- * Gamels Farmyard: Conversion of barn and outbuildings to new residential dwellings - permission and listed building consent granted.

(iii) Appeals

The Council noted the following appeals:

- * Paint ball games at High Wood: Appeal against enforcement proceedings - **the Clerk was asked to write to the Planning Inspectorate and set out the Council's views on the application and subsequent events.**
- * 1 Barclay Close: Appeal against refusal for 2 bedroom house and parking.

(c) Playing Field

(i) Grant applications

The Clerk reported that an application for £5000 had been submitted to Awards for All for inclusion in the portfolio going forward on 16 March.

(ii) Revised quotation from Wicksteeds

The Clerk had received a revised quotation which was considerably more than last year's. **Trevor Goodingham will contact Wicksteeds to query the amount.**

(d) Highways and byways

(i) Accident at the junction of Church Hill and London Road

The Clerk had received a letter from the driver of the car involved in the accident suggesting that double yellow lines be painted at the junction. The meeting could not support such a proposal as it would be likely to jeopardise the viability of the Country Store. **The Clerk was asked to request PC Scott to observe and comment.**

(da) Village of the Year Competition

Nick Sharp and Andrew Crumpton agreed to help with the application and a meeting was provisionally arranged for 23 March. **The Clerk will check that this is convenient for Martin Nash and William Ashley.**

(bb) Village Fete

Trevor Goodingham reported that the next meeting of the working group was to be on 16 March.

(e) Allotments

(i) Rents

Bob Akers had done some research and found the in Ware a 10 pole plot costs £26 a year and in Solihull, the cost was £39. It was agreed that, with effect from 1 April 2007, the annual rental of a full plot would be £15 and the annual rental of a half plot would be £10. It was further agreed that the free first year would cease with immediate effect. It was also agreed that the rents would be considered at each October Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk will print 10 copies of the revised rules for new tenants and will write again to the tenant who does not work his plot.

(f) Wildlife Meadow

The Chairman reported that, due to the exceptionally dry weather, the pond was not filling.

The meeting noted that a natural history walk would take place at 10.30am before the official opening on 11 June. **The Clerk was asked to let the school know.**

(g) Website

The Clerk reported that she had received information about the meaning of the "Union Boundary" on the old maps. Apparently, after the 1834 Poor Law Acts, Poor Law Unions were formed on geographical bases. There was a Hertford Union and a Ware Union. It was suggested that an article be written for the newsletter and/or the Parish Magazine.

(h) School

The Clerk had received a paper on the Hertford/Ware Secondary Review options which she would pass to Alison Scarll. Mike Tucker informed the meeting that Sele School would not be closed.

(i) The Clerk

Nothing to report.

(j) Village Greens

Members noted that the damaged lamp post on the green opposite the Goat had been removed and that dog bins had appeared around the village.

(k) Village Hall

Trevor Goodingham reported that the committee had spring cleaned the Hall and had received favourable comments. The work to the kitchen and toilets would be carried out as soon as possible. The Hall had arranged for a Casino Night to be held on 25 March and possibly an Elvis Night in the near future.

He further reported that Community Service people would be painting the Hall. The Village Hall provides the materials and Community Service the labour.

(l) Other

(i) Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk advised that this would be held on 3 April starting at 7.00pm and that it would follow last year's format. She would be writing to those organisations to whom the Parish Council had made donations asking for a report.

8. Correspondence received

- (a) The British School Museum Hitchin: Information and Events guide - noted.
- (b) CPRE: March 2006 newsletter - noted.
- (c) Open Spaces Society: Spring 2006 newsletter and appeal for donation to the Friends of Trap Grounds - noted.
- (d) Sports Drainage Solutions Ltd: Brochure - noted. (To be passed to Alison Scarll for the school)

9. Financial matters

(a) Accounts for payment

(i)	Mrs C Morgan	Net salary February	£437.43	
		Printing March newsletter	£60.00	
		Distributing March newsletter	£37.01	£534.44
(ii)	Mrs C Taylor	Net salary February		£79.11
(iii)	Mr P Webster	Net salary February		£103.81
(iv)	Web Tapestry	Domain name transfer/renewal		£15.00
(v)	Thames Water	Water services 1 Apr - 30 Sep 2006		£37.95
(vi)	The Information Commissioner	Data Protection Act registration 2006/07		£35.00
(vii)	Mrs J Wright	Reimbursement for tree work		£183.76

(b) Income

(i)	EHDC	Churchyard cutting reimbursement		£1380.00
(ii)	HCC	CMS grant towards wildlife pond		£298.00

(c) Balances

(i)	Current account (after above expenditure and income)			£1460.08
(ii)	Deposit account			£7331.75

10. Newsletter and Parish News Items

The following items are to be included in the newsletter and/or Parish Magazine:

- (a) Village of the Year
- (b) Union Boundaries
- (c) Energy advice
- (d) Annual Parish Meeting
- (e) Wildlife Pond
- (f) Mobile Police Station
- (g) Allotment rents
- (h) Distraction burglars

11. Date of next meeting

Monday 3 April 2006 in the Mission Room immediately following the Annual Parish Meeting

The meeting closed at 9:35 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____