



W E S T B E R G H O L T P A R I S H C O U N C I L

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held in the John Lampon Hall Wednesday 25th June 2008—7.30p.m.

In the Chair: John Gili-Ross
Members Present: Sally Butcher, Jenny Church, Bernard Colbron, Andrew Savage, David Short, Peter Sleigh, Chris Stevenson, Harry Stone, Bob Tyrrell
Clerk: Val Walsom
Present: Councillor Tod, Councillor Willetts, 10 members of the public
Apologies: Peter Johnson

Reports from the committees and the minutes of last year's Annual Parish Meeting were distributed in a booklet.

Before the meeting started refreshments were served.

1. Welcome and introduction from the Chairman—Mr John Gili-Ross

John Gili-Ross welcomed all. He explained that this is a new format for the Annual Parish Meeting and that it would be an informal but, hopefully informative evening. The meeting had been better advertised around the village and on the website this year.

2. A short presentation on the completed Parish Plan and what this means for our community. This will be followed by questions and observations

Chris Stevenson gave a presentation on the Parish Plan under the following headings:

- What is a Parish Plan (and who is producing it)?
- What have we done already?
- 2007/2008: Year of progress. 21 people volunteered to help take the Plan forward
- Establishing priorities for the village
- Spring 2008 consultations
- Overall priorities
- Priorities for the Parish Council
- What happens next?
- Action Plan
- Do you need any more help?
- Where can I find out more?

There were no questions from the floor.

John Gili-Ross commented that the Parish Plan was very important. The government is trying to get local communities to look after their own affairs. The Parish Plan also gives credibility when applying for grants. Lexden Road pond has been improved, driven by local residents. The Parish Council needs to maintain this for the benefit of the village.

The RCCE Best Kept Village organisers visited West Bergholt and we have been short-listed for an award. The Parish Plan was considered an important factor.

John Gili-Ross thanked the Parish Plan Steering Group.

3a) Discussion on written issues sent in by residents

No written issues were received.

3b) Any issues raised from the floor

Issue: Some users of the hall have been having problems with locks on cupboards in the kitchen.

Response: The cupboards are being looked at. The external fabric of the hall is currently a priority for refurbishment. This will, hopefully, mainly be paid for by grants.

Issue: The village handyman does a good job. What are his areas and do they include the church yards?

Response: Gary Walls' work is confined to the environs of the village and the hall. His workload is channelled through the Clerk and the Environment committee. The church areas are the responsibility of the churches.

Our footpaths are a disgrace due to a lack of funding. A Local Highways Panel is currently being formed. It will have a say in where expenditure will be placed. Essex County Council has implemented a rangers scheme. This may not be working effectively as they are mainly 'patching' footpaths etc. A fallen tree in Hall Road was dealt with very quickly by Gary. He is also clearing the verge in front of the pond. The residents need to pool together to improve their local environment as was done around the Lexden Road pond.

Issue: Are there any more details on the Chitts Hill crossing?

Response: Councillor Willetts said that this is still in the pipeline but is currently delayed. Once the automated barrier is installed it will be manned for at least 6 months until it is certain that the barrier is working safely.

Issue: Work on the Village Green is still not completed following the Compulsory Purchase Order. The area is still not registered as Village Green.

Response: The Chair of the Environment committee is unwell. There is regular dialogue between the Trustees and Essex County Council. The sub-contractor is not progressing with the work as fast as we had hoped. Essex County Council is funding a large part of this project.

Issue: Was the Covenant relaxed on Macnally's yard?

Response: No it wasn't.

Issue: The notice board outside the Co-op is super. However, the latest Parish Council minutes read that letters about encroachment onto the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field were going out to residents of Mumford Close instead of Mumford Close and New Church Road.

Response: This was an error and the letters will be sent to residents of Mumford Close and a resident of New Church Road. The Parish Council feels that the notice board is a big asset to the village.

It is hoped there will be 3 new 'Welcome to West Bergholt' signs erected very shortly.

Colchester Borough Council's Attended Freighter Service will be on 26th July and 20th September at the Orpen Hall. It was felt that a 'green' skip should be provided.

4. Concluding remarks

John Gili-Ross concluded as follows:

This year saw the resignation of Suzanne Bowden and the co-option of Jenny Church and Sally Butcher. Gary Walls replaced Graham Broom as handyman.

Thanks went to the Parish Councillors, Val Walsom and June Mayhew. The Hall and Environment committees work very hard to ensure both areas are maintained for the benefit of the village. Thanks also went to the sub-committee responsible for organising the change of format for the meeting.

The village website is the biggest means of communications. There are many hits each day including many from other parts of the country and from around the globe. The site is open for use of anyone who wants to promote a village club etc.

The Bergholt Youth Group (BYG) organised a visit from an Essex Youth Service youth bus which was in position in the car park for those who wished to look around it following the meeting.

The meeting finished at 9p.m.