

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WOODNESBOROUGH PARISH HELD
ON TUESDAY 16th April 2013 AT WOODNESBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30pm**

Councillors	D Woodward (Chairman)	K Ellen	P Charlesworth
	D Ford	A Boniface	G Hall
	B Baker	S Hoskins	

16 Members of the Public

PCSO Ian Norton

Sarah Wells Clerk to the Parish Council

County Cllr Leyland Ridings

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming. He then introduced the members of the Parish Council to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr G Boorman. Dist Cllrs Paul Carter & Pip Russell. Bill Chesterfield, D Shawcross, Mrs C Pearce.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last Annual Meeting, held on 8th May 2012 were available for all present to read.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the previous year's meeting.

4. POLICE REPORT – PCSO Ian Norton

Overall crime for the ward of Sandwich in which Woodnesborough is included since April 2012 has reduced 21.4% which is a reduction of 77 crimes.

During 2012-13 there were 207 calls to Kent Police for the village. Within these calls there haven't been any areas of concern that suggest that the current level of policing should be increased.

There were 62 reported crimes for the village during 2012-13 being 9 burglaries other than dwellings and 1 burglary dwelling, this is 16% of all crime. Six crimes for theft were reported being 11% of all crime. Criminal damage amounted to 11 crimes, which is 17% of reported crimes.

A Mobile Police station will commence in July 2013 which will visit rural location. Once the details have been arranged notices will be displayed outside the village hall.

Crime prevention.

Due to a recent spate of vehicle crimes where vehicles were left unsecure, owners are reminded to make sure their vehicles are locked.

In view of thefts from out-buildings, such as sheds, a list of tools and equipment inside sheds should be kept and all items marked with a UV marker. Consider alarms and CCTV.

Fuel thefts.

Check the storage tanks on a daily basis and locate them in a well-lit area covered with CCTV. For heating oil try and grow a thorny plant around the tank.

Register all your valuable property at Immobilise.com.

PCSO Norton was asked if shed alarms were still available. He answered that they were no longer given away by the police but could be purchased online or from DIY shops.

The Chairman thanks PCSO Norton for his report.

5. SPEAKER – Watch Manager David Potter - Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Mr Potter opened by emphasising the importance of smoke detectors in the home, especially in the kitchen. Smoke detectors can be purchased easily and are not difficult to fit. Free smoke detectors can be fitted for elderly or venerable people.

He said that fire safety in the home is dependant on people's habits and behaviour and what appliances they may own. Electrical fires cause a lot of house fires so it is very important to ensure that electrical appliances are functioning properly and that your home wiring is not faulty.

Warning signs of trouble such as light bulbs keep blowing, trip switches keep tripping or lights flickering should not be ignored. Get things check by a qualified electrician. It's not just faulty equipment that can cause a problem; equipment used incorrectly can also be a danger.

Most house fires start in the kitchen so don't leave electrical appliances running when you go to bed; don't use the timer function on washing machines etc to start appliances running during the night. Ensure that sockets are not overloaded, kettles, irons and microwaves all draw a lot of power, so don't run them all from the same socket.

Don't over fill tumble dryers. If the cloths won't tumble because the drum is jammed full, they will stay over the heating vent and may combust. Teenagers bedrooms can be a problem, with televisions, game consoles and computers all plugged in too many extension leads may be in evidence.

Simple measure taken in the home can also help in the event of a fire; keep doors closed when you go to bed. Have a planned escape route and ensure your family know what it is. If you don't have a land line upstairs take a mobile phone to bed with you so you can call for help.

Outside, ensure that BBQ ashes have cooled down before disposing of them. Also have a designated cook, remember alcohol and open fires do not mix well.

Mr Potter went on to outline the future of Kent Fire and Rescue Service. In light of reducing budgets, the service may change in the future, working practices will need to be changed and staff number reduced.

Mr Potter answered several questions from the floor.

The Chairman thanked Mr Potter and adjourned the meeting for refreshments.

6. CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Council

There have been no changes to the Parish Council and we are now half-way through the term of office of 4 years, with the next election being in May 2015.

Planning

Over the past year the Council has commented on 15 applications ranging from the erection of a garage, a barn, extensive changes to a manor house, restoration of land at Hammill Clay Quarry, conversion of holiday let to granny annex to mention a few.

The application for the development at Hammill Brickworks was supported by the Council, though we wondered if the construction of 19 large quality houses was sustainable. Nevertheless, we were pleased to see that the application was granted which provides an opportunity to clean up a blot on the countryside just within our parish.

Highways

It appears that the drainage of some surface road water outside the Old Post Office in The Street is still draining down behind some of the houses in Melville Lea, although we have had no complaints from the residents since Kent Highway's contractors installed new drainage last summer. This fact has been brought to the attention of KHS again.

In the absence of a new salt bin for Foxborough Close, Kent Highways agreed to supply a ton bag of salt, locating it on the old play ground for the benefit of residents in that area.

Following a request for additional dog waste bins the 3 existing ordinary waste bins have now been labelled to indicate that these are also available for dog waste in bags.

I reported on the possible reductions of street lighting last year in the interests of saving energy. KCC are still working on this and about to trial two phases – 1 to switch off surplus lights, of which 3,100 have been identified, generally located on roads to and out of local settlements, for a period of 12 months but subject to monitoring. Lights within settlements – towns & villages – will be retained.

Phase 2 is to switch off, part of night lighting from midnight to 5-30am (1am to 6.30am summer time) on minor roads including residential & industrial estates and high speed roads –amounting to around 70,000 street lights according to KCC. However, many factors are being considered such as safety, crime, emergency services etc before final decisions are made. Full details and the opportunity to make comments can be found on the KCC website.

Footpaths

The footpath running adjacent to the by-pass in a northerly direction from this side of the bridge over the by-pass has been obstructed by the crash barrier since repairs to the bridge. Enquires were made with the Public Rights of Way Officer of KCC who advised that it is only a “permissive” footpath and therefore no legal action can be taken to open the barriers to allow access.

The New Community Hall and Housing Development

Perhaps the highlight of the past year was the granting of planning permission for this development by Dover District Council Planning Committee on 21st Feb after 14 months of waiting.

Many residents have received yet another letter from DDC Planning at the end of last week. Having read the Planning Officer's further report I will explain why this has happened. Planning permission was granted on 21st February subject to the negotiations and resolution of outstanding matters identified in the Planning Officer's first report.

It hinges around the DDC Heritage Officer being concerned about the aesthetic impact of the new development on the existing village hall – grade 2 listed.

Of the 3 basic points in that report, only the increase of the distance between housing units 1 to 5 and Stoneleigh could be achieved by 3.4 metres which will be reported to the Planning Committee next Thursday, 18th April. The Planning Officer is recommending acceptance of her latest report.

Contrary to the Parish Council report in the April magazine, Mr Ellis, the Developer has to **commence** the development, starting with the new hall within 18 months of the planning permission being granted.

Ringleton Manor

Sometime ago the Council received several enquiries about the unsightly tipping of waste building materials either side of the foot path that passes through the property. The matter was reported to the Environment Agency who subsequently took legal action, commencing a year ago, against the owner of the property. At the last hearing in March, following earlier adjournments due to ill health, the owner attended and advised the Court that he would arrange for a contractor to clear the site of the waste

material etc. which the Court accepted with a final hearing set for 21st May. I walked through there last week and there had been no improvement and the EA has been advised.

Community Assets

The Localism Act 2011 provides for a scheme called “assets of community value” which requires a local council – Dover District Council – to maintain a list of community assets. Under the scheme, the Parish Council nominated The Charity Inn public house to be included in the list with the agreement of the licensee. The nomination was accepted by DDC which means that the Community would be able to bid for the asset should it be sold in the future.

I was delighted to read that KCC have agreed to keep the Richborough waste/recycling centre open and I congratulate the Sandwich Action Group for all their hard work. This Parish Council was fully supportive.

As I conclude I would like to express my thanks to each of the following whose contribution to the village may not be fully appreciated by some.

All the clubs and groups who provide facilities, entertainment, fitness training, etc, most using this hall. They are patiently waiting for the New Community Hall.

Ken and Linda Butcher who have attended to the delightful flower bed at the top of Fir Tree Hill for many years now.

Su Atkinson as our Environment Engineer – litter collector – who takes great pride in keeping our village clean and tidy. She has cleaned a number of street name signs and reports any fly tipping to me to arrange removal by the District Council contractors.

Su and Monika Smith look after a small flower bed beneath the Woodnesborough sign on Sandwich Road. Sadly the previous container with plants was stolen last autumn.

District Council Pip Russell who regularly attends our meetings and keeps us well informed of Dover District Council affairs together with a number items of interest.

Mrs Sarah Wells, our Clerk who puts an enormous amount of work into running this Parish Council for which we are extremely thankful.

And once again I must express my thanks to my fellow Councillors for your support throughout the year. And my two colleagues, past Parish Councillor Doug Smith and Cllr Steve Hoskins who with me form the New Village Hall Working Party, for their time, knowledge and support they have given to the Parish Council over the past year.

New Village Hall Update

The Chairman asked Mr Doug Smith from the Village Hall Working Party (VHWP) to give an update

Planning

- i) Parish Council Working Party started discussions with D Ellis Nov2011.
- ii) 21st Feb 2013 planning approval received at DDC planning meeting.
- iii) 18th April 2013 to discuss amendments for Units 1-5 at the Eastern end of the site next to Stoneleigh opposite the existing Village Hall.

The VHWP are in discussions with Mr Ellis (St Saviours Developments) & Lawyer regarding the 106 Agreement which needs to be in place before formal planning approval is granted and any work on the Site can start. (possible start date August/Sept 2013).

The final 106 will be reported on and agreed by a Lawyer of the P C's choice.

Future Questionnaire

Another community questionnaire needs to be circulated shortly to establish from the existing users/organisations and residents what else they would like the Community Hall to offer.

We will also of course be discussing with the Village Hall Management Committee all the present plans and possible time scale plans for completion, also the possibility for The Community Hall Committee becoming a Registered Charity.

Funding and Grants

Members of the Parish Council have attended seminars organised by CASE (Community Action South East).

- i) 20th November 2012 at Aylesham Conference & Training Centre.
- ii) 26th March 2013 Funding for Community Buildings at an Ashford Venue.

We have also had a meeting on the 27th March 2013 with Jenny Bradbury a representative of ACRK (Action Communities in Rural Kent).

Possibilities

Big Lottery – Reaching Communities Buildings.

There are 3 stages to this application for which we have the Forms and this will take up to 6-8 months for the finance to be available. The funding level is between £100k and £500k (Total project cost must not exceed £750k).

Kent County Council- Village & Community Hall Grants.

KCC offer up to £50k which has to be match funded in total from other funds i.e. Trust Funds, Village Hall Committee, Parish Council etc.

This grant is produced once a year the next deadline 31st December 13.

There are also other funding organisations for various aspects of this project which we can apply for such as:-

- i) Company Funding,
- ii) Sports Funding,
- iii) Children's play space and
- iv) Funds for Hedging & Trees.

Our aim is to make the hall suitable for many activities and for all residents to enjoy

7. FINANCE REPORT

The Clerk went through the year end account for 2012/13

RECEIPTS	2011/12	2012/13
Carried Forward	8,571.80	8,777.87
Precept	11,000.00	15,000.00
VAT	116.63	507.76
Interest	36.61	88.41
Other	0.10	0.10
	19,725.14	24,374.14

PAYMENTS

Administration	4,591.10	4,555.39
Village Hall Running Costs	678.42	972.93
Audit Fees	155.45	135.00
Village Green	1,145.00	1,100.00
Councillors Expenses	0.00	0.00
Training	120.00	60.00
Church Yard Grant LGA 1972 Sect 214/215	650.00	700.00
Highways Cleaning	601.95	1,098.24
Flower Beds	154.98	75.00
Membership	642.99	75.50
VAT	507.76	131.27
Contingency	17.00	37.00
Election Costs	119.80	0.00
New VH	1,400.00	0.00
New Printer	194.00	0.00
	10,978.45	8,940.33

Bank Reconciliation 2012/13

Current Account	60.00		
Reserve Account	3,471.80		
Bonus Saver	12,962.43		
Petty cash	20.29	Open Bal	8,777.87
	16,514.52	Receipts	15,596.27
Unpresented Cheques	-1,080.70	Payments	-8,940.33
	15,433.82		15,433.81

8. REPORTS**County Councillor Leyland Ridings**

Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen

For the third year running KCC have frozen council tax, the district council, police and parish precepts do show small increases. These increases are not subject to the control of KCC.

KCC has championed 3500 new apprenticeships there are now more than ten thousand in Kent.

A regional growth fund worth £35 million has been established to support new and growing businesses in East Kent.

Following the Pfizer closure, the site was designated an enterprise zone, now named the Discovery Park with new owners. Negotiations with Pfizer led to the retention of seven hundred jobs on site and three hundred further jobs have now been generated.

New flood defences to secure the Discovery Park and Sandwich Town have been funded together with the environment agency at a cost of > £20 million and work began recently.

You'll be pleased to know that following my lobbying assisted by Cllr John Kirby and RAG the leader of KCC, Paul Carter has agreed that the Richborough HWRC will remain open. The existing highways and transport depot in Ash Road will be sold and the operation moved to the Richborough HWRC site. A new and more efficient HWRC will be constructed; both facilities will share the Richborough site, which will open early in 2014.

Highways Matters –

Upgrading the Ash roundabout, including skid resistant surfaces on the approaches.

Completion of 50mph (max) speed limit from Canterbury to Wingham on the A257.

Interactive speed signs outside Sandwich Technology School and in the centre of Sandwich will be erected by the end of April.

More roads in the district to be re-surfaced and potholes repaired as soon as the weather improves.

Cllr Ridings answered questions from the floor.

The Chairman asked if there were any other questions before the meeting closed. A query about wheelie bins left on the highway was discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact DDC and KHS to see if any action could be taken.

Action Sarah Wells

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Cllr Pip Russell offered her apologies and sent the following report after the meeting.

Report to Woodnesborough Annual Parish Council
April 16th, 2013

DDC has yet again in 2012/13 been dominated by two themes: finance and regeneration.

With the Government Central Support grant diminishing year by year – a process which seems set to continue for several more years – there has been ever-increasing pressure on the main DDC General Fund budget. However by careful management of our resources, both human and financial, we have come in on Budget with only a small increase in Council Tax while maintaining front line services. We are reasonably confident of achieving the same in 2013/14 without letting our reserves fall below the £2 million mark, although our business rates income will be hit hard by demolitions of the older buildings on the Discovery Park site (Pfizers.) Changes in welfare reform have made the financial picture particularly volatile.

Town and Parish Councils have been affected by the change from Council Tax benefits to the new Council Tax Discount scheme which came into effect on April 1st. This requires a saving of 10% on total funding and results in the reduction of their Council Tax base for Ts and Ps. All councils benefited from a transition award from Government which was passported to councils in full by DDC, following extensive and well received briefings on the impact of the new scheme by DDC officers. As there is a possibility of capping of town and parish council precepts from 2014 onwards a number of councils have put through significant increases in their precepts to protect their longer term standing, especially if they have important projects in the pipeline.

A change this time last year in the financing arrangements for the ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account has had a very beneficial effect on HRA balances, allowing us to put aside £2.5 million to help fund small scale residential development on land currently owned by DDC and no longer needed.

Progress on our main regeneration agenda has sometimes seemed frustratingly slow, especially when compulsory purchase orders are involved, and also when one knows of agreements that are virtually signed and sealed but cannot yet be announced publicly. This is particularly true of the Dover Town Investment Zone fronting onto the A20. There has been encouraging progress on the redevelopment of the Western Heights and the Betteshanger colliery site. Local Development Orders are now in place at the Discovery Park, which will make it much simpler for new tenants to take space. DDC is supporting Ash as the village works on its own Village Development Plan.

On a different aspect of regeneration the Government grant of £35 million to East Kent in the Regional Growth Fund has started paying dividends. Eight companies within the DDC area have already received grants or loans, two of them in the Discovery Park, and two more are at an advanced stage of application, one of them a major project. Funds supplied so far total £1.9 million, creating an estimated 227 full time jobs plus some part time.

Following the changes in waste collection implemented in the autumn of 2011 percentage recycling rates in DDC are now consistently in the high 40s and have occasionally topped 50% Green waste collection, for those who want it, was extended to all households in the District in 2012.

DDC plans to tighten up enforcement in areas such as littering and dog fouling though the use of a private contracting firm had to be abandoned when concerns were raised about its structure and financing. However more resource is being made available through the use of DDC staff and it is hoped that parish councils can become involved in the monitoring and reporting of offences. With the recruitment of a new senior enforcement officer a year ago a higher number of S215 notices are being issued to owners of run down or derelict properties, especially in Dover Town.

There have been two examples of 'People Power' in our District this year. Following a campaign led by our MP, district councillors, parish councillors and residents the Richborough waste site has been saved thanks to the efforts of the Action Group and a lot of behind the scenes lobbying by county and district councillors.

Finally, with the changes in the NHS now underway we have seen the introduction of the District Health and Well-Being Board, with the local Clinical Commissioning Group renting space at the DDC offices. DDC has taken a leading role in piloting these changes and a number of other councils have benefitted from our experience in setting up these organisations.

May I take this opportunity to mention that Sandwich Town Council, in co-operation with Kent County Council and Dover District Council, is preparing a Sandwich Community Emergency Plan. The Mayor of the day has been appointed as the first point of contact in the event of a local, or wider emergency. He or she will act as the Community Co-ordinator and will be contactable at any time of the day or night. His or her telephone number will be held by DDC and KCC. The Deputy Community Co-ordinator will be Mr Steven Sheppard, who has recently moved to Poulders Road. Steven is an ex-police officer and has been working with me on the plan. We have now developed a "telephone tree" of people who can be contacted urgently by the Deputy Community Co-ordinator in the hopefully unlikely event of an emergency and these people will be able to contact a list of members of the community who would be willing to provide such things as 4 x 4 vehicles, first aid, help with the evacuation of vulnerable or disabled people, tannoy system, bicycles, generator, etc, etc. Or even just general help in an emergency.

If you feel you could offer help in such a situation, we would be most grateful if we could jot your name and number down in our little brown book. These details are subject to data protection and would only be available to those on our telephone tree, in the event of an emergency. Details of the plan, when this has been finalised, will be published on the website, but names and telephone numbers of the general public will not be published.

Please see the board we have prepared for further information. I have some spare copies of the advice produced by Dover District Council for emergencies in the home, and how to prevent them, which has been sent by post to all homes, but in case you did not receive one, or wish for more copies, do please take a copy, or copies. They are full of useful information.

I have also become involved in the Armed Forces Network launch. The aim of this network is to help veterans of the armed forces who have physical and mental issues when they return to this country from

war zones. When these people return to the UK they find that initially they still have the security of the Army, Navy or Airforce to support them. After this they are alone in the community, being treated by medical practitioners and mixing with communities who possibly do not understand the nature of their trauma. In many cases even their own families and friends are not aware of the things they have been through and the difficulties they experience coming back into the community. This network is an attempt to use some joined-up thinking in helping our veterans to fit back into civilian life and to help those who have turned to drink, drugs and other dysfunctional behaviour brought on by their problems.

This is just to make you aware that there are many people in Kent in this dilemma and that we at Dover District Council have agreed to join forces with the network to provide help.

To give you advance notice, there will be an announcement in the press from Friday of this week regarding the next steps to be taken by National Grid in respect of the transmission of high-voltage power from Richborough from 2018.

Cllr Pip Russell