

ICKHAM & WELL PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Meeting – 21st September 2015 at 7.30pm

Minutes of meeting

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

Public: 2 members of the public

2015/66: Apologies:

There were none.

2015/67 Declarations of interest

Councillors J deGraft-Johnson and K Richards declared interest in Item 10 on the Agenda, Carpenters Lodge, the former as the owner was a supplier to his business, the latter as a friend of the owners. Councillor Tatman declared an ongoing interest in the mains replacement (Item 6) as his property had been flooded in the past and was still at risk until the work was done.

2015/68 Minutes of meeting on 10th August 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.

2015/69 Matters arising

69/01: 54/03 – Councillor deGraft-Johnson stated that East Kent Housing had now informed him that they were refusing the request to place a mirror on Forge House to aid drivers leaving Ickham Court Farm due to the cost and difficulty of installing it properly.

Councillor deGraft-Johnson will inform residents.

69/02: 54/05 – Councillor Wyant had now talked to Southern Water about the water quality at Seaton Weir and had been told that treated domestic sewage, not industrial waste, is discharged into the Wingham River, which joined the Little Stour at Seaton Weir. Although the water might have bacterial infection, it was tested monthly for compliance with H&S Regulations.

- 69/03: 56/03 – The apple trees planted 3 years ago on the new village green might need pruning and ***Councillor deGraft-Johnson will speak to Simon Mount about any necessary work.***
- 69/04: 56/15 – Although earlier discussion had indicated that the Petanque Court and Fingerpost should be included in the insurance cover, it was decided that they were not assets, as such, for insurance purposes. The Court had been developed with volunteer work with funds from the Parish Plan and would be maintained, where necessary, by users. The Parish Council would, however, appreciate the transfer of the remaining Plan funds, estimated as £400 – £500, to cover any on-going costs on developments under the Plan.
Councillor deGraft-Johnson will ask if this transfer could be made.
- 69/05: 56/16 – Ramp funding. Although too late to make a claim this year, Councillor deGraft-Johnson asked Councillor Richards to create a proposal outlining how the villagers could be asked about what they might want and to present it at the next meeting. A suitable questionnaire might then be prepared with the clerk if required. Some sort of children’s facility on the new village green was suggested – such as a climbing frame or trampoline – but space is limited and there would be H&S / insurance issues to consider. Councillor Hipkin raised the point that residents in other parts of the parish should be considered, rather than focus solely on the village itself. Provision of bus shelters (one each side) of the A257 at Bramling could be a suitable project at an estimated cost of £10k for both, but we should offer parishioners a choice and try to engage them in fund raising. A member of the public present, Roger Burnett, suggested that a ‘champion’ should be appointed to head the shelter project, should this be chosen, in the same way as he had championed the installation of the Petanque Court. Councillor Hipkin mentioned that Canterbury CC would match funding on the bus shelter project up to a value of £2k.
The clerk was asked to upload the 2010 Parish Plan onto Box.com and the Plan will be discussed at the next meeting.
- 69/06: 58/03 – Councillor Richards reported that there had been no response, as yet, from Serco nor Canterbury Council re the provision of a dog litter bin near Ickham Weir Lodge.
- 69/07: 61/01 – Having sent the photo of the diseased sycamore tree to Canterbury CC, as requested, Councillor deGraft-Johnson had been told that ‘they no longer provide advice’. He had spoken to a tree surgeon, David Gurney, who had deduced from the photos that the damage had been caused during the cutback last year and was not particularly dangerous, but who would charge £480 for a site visit to inspect. In view of the tree expert saying that the tree was not dangerous at present and the likely average cost of maintenance of the protected trees being over £1k, it was decided not to proceed with any further action on the diseased tree at this stage. It was briefly discussed

whether those that sought the imposition of the TPOs should be approached to help with funding their maintenance.

- 69/08: 63/02 – Councillor Wyant reported that Southern Water are not installing sensors to detect build up of fat at the pumping station. Mrs Graham had communicated with them and been told that they would jet clean the mains at least once every two months and that The Duke and Tor Spa will be asked to install fat traps as soon as possible.
- 69/09: 64/04 – Councillor Wyant reported that she and Mrs deGraft-Johnson had found that the consensus in the village is to have an informal carol singing around the tree without a church service, although the church could be used in the event of bad weather and / or for serving refreshments. The carol singing will be held on Friday 18th December, with song sheets provided. A Christmas tree will be set up, funded either from the balance of Parish Plan funds, or from the FOI or another donor (not from PC funds).
- 69/10: 65/02 – Councillor deGraft-Johnson had both spoken and written to Janet at The Duke re the problem of people using the back access to the pub and thereby deviating from the public right of way onto farmland, to which the farmer objected. The gate was installed a couple of years ago and it was pointed out that a right of way can be acquired after a set period of time so that it was important to ensure that the gate was closed to prevent use. It was mentioned that there was a large dip in the actual designated footpath and Councillor Wyant will talk to the farmer, Martin Twyman, about repairing it.

2015/70 Finance

- 70/01: Councillor Hipkin spoke about the Concurrent Funding Application for 2016-7, due for submission by 30th September. We are basically claiming the same as last year, plus 3%, in the knowledge that we will probably only be awarded 70% of the claim and any shortfall will have to be met from the Precept or funds. An amount to cover the three-year maintenance of the protected trees was included as was hedge maintenance and a sum of £200 for the necessary repairs to the Bramling notice board (item 56/11 on previous minutes).
- 70/02: All approved the application figures which totalled £3,290.

2015/71 Highways

- 71/01: A257 group asked to make a presentation to Kent CC and Kent Highways on major issues affecting the road between Canterbury and Sandwich. These are basically the speeding and overtaking on certain areas and the congestion and bottlenecks at other notorious junctions such as Nargate Street and The Red Lion junction in Wingham. A

number of proposals will be made: - 40mph buffer zone between Canterbury and Littlebourne; 40mph from Littlebourne to Cherville Lane then a 30 mph limit to just past the Bramling bend after which the 40 mph limit would apply and a 50 mph limit from Wingham to the Ash bypass. Councillor Tatman will be seeking local opinion about the potentially contentious inclusion of a request for a speed camera somewhere in Bramling and will respect the consensus.

- 71/02: Operation Stack – having taken views from all parishes concerned, the A257 Group wrote to the Police and MOT and had been assured that adequate signage and policing would be in place as necessary to ensure that HGVs used the correct route to and from the airport. Councillor Tatman asked that any problems that occurred if Operation Stack was implemented should be reported to him.
- 71/03: Councillor Tatman reported that the Wingham Well Lane part of the mains replacement is scheduled to start at the end of October and be completed by the end of the year. It is still possible that adjacent farm land might be utilised for the works but SW are currently assuming that the Lane will be dug up and access limited to residents. Work on the A257 between Littlebourne and Bramling will not start until January 2016, for unknown reasons, and may take up to 5 months to complete. Highways have told Southern Water that they must work 7 days a week (7 am to 7 pm Mon – Sat and 9 am to 4 pm on Sunday) and must provide manned traffic lights in order to cope with varying traffic flow.
- 71/04: There was some fly tipping in the lay-by in Bramling Road which was subject to arson before Serco could clear it.
- 71/05: Some of the pot holes in Wingham Lane have been marked for repair but others were deemed too shallow to qualify by Highways, an opinion not shared by Councillor Tatman.
- 71/06: The fingerpost has now been restored and Councillor Tatman expressed his thanks to Tony Jones for the work, to David Rosslyn-Smith for clearing the undergrowth around the post and the FOI for paying for the work to be done.
- 71/07: There has been another accident on the A257 at the Bramling bend by a speeding driver, no-one was hurt in the incident.
- 71/08: Councillor Tatman stated that he will complete the annual Kent Highways Survey by the due date of 27th November, and will bring any items warranting discussion to the preceding parish meetings.
- 71/09: Councillor Tatman summarised the Kent Highways Permit Scheme, a long document detailing protocol for digging up the roads. The main change to the previous version is that Highways themselves will now be subject to the same protocol as the utilities companies and that the

utility companies will now have to apply for permission from Highways for what they want to do and when they want to do it.

2015/72 Dog fouling

- 72/01: Councillor Richards reported that footpath behind The Duke towards Littlebourne is now clear of mess.
- 72/02: Four posters had been laminated and nailed up but the posters on the footpath by the church towards Seaton had already all been torn down. It was suggested that an email should be circulated via Jacque to ask people to be aware of such vandalism and report it.
- 72/03: In the past, residents of Seaton had apparently not wanted to have a dog bin, possibly due to the antipathy towards any 'suburbanisation' of the rural village. Councillor Hodges offered to seek the opinion of current residents, which may be different, and to point out that it is a legal requirement for dog owners to remove their pet's mess.
- 72/04: Councillor Richards will arrange for a new 'No dogs' sign to be placed on the new village green as the current one is unreadable.

2015/73 Fred Bennett memorial tree

It was unanimously agreed that the tree would cause too many problems in siting and costs in maintaining and therefore could not be permitted. Councillor Tatman offered to write to Mr Bennett's son informing him of this and recording the kind thoughts of the councillors and their gratitude towards his father for his work in the parish.

2015/74 Cutback of hedgerows

- 74/01: Councillor Wyant reminded the members that, under new legislation, it is illegal to cut back the hedgerows until after 31st August, unless the growth obstructs roadways or footpaths, in order to protect wildlife.
- 74/02: Councillor Shouls had raised the problem of an early cutback being done in Baye Lane but it was unclear whether Highways or the farmers of the adjoining land, (Martin Twyman and Michael Mayes), had done this. Councillor Shouls will investigate the Canterbury CC website about which department is responsible for cutting hedgerows in the area, and consider contacting them, more likely next year.
- 74/03: Councillor Wyant will arrange a cut back in Seaton Lane, which has become dangerous due to the excessive foliage.

2015/75 Carpenters Lodge

75/01: Councillors deGraft-Johnson and Richards, having declared their interest, took no part in the discussions.

75/02: Planning permission for the double garage had been granted on 18th April 2011 but work was still underway and it had been alleged that the actual development was in breach of the terms of the permission granted.

75/03: The possible breaches of permission were:

- that the work should have been started within 3 years of the permission date;
- that garage door(s) on The Street required separate permission;
- that the building was actually being used as a kitchen extension.

75/04: Councillor Hodges queried why these alleged breaches caused a problem and why some residents were angry.

75/05: Roger Burnett pointed out that the window overlooked the neighbour's garden.

75/06: Councillor Tatman had invited the owners to come to the meeting but had had no response. An officer at Canterbury CC had been assigned to investigate and the matter will be raised at the next parish council meeting, to which the owners of The Lodge will again be invited.

2015/76: Flood prevention

This was deferred as there is a meeting with the Environment Agency at Seaton Weir at 10 am on Friday 9th October to discuss the work done there and the river restoration, which Councillor Wyant will attend and will report on at the next parish meeting. Roger Burnett stated that Lindsay Dixon was still concerned about possible flooding as the relief channel behind her house needed de-weeding as growth in the ditches is preventing water flow..

2015/77: 'Happy hour' at The Duke

As near neighbours of the pub, both Councillors deGraft-Johnson and Shouls, declared an interest in the matter. Councillor Shouls queried whether the two hour periods each day were appropriate but was informed that the parish council had no jurisdiction over commercial enterprises operating within the law. Councillor deGraft-Johnson said that he had spoken to a couple of neighbours who had reported no increase in traffic. He also remarked that the landlords seemed responsive to complaints, citing as an example, a recent complaint about the music being too loud one Sunday evening, which was dealt with immediately.

2015/78 Councillors' Code of Conduct

Councillor Hodges stated that she would send a link to everyone to the 2013 Guide for Councillors and that she and the clerk would compile a draft code of conduct. This would be reviewed by a sub-committee and presented at the next parish meeting and would ultimately become part of the Standing Orders. Councillor Shouls was asked to check the draft and said she would do so when time permitted.

2015/79 Kent Highways permit scheme

This was covered under 71/09 above.

2015/80 Contact List preferences

Councillor Hodges stated that her parishioners preferred written contact and that she would deliver notes as necessary. Councillor deGraft-Johnson reminded everyone to ask their parishioners about their preferred method.

2015/81

- 81/01 Councillor Wyant reported that approval from the DAC for the Welcome Project at St John the Evangelist is nearly forthcoming.
- 81/02: The parish council were unanimous in their support for the project and the clerk will draft a letter of support to be used in conjunction with funding applications.
- 81/03 Councillor Wyant mentioned that a major potential donor, the Heritage Lottery Fund, needs to know that there is community support, although there was little interest shown in the plans displayed at the church. Mrs deGraft-Johnson agreed to write a letter of support on behalf of the FOI.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 9.45pm.

The next parish meeting is on Monday 19th October 2015 at 6.30pm