

ST. IPPOLYTS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of St. Ippolyts Parish held on Monday, 2nd April 2007 in the School with 15 people present.

Apologies for absence had been received from County Cllrs. D. Ashley, R. Thake, NHDC Southern Rural Community Development Officer G. Gover.

The Chairman, Cllr. Veasey, welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming.

1. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

The Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Monday 8th May 2006, copies of which had been circulated to each member of the Council, were signed as a true record of the proceedings at the 5th June 2006 Parish meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were none.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would like to thank the members of the Parish Council for their help and support during the past year.

There have been several visitors from NHDC this year including Mr. G. Gover from Community Development who updated us on community matters and grant programmes for 2006-7. Mr. M. Nadasdy from Community Safety and Mr. S. Sears from Parks & Open Spaces who advised us on Recreation Ground play equipment. Mr. A. Beavan and Mr. R. Kelly from Local Development Framework on Preferred Options. Miss. J. Lines and Mr. G. Crowhurst from Service Delivery on the current recycling scheme and future direction of recycling in N. Herts.

Other visitors included Police Officer PC Suckling and PCSO Sara Coombes on local community matters. Mr. Paul Sands from Caldicott Centre on ideas to involve children with activities and trips. Parish residents to discuss various local matters.

The Council welcomed A.F.C. Santos who now shares the use of the football pavilion with St. Ippolyts Football Club.

The Council has been represented at many meetings, presentations and exhibitions. These included various meetings and workshops with the Police Authorities, North Herts District Council, Herts. Highways and a networking meeting with other Parish Councils.

During the year 40 planning applications and 3 planning appeals have been considered and the government has announced that this role will continue.

Internal and external auditing are being carried out annually.

NHDC Rural Play Project organised several Rural Play events at the Recreation Ground throughout the year around public and summer holidays. They were well attended and enjoyed by the children from the parish. Caldicott Centre also held 2 youth activity events on the Recreation Ground.

Following a request from young people a single 5-a-side goal post was installed on the Recreation

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Ground in February 2007 grant aided by North Hertfordshire District Council.

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) St. Ippolyts South continues to be an important part of the community. It is in its 6th year and currently has 265 members. The membership is up for renewal in September 2007. During the last NHW year (Sept 06 to date) there have been 7 incidents reported, including 3 burglaries and 3 thefts from motor vehicles. Chris Suckling is our Ward constable and Sara Coombes our PCSO. Area Co-ordinator Mandy Aylott has been a volunteer for NHW for 6 years and has recently joined as a PCSO based at Letchworth Station. She will remain as a Co-ordinator until a suitable replacement is found. St Ippolyts North (NHW) Newlands Lane area the first Neighbourhood Watch scheme to be set up and Broadmeadow Estate both continue to be successful but a co-ordinator for Blackhorse Lane area has not yet been found.

The St. Ippolyts Youth Club set up two years ago with the aim of providing a safe, accessible place for the young people of the area to meet and socialise in an informal setting continues to thrive. Up to 35 youths attend each week and new members are always welcome. The club meets in the Parish Hall from 7.30-9.00pm every Wednesday during term time and is open to those in school years 5 to 10 (ages 9 to 15).

At the end of last year the Youth Club Committee put in a successful bid for a grant of £300 from Hitchin Youth Trust to cover the hall rental costs for 2007. With the purchase of new sports equipment they were able to add badminton, volleyball and dodgeball to the list of activities available. Recent special events have included a Band Night, a craft evening and a Food Night, as well as bingo, quizzes and board games in the small hall. Suggestions of new ideas and offers of help are always welcome.

The St. Ippolyts Footpath & Bridleway Group organised a blue bell walk in May and a winter walk in December which many people enjoyed. Group members attended various courses organised by Countryside Management Service (CMS) during the year. Destination signs have been installed around the Parish. The Council would like to thank HCC, CMS and Mr. R. Williams, Parish, Path, Partnership co-ordinator, for their effort on this.

The Council has inspected the external and internal condition of the football pavilion with a builder and will investigate further on improvement possibilities that can benefit more members of the community, particularly youngsters.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank our County and District Councillors for their support and for coming to our meetings whenever they can. Also thanks to Cllr. Mrs. T. Gibbs, Community Engagement & Rural Affairs Portfolio holder for attending our meeting in October 2006 and her advice on ASBO.

4. PARISH PLAN COMMITTEE REPORT

The Chairman invited Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs to give an update on the Parish Plan.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs reported that all households in the parish have received a copy of the Report and it is also available on the Parish website. She would like to thank Cllr. Mr. Mawer for arranging the printing, Cllr. Mr. Veasey for preparing the distribution bundles and everyone who delivered them.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs invited questions at the meeting. No questions were raised.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs for her report.

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5. TRAVEL PLAN UPDATE

The Chairman invited Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs to give an update on the Parish Travel Plan.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs reported that she has received confirmation from Herts. Highways, Mr. I. Thompson that funding has been secured in 2007/8 to develop plans and designs for the schemes discussed. However, a separate bid would have to be put forward in February 2008 for funding of any schemes that are to be developed.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs invited questions at the meeting. No questions were raised.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs for her report.

6. PARISH, PATH, PARTNERSHIP REPORT

The Chairman invited Mr. R. Williams, Parish, Path, and Partnership co-ordinator, to give an update on the PPP.

Mr. Williams reported on various work that were carried out in the past year including 3 new kissing gates near Little Wymondley, installed and paid for by CMS, a members meeting in November and a well attended Christmas walk which took place in December. He thanked Mr. P. Pinkstone for organising the event. For the forthcoming litter picking event on 28th April, he has purchased some litter pickers and requested that they would be paid for by the Parish Council. It was agreed. Mr. Williams said that he has been in discussion with some residents of Charlton on PPP matters and that they would be joining St. Ippolyts on this year's cricket match. The next Bluebell walk will be on 20th May. More detail will be displayed on Notice Boards and the Parish website.

Mr. Williams attended a CMS training on 'The way ahead for P3' and mentioned a possible County Wide Green Issues Group to look at environmental issues. Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs asked if Mr. Williams would be interested to represent our area if the Group were to go ahead. Mr. Williams has agreed. Mr. Williams also referred to the Healthy Walks initiatives, similar to the one in Hitchin.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Williams for his update.

7. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER PROJECT

The Chairman invited Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs who is also the Parish Recorder to give an update on the Landscape Character Project.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs explained that the Hertfordshire Association for Local History's Recorders Group would be celebrating their 25 Anniversary in 2008. The main thing about the project is to have many people and groups involved. Field trips around our villages, hamlets, estates and surrounding countryside can be arranged and participants are invited to walk around, record and comment on what they see. Those unable to walk could be involved in other ways, for example, by driving round and/or providing their memories.

Information gathered would be turned into a coherent statement, local people can then use it to influence the decisions that local authorities and landowners make about our local landscape. It is important to have the statement adopted as 'supplementary planning guidance' to ensure the findings are taken into account in local planning policies. It will also support local views and it complements parish plans.

CPRE has produced an action pack to assist with the project that can be added to the Landscape

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Character Assessment that Cllrs. Mrs. Skeggs and Mrs. Titmuss were involved in some years ago. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs for her report.

8. ST. IPPOLYTS PARISH HALL REPORT

The Chairman invited Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs who is a Trustee of the Parish Hall to give an update on the Parish Hall.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs reported that the Trustees endeavour to maintain the fabric of the Hall in a good condition and in the summer holidays there would be redecoration for the lobby, kitchen and crockery cupboards. Other improvements planned are a modification to the guttering on the entrance porch, the hot water supply to the kitchen and the gas supply pipe to the cooker. The Hall continues to be busy with regular and casual users. There was a surplus of £2,500 (including £1,328 generated by fund raising) that has been added to reserves to cover future costs.

The Hall Users' Fair and the Trustees' raffle draw will be held on Saturday 24 November 2007.

At the AGM the Board of Trustees were elected. More information about the Parish Hall can be found on www.stippolytshall.co.uk.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs invited questions at the meeting. No questions were raised.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman invited PC Suckling for his comments.

PC Suckling gave an update on various statistics on crimes reported in the parish and nearby villages. Numbers of burglaries, especially 'distraction' burglaries have gone down. PC Suckling is working with Community Engagement Group on Locality Plan and Cllr. Mrs. Titmuss is representing the Parish Council on this.

Cllr. Mr. Mawer enquired about the incident that a car was driven onto the Recreation ground and was told that the Police managed to identify the driver. Cllrs. Mr. Mawer and Mrs. Titmuss made PC Suckling aware of their concerns about speeding around the Gosmore High Street crossroad by The Bull and Little Almshoe junction around rush hours.

The Chairman thanked PC Suckling for his input.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the Annual Parish Meeting closed.