

ICKHAM & WELL PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Meeting – 10th August 2015 at 6.30pm

Minutes of meeting

Present: Councillors J deGraft-Johnson (Chair), K Tatman, S Hipkin, K Richards, G Wyant, Mrs P Heath (clerk).

Public: 5 members of the public

2015/51: Apologies:

Councillors P Hodges, L Shouls.

2015/52 Declarations of interest

Councillor S Hipkin, resident of Ickham Court Farm, declared his interest in CA/15/01582 – replacement of heating system – as he was a neighbour of the property being modified and similarly affected by the expensive electric heating.

2015/53 Minutes of meeting on 20th July 2015

The minutes were signed as a true record. They will be re-circulated via Jacque and a notice placed on the notice boards at Ickham and Bramling inviting parishioners to request copies from the clerk if they are unable to access the emailed version.

2015/54 Matters arising

54/01: APCM 03/03 – c/f from last meeting: Councillor Wyant had now spoken to Martin Twyman and was told that the gate giving access to the field behind The Street is locked at night and unlocked in the morning, usually before 9am, by Roger Burnett (or Mark Downes). The padlock is a combination lock and the affected farmers have provided the code.

54/02: APCM 03/04 – c/f from last meeting: Councillor Wyant had talked to the site manager about early occupation of the caravans (pre 21st March) by about 6 workers setting up irrigation, repairing tunnels etc before the growing season. ***This matter will be diarised for action in February 2016*** when a letter will be sent to Mansfield reminding him of the start date of occupation.

54/03: APCM 11/03 – Councillor deGraft-Johnson stated that he was still awaiting a reply from Katy at East Kent Housing to his request for a

mirror to be placed on Forge House to help motorists leaving Ickham Court Farm, but that he expected a refusal.

54/04: 46/07 Councillor Wyant mentioned the generous support given to the Church by Fred Bennett during his lifetime and his continuous help in fund raising but corrected the reference to a bequest.

54/05: 51/02 The quality of the water at Seaton Weir was of concern. Just below the weir, the river from Wingham joined the Little Stour and the water contained treated discharge from the sewage works, including heavy metals. ***Councillor Wyant will ask Southern Water about what action they are proposing to take.*** It was thought that a notice should be placed by the joined rivers warning dog owners not to let their pets drink the water but no immediate action was planned pending a response from Southern Water.

2015/55 Planning Applications

55/01: CA/15/01544 Councillor Tatman suggested that the changes would be visible from the road but no one raised any objection to the application.

55/02: CA/15/01582 Replace heating system at Gadd Cottage in Ickham Court Farm. It was noted that the system would cause emissions which the existing electric heating does not, but that the cost savings would be significant. Councillor Hipkin, whose property adjoined Gadd Cottage and was similarly heated, expressed his interest. No Councillors raised any objection to the application.

2015/56 Finance

56/01: Councillor Hipkin reminded members that the Concurrent Funding application had to be submitted in September and asked for their views.

56/02: Grass cutting: Last year's application amount was £1,400 but Councillor Wyant pointed out that Gary Bradford was much less expensive than the previous contractor and only cut the grass as necessary and rarely in the dry season. As churchwarden, she stated her interest as the Parish usually donated £800 towards the cost of grass cutting in the churchyard. It was agreed that current costs + 3% should be used as basis for claim.

56/03: Tree cutting: Maintenance of the trees on the village green would be carried out on a 3-4 year cycle, with the added complication of a possible new oak tree in memory of Fred Bennett. Councillor deGraft-Johnson had spoken to Lynda Gatusch at Canterbury CC and had been told that we could set a budget amount of approx. £1k, with a note advising that this could be more or less in any one year. In addition, the

apple trees on the new village green might need pruning. ***Councillor deGraft-Johnson agreed to seek the opinion of Geoff Preston.***

- 56/04: No money was required for shrubs or flower bed maintenance.
- 56/05: Hedge cutting: The cutting of the hedges on The Street had cost £48 last year. The hedges on the new village green might also need cutting. As Gary Bradford was able to do this task and was less expensive, a budget of £48 + 3% was agreed.
- 56/06: Hard surfaces: The path through the village green does not need any maintenance at the moment.
- 56/07: Fencing and walls: The chain fence on the village green does not need maintenance and Councillor Wyant confirmed that the wall by the lych gate and the railings were the responsibility of the church.
- 56/08: Gates: Zero expenditure required.
- 56/09: Lych gate – Councillor Wyant reminded members that the PCC held a restricted fund of £280, raised during the WW1 commemoration, for maintenance of the gate. David Haywood had painted it last year with boiled linseed oil at no cost. Alan Jones had pointed out that the memorial boards within the lych gate needed repainting. Councillor Wyant also mentioned that there was a stone loose on the seat inside and this should be cemented back – costs being met from the fund.
- 56/10: Benches: The benches on the old village green and the table and benches on the new village green are in good condition and do not require maintenance next year.
- 56/11: Notice boards: The backing board in the notice board in Ickham is to be replaced this year (quotation received from Andy Biggin for £109). Councillor Tatman said that the notice board in Bramling also needed repair / renovation and a budget of £200 was suggested.
- 56/12: Any other: Last year £300 had been claimed for the pond and fingerpost. The pond was now being maintained by Highways, thanks to the efforts of David Rosslyn-Smith, and the fingerpost will be repaired this year and therefore not need any provision next year.
- 56/13: Councillor Tatman mentioned the road safety signs along the A257, which had cost £70-80 each eight years ago, which were not listed as a maintenance cost etc. He queried the excess on the insurance (*since checked to be £100 on assets, £50 on loss of money*).
- 56/14: The council have recently only been awarded 70% of the amount of concurrent funding requested, the balance being met from the precept, (parish tax on properties), or from fund raising. Concurrent funding is for designated categories of spending and Councillor Tatman said that

he did not believe that it should be assumed, without debate, that the concurrent shortfall should automatically be made up from the precept. Alternatively we could cut down on some of the concurrent designated works (e.g. less grass cutting) or, as had been suggested, by fundraising. The bid for concurrent funding has to be submitted by 30th September and will be discussed and finalised at the next meeting on 21st September.

56/15: It was agreed to add the fingerpost and the petanque court to the insurance cover and asset list. Both needed valuation but it was thought that, although it had cost £1,500 plus volunteer labour to create, the petanque court might cost £5-6k to replace. It was suggested that the assets cover might be increased by 10% and *the effect on the premium should be checked.*

56/16: **RAMP funding** - Councillor Walker had talked about this at the last meeting, a budget of £7.5k being available for southern parishes. Projects that benefited the residents' social well-being, had economic benefit etc would be considered. Councillor Wyant mentioned the lack of facilities for children in the village. *Councillors were asked to seek the opinions of their parishioners about suitable projects, prior to the next meeting.*

2015/57 Highways

57/01: Councillor Tatman reported a head-on collision on the A257 near the Haywain when a car coming from Wingham was on the wrong side of the road. The A257 group will set up a meeting with Kent Highways to look at ways to minimise dangers on known hot-spots on the road in view of the speed and volume of the traffic using it.

57/02: Councillor Tatman also spoke of the recent decision to utilise Manston airport as part of Operation Stack.

57/03: There would be a special meeting at Southern Water on 24th August to discuss the changes to the water mains at Bramling as the project cost more than £1m (estimated £1.3m). Once the meeting had approved the project, then detailed plans would be drawn up and the sub-contractors given the go-ahead to start work late September / early October. It was thought that the plan to use adjoining farmland rather than affect Wingham Lane would be approved.

57/04: Councillor Wyant reported that the potholes near the bridge in Wingham Lane were becoming dangerous for cyclists and that more comprehensive repairs rather than just patching up were required.

2015/58 Dog fouling

58/01: Councillor Richards reported that the 'Poo Fairy' stickers, asking dog owners to clear up, had been placed around the village but she had not, so far, noticed any decrease in fouling. One of the stickers had been removed from the pathway to Seaton.

58/02: The posters had to be laminated, which Councillor Wyant offered to do, and then will be placed around the area, including in the Duke William if the owners agree.

58/03: The new residents of Ickham Weir Lodge have requested a dog bin by their property, which is one the end of the footpath by the river, the other being at Littlebourne, which already has such a bin. *Councillor Richards will contact Canterbury City Council to arrange this and will write to Littlebourne to inform them, as a matter of courtesy.*

2015/59 Stile at Seaton Weir

Councillor Wyant informed the meeting that James Holstock, the farmer leasing the field, has repaired the stile, although it is not his responsibility, and will monitor and repair as necessary.

2015/60: Maintenance of lych gate

Covered under previous section on finance (56/09)

2015/61: Fred Bennett memorial oak tree

61/01: Councillor deGraft-Johnson had spoken to Mrs Hardman at Canterbury re the diseased branch of one of the protected sycamore trees. She had told him that they did not have time to visit and inspect the fungal growth but *asked Councillor deGraft-Johnson to email photos*. If they felt that it merited attention, they would then send someone out.

61/02: There had, however, been objections to the idea of replacing the diseased sycamore with an oak tree to commemorate Mr Bennett, from some residents of Ickham Court Farm whose properties might be overhung in coming years by the oak's branches. Siting the tree to the right of the green may overcome further objections.

2015/62 Early cut back of hedgerows

In the absence of Councillor Shouls, this matter was deferred until the next meeting.

2015/63: Sewage leakage / Southern Water

- 63/01: Councillor Wyant had spoken to Paul at Southern Water about the leakage of sewage as had been reported to them in a letter from Anne Graham, (for which she had received a “stalling” letter from the CEO). They stated that this was caused by a build up of fat by the pumping station in Drill Lane, which happened regularly in the past. She was pleased to report that Southern Water had flushed the drains that day and that this should solve the problem.
- 63/02: *Councillor Wyant was asked to discuss with Southern Water the possibility of both having a sensor installed to detect build-up of fat etc and / or regular clearing of the drains to pre-empt leakages.*
- 63/03: The condition of the sandbags in Drill Lane, which protect the electrics serving the pump station, was also mentioned as they were disintegrating, thereby not only being unsightly but also failing to give adequate protection. Southern Water could not promise to build a retaining wall before the winter, but stated that they would reinstate the sandbags before then.

2015/64 Christmas tree and carols

- 64/01: In past years, the tree had been funded by Ickham Parish Plan. *Councillor deGraft-Johnson will ask Brennan Dwyer if funds are available for the tree this year.*
- 64/02: The carols by the tree were initiated under the Parish Plan. The Reverend Chris had approached Mrs deGraft-Johnson, as representative of the FOI, suggesting that this should be co-ordinated with the carol service held in Ickham Church. It was felt that this would be of benefit, particularly if the weather was bad.
- 64/03: It was suggested that the carols could start by the tree, weather permitting, before progressing into the church for a more secular assembly, including the serving of mulled wine etc
- 64/04: *Mrs deGraft-Johnson and Councillor Wyant agreed to co-ordinate the arrangement and to set a date for the carols on a Friday / Saturday before Christmas.*

2015/65 AOB

- 65/01: Councillor deGraft-Johnson formally expressed the Council’s thanks to Martin Twyman for informing local residents of two instances when he was doing work on the fields behind The Street.

65/02: Martin Twyman had raised his concerns about people digressing from the footpath alongside his field due to the gate at the end of The Duke's garden being left open. *Councillor deGraft-Johnson will write to the new owners asking them to keep the gate closed and to place a sign on the wall discouraging the use of that exit as there is not a public footpath directly behind the pub garden.*

65/03: Kent Police had sent some information to the parish clerk, *who was asked to scan and circulate it for discussion at the next meeting.*

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 8pm.

The next parish meeting is on Monday 21st September 2015 at 7.30pm