

Knapton Parish Council

Minutes of the **Annual Parish Meeting** held on Tuesday 7 April 2009 in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Present: Alan Young (in the Chair)
Peter Kaye
Karen Herbert-Okey
Norman Dodd
Sally Dodd
Clyte Venvell
13 members of the public.
Graham Jones NNDC

1. Apologies

None.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting

These were reviewed, and it was proposed by Peter Kaye and seconded by Sally Dodd that they constituted a true record of events. The Council voted to accept these minutes.

3. Chairman's Report

Chairman Alan Young presented a brief summary of the year's work of the Council. The Chairman first welcomed everyone to the meetings and thanked them for their attendance. It was really good to see so many people present.

4. Reports from other bodies

Village Plan Steering Group

Since the Village Plan Steering Group last reported to the Parish Council at last year's AGM, we have unfortunately experienced a series of delays, and therefore have not achieved our deadlines as hoped.

However, we are now back on track and can say with confidence that the Plan will have been completed and published by early July. At the Parish Council meeting following this AGM, we will finalize the actions and time frames for the Action List. Following this, there will be a meeting of the Steering Group to finalise the draft and the completed Plan will then be passed to the Parish Council for their approval prior to printing.

There have been some disappointments along the way. We had hoped that Knapton would now have a Youth Club. Despite a huge amount of effort from Bea Gatfield, this project appears to have failed, largely due to the lack of a suitable venue. The Steering Group would like to express their grateful thanks to Bea for her hard work.

The Active Travel Project to provide a footpath to Mundesley and North Walsham has also stalled due to the astronomical costs forecasted by the feasibility study. The Steering Group will continue to look at other ways to provide this much needed footpath.

Recreational and community events continue to flourish. History, gardening, book and coffee clubs now meet regularly. We have enjoyed a quiz evening and a Village Christmas party and the Steering Group are actively involved in the planning of 'Knapton Together', a fundraising event for the church and chapel.

It is our intention that the Village Plan will have been circulated to each household in the village by the time Knapton Together' takes place.

The Butterfly Walk & Pigneys Wood – Peter Kaye presented the following report:

Pigneys Wood.

Following successful completion of the large scale planting programme in March last year which was supported by a grant from the Lottery Fund, the woods management immediately embarked on a further bid for Lottery funding to finance improvements to the woods infrastructure.

These improvements include, extending the car park, improving heavy vehicle access for the removal of timber and for vehicles of the emergency services, repairing and widening the easy access footpaths to ease movement for wheelchairs and digging a new scrape/ shallow pond to attract migratory birds with the inclusion of a screening hedge. Additionally we intend to create several signposted walks within the wood. Some of you may have completed a consultation document covering the above points recently. Gauging public support is a major factor when applying for grants of this sort and is always taken into account by fund providers.

We have successfully completed the first stage of the bid and work on the second stage is now well advanced. We will complete and submit this within the next two months and should know whether we have been successful shortly thereafter.

The year has not been without its problems and we have suffered from vandalism where a picnic bench was damaged and the bird hide was destroyed by fire. The cost of replacing these items is about £6,000. Fortunately, the bird hide was covered by insurance but the table cost us £260 to repair. A number of rare Christmas Trees were also stolen. As the wood is accessible at all times and is for the use of the community, we are almost defenceless in the face of such irresponsible acts, and we would ask members of the public to be vigilant and report any such incidents they may witness.

During the year timber was felled and sold and some branches on trees bordering Hall Lane and within the wood have been removed, in the interests of safety, following a tree safety audit. The sale of timber provides a valuable source of income for the trust and is expected to increase in the coming years.

Following complaints of trespass by a neighbouring landowner steps are being taken by the Highways Department and us to improve access to the wood from Paston Way and Butterfly Walk by the creation of a new footpath and the erection of fences to discourage trespassers. Time will tell whether these measures will be successful.

Trustee/Directors attended a first aid course run by St Johns Ambulance during March this year. The course was held at the MADRA. Trustee/Directors also made a presentation at a seminar titled 'Natural Neighbours' organised by BCTV at the Kings Centre, Norwich on March 7th.

Trustees are also exploring the possibility of creating a 'Green Burial' ground on a two acre site within the wood. Considerable interest has been shown by the general public in this form of internment. This project is likely to be undertaken in association with North Walsham Town Council.

As some of you may have read in the local press, we have asked local schoolchildren to design a suitable 'Keep Dogs on a Leash' sign for display in the wood during the nesting season. There will be a prize for the winning selection and also for the runner-up. We are also planning a 'Fun Day' in the wood during the summer to which all members of the public are invited.

Finally, this report would not be complete without taking this opportunity to thank all those volunteers who have willingly given of their time, in all weathers, in the maintenance of the wood and its facilities throughout the year and without whose help this valuable community asset would not be so enjoyable for those who use it.

MADRA

Norman and Sally Dodd reported that the new committee had done well. Whilst there were some ongoing problems, it was thought these could be sorted out soon. The AGM will be in May 2009.

Homewatch/Police liaison: presented by Karen Herbert-Okey

Karen thanked all concerned in the local neighbourhood Police team, there are doing a good job. Overall crime was down, though they did attend 9 crimes in this area.

Village Hall: presented by Clyde Venvell in the absence of the Vicar. The Village Hall was doing OK, it was solvent, and offered very good value as a low cost venue for village activities. In fact it is in use most days of the week. The Kitchen had passed its H&S inspection. A minor repair was being carried out on the roof. Special mention to Vi and Dennis Haines for all their hard work in getting the hall to look very presentable.

Fete Committee – presented by the Chairman John Kemp.

The fete was held 7 Sept 2008 at Church Farm. Contrary to weather reports and to our relief the sun shone. The turnout was very good considering the prior weather and it was a fun afternoon. Donations and stall takings amounted to £1847 (£1185 from stalls). After deductions our bank balance stands at £5406. John would like to thank all who helped make this fete so successful.

The fete this year will be held at the same venue on Sunday 6 Sept. We will be grateful for volunteers also cakes, bric-a-brac, raffle and Tombola prizes. Please contact John Kemp 01263 721 723 or Linda Risebrow 01263 721278.

Footpaths/Website – Norman Dodd stated that the flooding work had been done and had proved successful. However, if parishioners experience any problems with any footpaths, please contact their local councillor or the Parish Clerk.

The minutes can now be viewed on the website along with the newsletters. Are there any village clubs that wish to put a piece about their activities on the website? If so please contact Norman or the Parish Clerk who will pass the information on.

Open Meeting

The Chairman opened the meeting to the members of the public in the room. There was general discussion on items such as the repairs to the road in the village, along with a few words about 'Knapton Together', a fund raising event in the village which will be held 4-5 July. For further information contact the parish Clerk or your local Councillor. Robin Simmonds stated that he would be prepared to assist the Clerk in sorting out the planned road closure in the village. The Chairman thanked Robin for this kind offer.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 8.15pm, and was followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council.

Signed _____ Date _____

Alan Young (Chairman Knapton Parish Council)