

# Knapton Parish Council

Minutes of the **Parish Meeting** held on Tuesday 10 May 2005 in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Present: Alan Young (in the Chair)  
David Ross  
Karen Herbert-Okey  
Dennis Watmuff  
David Spencer  
7 members of the public.

## 1. Apologies

None.

## 2. Chairman's Report

Chairman Alan Young presented a brief summary of the year's work of the Council. The major item of expenditure was the construction of the Village Hall car park. The next project had already been started, the establishment of a Homewatch scheme. The Council had been informed that Knapton was one of only 2 villages in North Norfolk without such a scheme in operation. Alan encouraged the villages to join this scheme. There had recently been a change of Parish Clerk, the Chairman introduced Peter Holtam and thanked the outgoing Clerk (Don Venvell) for his much valued help and support during his tenure.

The Clerk then presented the financial statement to the meeting. The Parish Precept had just been received; the sum of money in bank was currently £3,200. However the Clerk warned that there were some substantial bills yet to be paid, and some consideration **might** have to be given to increasing the precept for 2006/7. The Internal Auditor (Mrs Lambert), highlighted the fact that a sum of £500 had been 'loaned' from the Village Hall Committee to cover the Car Park construction. After taking guidance, this was deemed to be illegal. The Clerk was currently working with Mrs Lambert to resolve this anomaly and he would report back the outcome to the Council at the next Ordinary meeting.

## 3. Reports from other bodies

- (a) **The Butterfly Walk & Pygneys Wood** – David Ross stated that this and the Butterfly Wood were a real asset to the Village. What other village could boast of two areas of outstanding wildlife conservation. Benches were now in place in Pygneys Wood, and access for the handicapped had been very much improved thanks to a generous grant of some £9000 from BTCV, a firm patch has been installed for wheelchair users and a hedge planted to mark the woodlands boundary. The Wader Scrap (a shallow pond to encourage 'waders') had recently

received planning approval from the NNDC. The dog leg field had been earmarked as an area of open meadowland in which trees would be encouraged to self seed and return to a natural environment. Grants would then be attracted from the Forestry Commission.

In February, several acres adjoining the 'old wood' were planted with hazels by volunteers. In future years these areas can be properly coppiced.

- (b) **MADRA** – David Ross stated that in his opinion the present committee was doing well, and the facilities were well used by the footballers. The SureStart grant of some £8,000 to improve the play area with the addition of new swings had been very well received. Norman Lamb MP attended the opening ceremony on Sunday April 17. This was a well attended event. The entry driveway had also been improved. It was understood that the car parking area was going to be tidied and it was hoped that some tarmac that would be donated by a local company. The finances were of some concern, no accounts had been presented, and it was reported that they could be liable to up to 5 years of Performing Rights payments which would incur a bill for around £1,250. The committee had recently applied for 24/7 license for the bar to the NNDC. In all David Ross was impressed with the hard work being undertaken at MADRA. Four new committee members had been voted on at the recent AGM.
- (c) **Homewatch** – David Ross had been working along with the Clerk in distributing a leaflet to all parishioners outlining the proposal to set up a scheme in Knapton. The response has been a little sluggish so far, at this moment some 48% of the houses approached had signed up to the scheme. David was now looking to approach some parishioners to act as co-ordinators for the scheme. We have most areas covered now apart from Knapton Green.
- (d) **Police Liaison** – Karen Herbert-Okey stated that the 'gates' to emphasize the speed restriction had been installed, though traffic was still travelling too fast through the village. On balance though Knapton was very lucky to such a low crime rate. There had been two occasions lately where Police had been involved in investigation acts of vandalism. The Clerk stated that he had been given a report from the Police after a recent speed check; at least one motorist had been booked for travelling in excess of 60 mph.
- (e) **Village Hall** – Apologies were presented by David Ross, but Rev Roger MacPhee could not attend. The Chairman said that he would like to record a special vote of thanks to Linda Risebrow and team for the really splendid spread they had prepared for the recent presentation made to Henry Wild upon his retirement; it was so good to see such a large turnout for this event. Henry's portrait now adorns the wall together with a commemoration plaque.
- (f) **Fete Committee** – John Kemp thanked all concerned for the hard work and support that had gone into making the 2004 event such a success. The fete raised £776 after expenses. During the year, the committee had gifted £500

towards the Village Car Park, £500 to the MADRA Children's Playground, and £100 to Pygneys Wood legal fees. Moving on to 2005, and Nelson's bicentennial celebrations in October, the Committee were looking to erect a flagstaff to enable the Union Flag to be flown at appropriate times now and in the future. The Clerk is currently investigating the need for planning permission.

#### **4. Open Meeting**

The Chairman opened the meeting to the members of the public in the room. There was a lively and frank exchange of views regarding MADRA and how it did or did not fulfil the need as a social centre for the village. One parishioner stated that they had paid their membership money but nothing had been offered in return. Others stated that it was the only place for miles around where youngsters could get involved in sport. The Chairman stated that it would be good to see a more positive attitude taken towards this venue, and would encourage all concerned to give MADRA a chance and support it as often as possible.

There was then a discussion on how the Millennium garden could be improved, possibly including the pond into the current layout, and the fact that all the hard work that had been put in by parishioners and in particular Knapton Ladies in establishing the garden in the first instance. It was stated that Mr Baxter might not be available to upkeep this garden in the future. The trees planted along the roadside should also be included in the general upkeep of the centre of the village. The Chairman stated that this would be looked into; perhaps the youngsters could get involved, along with other interested parishioners. An advertising campaign will be looked at, to restore this village amenity.

A question was raised regarding the overall cost of the Village Hall Car Park. David Spencer explained that of all the quotes the Parish Council had received, the one taken was substantially less than the other tenders. Some discussion took place regarding the parking of cars alongside the hall; consideration should be given to placing notices guiding visitors to the car park across the road.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed, and followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council.