

**MINUTES OF EASTRY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT EASTRY VILLAGE
HALL ON WEDNESDAY 19th MAY 2004 AT 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors I Mollart (Chairman) S Shevde S Smith S Hooper
M Pemble M Jones P Cook

S Wells Clerk to the Parish Council
Mr Priestley the Community Warden
PC W Wright
County Councillor L Ridings
32 Members of the Public

The chairman opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

1) APOLOGIES

Cllrs T Scott & A Wiles. Dist Cllrs S Manion & N Kenton

2) MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Minutes of the last Annual meeting had been given to those present. It was proposed by Cllr Shevde and seconded by Cllr Pemble that the minutes of the meeting on the 15th April 2003 be accepted. All agreed.

3) MATTERS ARISING

Allotments and Leisure Fields

Allowing the bottom gate into the Gun park play area to be opened – A new gate is to be fitted.

Provision of a litterbin in the Gun park play area - Completed

Replacement of the fence around the skate park and basketball court - new fencing has been ordered.

A possible rebound wall behind the basketball court – New fencing to be concrete

A dog waste bin by the doggie loo - Completed

Local Organisations

Fire Brigade – High Street parking causing obstructions. The Council had been in constant discussion with Kent highways about this problem.

4) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I welcome you all here tonight. However before I begin on the work of the Parish Council, I feel I must mention the sad death of our Clerk Mr Ken Austin last year. As we all know Ken loved and enjoyed all the time he gave to the Parish.

Tonight I must put on record a big thank you from the Parish Council to Mrs Ann Austin who since Ken's death has seen that the Council has received all of the parish records minutes etc and also all the correspondence that in spite of our best efforts to prevent, continues to be delivered to her even to this date. I appreciate everything she has done for me personally through this sad time and hope the future will be a little brighter. Thank you Ann.

On the day of the election we had only six elected members for eleven seats on the Council. In the ensuing months we have co-opted five additional members and were up to full strength.

Unfortunately Mr Scott Kirk-Emes an elected member, due to pressure of work has had to resign. I take this opportunity to thank him for setting up the Parish Council web site and continuing to work on it. I hope all our Parish businesses and organisations know they can be included on the website.

As it has taken 11 months to get 10 Councillors I would like to take this opportunity to introduce them to you. The Chairman then introduced the Councillors that were present at the meeting.

In the past year all the normal work of the Parish Council has continued. We have been in negotiations for additional land for the building of new toilets. The Plans have been submitted for the landscaping of the Parade. Here I would like to thank Mr Donald Eldridge for his continued work on this project. Mr Eldridge together with Cllr Kenton and myself have met several times with the Architect and the planning conservation officer. We are now hoping that the plans will be accepted by all concerned.

Other projects this year have included the Parish Room and the old chestnut, additional land for the churchyard.

A new venture this year has been our Friday Morning Coffee break; this is for everybody young and not so young. On the 2nd Friday of the month there is a hearing aid re-tubing clinic and on the 18th June the Kent Association for the Blind will be coming along to show the aids they have available. Mr Bob Priestley, our community Warden calls in most Fridays to offer his help to everybody.

The Parish Council hope that more people will drop in for coffee, find someone to chat to and find a Councillor willing to help or at least find out where help can be found. Our thanks to Mrs A Shevde who has supported this project from the beginning. If you know anyone that needs transport to and from Coffee Break please let us know or ring 614320. We look forward to seeing many more people on Friday mornings. Its Free.

I will finish with thanks from the Parish Council. Firstly to Trevor Burton and Richard Swain for their work at the pond. All the Volunteers that open and close the picnic site. Mark Jones our tree warden with special thanks for the work at the Gun Park. Shelia Broster for keeping the Village Tidy with special thanks for cleaning up after the vandals and of course to Malcolm for helping her with the many odd jobs that come her way.

I thank the Messrs Swain for their devotion to the toilets in the past and for Richard SNR for being willing to continue for the coming year.

As a Parish Council we all thank Bob Priestly for the diligent work he has put in as our community warden. Especially for the extra hours at Halloween and bonfire night and of course for attending parish Council meetings to report to us.

Thank you all.

5) FINANCE REPORT

Copies of the Parish Councils accounts for 2003/04 and the budget for 2004/05 were available for everyone at the meeting; the Clerk ran through the figures and invited questions from the floor.

6) HIGHWAYS REPORT

The Chairman of the Highways Committee, Cllr Kenton was not at the meeting therefore the Clerk gave a Highways report. Most of the Highways Committee's time had been spent in negotiation with DDC Highways department about High Street parking and traffic problems. A scheme had

now been proposed by DDC for the introduction of Double Yellow lines at the bottom end of the High Street that should alleviate some of the problems.

The Highways Committee had also been working on the Parade landscaping project and had requested additional Street lighting for the village.

Questions were then taken from the floor.

Enforcement of Yellow lines – It was felt that double yellow lines would have no effect if they were not enforced. The Clerk reported that this issue had been raised with the Highways department and they had agreed to liaise with parking enforcement. PC Wright said he would be willing to meet with Parking Enforcement to discuss the problems.

Traffic Calming Lower Street – the Clerk informed the meeting that Highways had put in a bid for an interactive Speed sign and the Parish Council had requested traffic calming gateways.

Additional Lighting Felderland Lane Junction – County Cllr L Ridings reported that he had raised this matter with Kent Highways and been told that it was not necessary, he suggested that if he received a petition about the matter he would approach Highways again.

30 mph limit Tar Mac Topblock Site - the Council to discuss at its next meeting.

Action Parish Council

The new layout at Poison Cross - some people felt this junction was now even more dangerous. It was also pointed out that cars were now encouraged to go down Gore Lane, however when they reached the junction with Mill Lane there are no signs telling them where to go. To be discussed at the next PC meeting.

Action Parish Council

7) ALLOTMENT AND PLAYING FIELD REPORT

Cllr Hooper, Chairman of the Allotments and leisure sub-committee gave the report.

The problems caused by vandals in the gun Park over the past year were detailed. She reported that now the work on the Youth Club was near completion, the fences round the Skate Park were to be replaced and a new gate would be fitted at the bottom end of the Gun park play area.

Cllr Hooper informed the meeting that there are allotments available for rent and that gardening was a good way of keeping fit and getting exercise.

8) POLICE REPORT

PC Wayne Wright gave a lengthy report in which he informed the meeting that crime figures for the parish had gone down since the Community Warden had taken post. He went on to outline the various initiatives that the Police were undertaking to combat various crime related areas.

He informed those present that door to door duster sellers were being targeted and that their goods were being confiscated. He said this had been made possible by the vigilance of the neighbourhood watch.

He went on to say that unfortunately the equipment used for speed watch was currently out of order but that as soon as it was replaced or repaired Eastry would get the Speed Watch training. A computer programme had been designed to allow follow up letters to be sent.

PC Wright then gave out the Following phone numbers.

Control room for SE Kent 01340 240055
Crime Reporting Unit 01622 690690
PC Wright 07980 770585 or 01304 218130

9) REPORTS

County Councillor Leyland Ridings

Cllr Ridings gave a reported covering the following, the increase in Council Tax. School admissions, the provision of a new school in Ash and additions to Sandwich Technical School. The development of 23 children's centres. The LEA to have an OFSTED inspection this year.

Cllr Ridings then asked if they were any questions from the floor. Their followed a discussion on various Highways Matters. Cllr Ridings agreed to investigate.

District Councillors Report

A written report had been provided by Dist Cllr Manion and Kenton, a copy had been given to all those at the meeting. The Clerk read out the report that covered the following subjects. Finance, Anti Social Behaviour, Licensing, Roads, Planning and the Betteshanger Regeneration Project.

Charities

Mr Donald Eldridge, Chairman of the Greville Homes Charity read an extract from this year Charity Commission report that detailed their activities for the year. He closed by thanking Mrs M Craigen, the secretary for all her hard work over the past year.

Church Report

Chris Jones gave the church report; a new rector Mr Frank Kent would be joining the Parish in September. She gave the meeting information about the Rev Kent and his background. She went on to report on the activities of the Church over that past year including the monthly lunch. This had been so successful that it was hoped it could be run fortnightly if more help could be enlisted.

Parish Plan

Cllr S Smith outlined the Parish Plan Process and gave special thanks to Don Gardiner, Di Webb and Pam Seabright for their help with the computer work. The group had started out with £5500 worth of grant funding. Because of the vast amount of volunteer time that had been put into the preparation of the plan especially in the analysis of the data from the questionnaire £2000 of this was left and would be returned to the Country Side Agency. Cllr Smith also thanked the former Clerk Mr Ken Austin for his help and advice with the project.

The Chairman thanked the Parish Plan group on behalf of the parish Council

The Chairman thanked everyone for their reports. The meeting broke for refreshments.

10) LOCAL ORGANISATION REPORTS

Kent Fire and Rescue Service – Kevin Deveson reported that the fire service now had a new name and were undertaking a new roll. Training was being given in Road Traffic Collisions and a Chemical hazard unit has been formed. It is no longer mandatory to respond to all 999 calls, this

means obvious hoax calls are no longer attended. More work in community fire safety is to be undertaken with the fitting of smoke alarms being promoted.

Eastry Fire Station had had a mixed year with the sad loss of two retired fire fighters, Mr Ken Austin and Mr R Deveson. Also the retirement of Mr D Vickers after 30 years service. The station had been given a bit of a revamp with one set of doors being replaced. The station had responded to 287 emergency calls last year and had been available 97% of the time, down from the 100% cover of the year before. This was due to a shortage of day cover. The station had vacancy for day only cover and anyone interested should contact Kevin at the Fire Station for details.

The Chairman thanked Mr Deveson.

Cricket Club – Kevin Devison, Chairman of the club said they had a good crop of young cricketers coming through. The Ground is in good shape and people are invited to come and watch a game. A tour of Suffock will take place later in the year cumulating in a game against the RAF. A six aside tournament is being organised and local organisations are invited to enter a team.

Youth Club – Mr R Laslett reported that the new building was approaching completion and should hopefully be open by mid-July, with the official opening in September. Mr Laslett said he would like to thank the manager of Hammill Brick Company, whose help and support had reduced the cost of the bricks for this project by £2000.

He said he would also like to thank Brin Hill from the SRB team, £106k had been given by SRB with the youth Club raising £200k. It was estimated that the total cost of the building will be £310k and it is hoped that it will be completely paid for when opened in June. Now the new building is complete it is time to make it work. One wing has been leased to Bubbles Nursery for 10 years. The rent from Bubbles should offset the running costs of the youth club.

Mr Laslett said he would like to thank the Youth Club Committee. Mr Teddy Burnburg, Mr John Kemp, Mr Colin Humphries, Ms Jenny Scott, Mrs Shelia Smith and Mrs Trudy Gibb. He informed the meeting that the committee had done what they set out to do, however a bigger team was needed to run the new facility.

The Annual Meeting of the Youth Club will take place on 17th June 2004.

Village Hall Management Committee – Mrs Ann Shevde – the Village Hall continues to enjoy the support of local organisations and has been well used during the past year. To all the hall users we would like to say thank you. Improvements with the aid of grant funding, this year include a new central heating boiler, new cooker and painting of the outside of the hall. Plans for improving facilities for the disabled have been submitted and we hope in the near future to be able to start these improvements. As always with an older building running cost are high and without doubt if it wasn't for the dedication of the fundraising committee we would be hard pressed to keep the hall open. Events such as bangers and bingo raise much needed funds. The last fund raising event, the Snowdown male Voice Choir raised almost £400. Other groups, The Parish Council and Clubs also raise money or make donations to the improvement fund. We would like to thank them all.

Eastry Horticultural Society. – Mrs Sue Cook outlined the events of the group over the past year. They had been on a number of visits to gardens and shows and members had done well when entering competitions at various horticultural shows. The meetings are well attended and new members are always welcome.

Eastry Neighbourhood Watch Group – Mr Richard Swain – gave details of the groups meeting dates and asked that anyone interested in becoming a co-ordinator should come along to a meeting. He thanked the Parish Council for their support in allowing the group to meet at the Council room

and for a grant to cover admin costs. Thanks also to our Rural Community Warden, Mr Bob Priestley, with out whose help the group would have failed.

Mr Swain went on to outline the group activates over the past year and to give information on some of the groups activities during the past year and to say that more co-ordinators are required throughout the village.

Brownies and Guides – Mrs C Martin, both Brownies and Guides are full. The brownies are celebrating their 90th Birthday this year, the region celebrated in January by taking over Butlins, Bognor Regis; over 3,500 Brownies had a fantastic weekend there. Locally we are having a Circus Skills Day and Barbecue in Sandwich in June.

The Brownies have had an exciting year with a new programme and books geared for the use of the Brownie, more colourful challenges and interesting badges and a variety of uniforms. The Guides are a lively bunch, all the time, but they work well together and look after each other.

Mrs Martin went on to outline the activities of the Guides over that past year. She also reported that the Brownies have three leaders and that a lady from Sandwich and Jenny Stone had joined to help, she was very grateful. Other offers of help would not be turned away and anyone with a particular interest or skill they would occasionally be willing to share with the girls would be very welcome.

Youth Action Group – Mrs Shelia Smith – the group had been running for 18 month now. It was attended by 11-16 year olds that meet monthly at the Parish Room. With around 20 young people coming to the meetings. New Goal post for the Gun Park would be put up soon, the parish Council are paying for them to be erected, and will take on the long term insurance and maintenance of the post which will be for the use of all the Parish.

The youth action group had raised £100 towards the cost of the one post, with the Community Warden paying for one out of his budget and a grant from SRB had meet the remainder of the costs.

Trips had been organised and had been well attended and enjoyed by all. Mrs Smith thanked all the adult helpers for there work over the past year.

The Chairman thanked every one for attending and giving there reports, the meeting closed at 10.25pm.