

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF
THE WYMONDHAM & EDMONDTHORPE
PARISH COUNCIL**

Held at Wymondham Village Hall, Church Lane, Wymondham
Monday 15th May 2017 at 7:30pm

Present:-

Cllr. Christian Semmens (CSJ)

Cllr. Chris Semmens (CSS)

Mrs Tina Semmens (Parishioner and taker of minutes)

6 members of the public

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone and introduced Mrs Tina Semmens as minute-taker for the purposes of this meeting only, for and on behalf of the parishioners. He also outlined the purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting and provided a printed copy of its function for parishioners to read before commencing with items raised on the agenda.

2. To read, confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 3rd May 2016

RESOLVED: - The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting were read and confirmed as a true copy and signed by the Chairman.

3. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

Please see appendix 1: Chairman's Report

4. To receive reports from Village Bodies

Please see appendix 2: Village Hall Committee Report

Please see appendix 3: Wymondham & Edmondthorpe Journal Report

Please see appendix 4: Wymondham Players Report

WYMONDHAM TRAFFIC GROUP

The Wymondham Traffic Group was initially set up as an informal group of five people acting in response to parishioners' concerns about road safety due to the excessive speed and size of vehicles travelling through the village of Wymondham on a regular basis. After consultation with members of the parish and the Parish Council it was decided that it would work most effectively as a splinter group working independently and is now a fully constituted body who can report findings and concerns to the Parish Council and also directly to Highways and the Borough Council. They have achieved success through working closely with Breedon Quarry, which has seen a reduction in HGV

traffic travelling through the village of Wymondham from 470 HGV vehicles per 12 hour period in 2014 to just 38 in 2017. The planning application to extend the quarry had been retracted but new plans are being submitted which the group will continue to monitor and report on. Information provided by Highways through the use of covert cameras has shown that 7 out of 10 vehicles travelling through the village are doing so at speeds in excess of 49 mph, and the group are awaiting a response from Highways on suitable methods available to reduce speed. The group have a petition outlining concerns about weight restrictions, speed and reduction of traffic numbers with over 200 signatures already and are preparing to canvas door-to-door for further parishioner opinion. The Parish Council were thanked for their advice and continued support, and it is hoped that by working together, these issues can be resolved to the satisfaction of all those concerned.

Sean Kerr

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP

The plan has gone through two village consultations and statutory consultation by Melton Borough Council. Some minor issues were raised and amendments implemented and it has now been submitted for independent inspection. MBC will report any adjustment recommendations back to the Neighbourhood Plan Group. When this is completed, the last stage will be for Melton Borough Council to conduct a final referendum to the village and if the majority vote for its approval, it will be accepted, which will provide the parish with a legally binding and strong planning measure. The Melton Borough Council Committee meet every three months and provided the plan passes the independent inspection within the next six weeks it is hoped that it will go to Committee in June, but it is most likely to be September.

Rob Fionda

5. To consider any matters parishioners wish to raise

- In response to the report given by the Wymondham Traffic Group, the Chairman advised that he was in receipt of a notification from Highways this evening which seems to indicate that they have taken up the traffic concern initiative. The report also shows that as there has been a much higher than average accident rate on the B676, a speed restriction of 50 mph is proposed from Autumn 2017, which raises concerns over a possible increase in speeding traffic wishing to avoid this stretch by cutting through Wymondham. A meeting between Highways and the Parish Council will be set up in the near future to identify and discuss the full range of measures that need to be taken to ensure road safety.
- Concern was raised over the maintenance of the village greens. The Chairman agreed to raise the matter with the Parish Council to request that Highways return to the village and re-seed the greens properly should the grass not grow. Gill Musson volunteered to tidy up the troughs. The Chairman confirmed that the land referred to as the village green is owned by Highways due to an administrative error over registration of village greens back in the 1950s. He further explained that in order for a piece of land to qualify for village green status it must be 'used by the community as a right for 20 years', and that returning to that status would mean the parish would have to fully maintain the area, which may also bring with it other responsibilities. It was felt by those present that it would be better for the status to remain as is. Highways currently mow the greens on a 6- weekly basis due to

funding cuts but members of the parish have followed the example set by the Chairman and continued to maintain it independently on a more regular and voluntary basis, for which the Chairman expressed his thanks to all those community spirited participants. Sean Kerr suggested that if a secure storage facility in the village could be obtained, equipment owned by WASSP, purchased for community use, could be borrowed to save people using their own personal lawnmowers and gardening equipment. The Chairman agreed to make enquiries and report back in due course.

- Hygiene concerns were raised over the continuing issue of dog mess around the village, from people not clearing up after their dogs at all, collecting it in bags but discarding them on fences or on the floor rather than in a bin, to placing the bags in ordinary refuse bins. The Chairman confirmed that it is Melton Borough Council's recommendation that dog mess collected in a bag can and should be discarded in any bin, not just the specifically designed dog bins. It was suggested that more bins should be placed in the village but the consensus of opinion was that people who choose not to use the bins already provided are unlikely to change their behaviour regardless of how many bins are available. Jenny Weston agreed to put another polite notice in the Journal. It was also suggested that if anyone witnesses this irresponsible behaviour they should report it to the authorities as dog fouling is now an offence.
- Rob Fionda suggested that the Parish Council look to the example of Market Overton for ideas such as opening an amenity shop and organising a community assistance network for parishioners in need of, for example, company, a lift to appointments, shopping etc. These could possibly be part funded through Section 106 agreements yet to be determined as part of the Neighbourhood Plan, in conjunction with the Parish Council and parishioners. The Chairman expressed his personal approval and noted that he is already in the process of investigating the possibility of acquiring the use of Miss Gill's shop as a Parish Council Office and community meeting place, and will discuss these matters further with the Parish Council.
- A question was raised regarding the updating of the Village Directory as WECS are no longer doing it. It was noted that the amount of time it would take to secure and obtain the informed and personal consent of all members of the parish for personal details to be used for publication in accordance with the latest Data Protection Legislation was an issue, alongside the secure storage of that information once obtained. Tina Semmens suggested that a standard consent form could be designed and posted to all parishioners with a latest return by date. The Chairman expressed that he could see no reason why the Parish Council would not support any group wishing to take on the task but confirmed that the Parish Council would not be able to do it directly.

6. To update Local Groups on Parish Council Grants

Please see appendix 5.

The meeting closed at 8:50pm.

Appendix 1

This year there have been many changes that have affected us all, from the large scale to the small. The UK changed Prime Ministers, an advisory plebiscite has pulled the UK out of Europe, losing us preferential access to our largest market, and the integrity of the UK itself is now under threat. Here, over the last year, things have been less dramatic, but change, we have seen. Two new councillors, one for each ward, a new Clerk, for whom we have adopted the NJC pay scales and implemented the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) contract.

Our Clerk is now fully CiICA qualified, and this gives the Parish Council the opportunity to apply for the general power of competence. The general **power of competence** is a new **power** available to local authorities in England to do “anything that individuals generally may do”. It was provided for in the Localism Act 2011 and replaces the well-being **powers** in the Local Government Act 2000. This allows councils specifically to:

- carry out any lawful activity;
- undertake any lawful works;
- operate any lawful business; and
- enter into any lawful transaction.

Whereas, currently, we are restricted to actions for which we have specific statutory powers granted to us, and we need to identify which of those powers are applied to a specific action. This opens up a whole new vista of opportunities to the PC and by extension, the community it represents.

For the PC itself, the year has been dominated by the trials and tribulations of the Melton Borough Local Plan and the knock-on effects that has had to Wymondham and Edmondthorpe’s Neighbourhood Plan.

Whilst Edmondthorpe has been largely spared the excesses of the turmoil in Melton’s Planning regime, its apparent lack of enforceable planning policies (with the notable exception of design) means that Wymondham has felt the full force of their demands for new housing, resulting in demands for an increase in housing stock of about ½ over the next twenty five years, although this is not likely to be the only development permitted.

Despite planning decisions taken that undermined some of the work completed last year, and the Borough’s current lack of useable planning policies, our Neighbourhood Planning Cttee have continued their strenuous efforts and sterling work and have produced a viable plan in a very short time. The plan accommodates everything that was demanded of it by MBC in a way that has been generally well received by the community as a whole. Their efforts should be roundly applauded and I offer my very sincere thanks for a job very well done. Even though we are not yet at the end of the journey, the creation and delivery to the Borough, of the Plan should be considered as a remarkable success so far.

Appendix 1

On other matters, We have lost more local infrastructure, in the shape of the Post Office, replaced with a van 3 ½hrs a week.

We now have a resolution to the matter of parking at the allotments, working with the landowners and local residents, a subject that took far too many years to adequately resolve. It has now been determined who has the right to park where and when.

We also have a new website, a situation forced by a 300% increase in the cost of our previous provision. The new site has also reduced the cost by two thirds over what we were paying last year.

We now have fast broadband over most of the Village, and superfast broadband to select postcodes as well as 4G LTE wireless data accessible across at least the western half of Wymondham.

The Village Green has been thoroughly worked over again with the uprating of the drains and will take at least another year to recover its former glory, but with the increased involvement and efforts of the community in general we have seen that the rest of the village is largely looking very nice, due in no small part to the efforts of the local residents maintaining their own immediate surroundings. Particular mention should go to Meadows Rise, and the centre and West of Main Street. Well done!

In the future we have to look forward to dealing with the increased traffic from the new build as well as the current speeding issues and to ensure that the speed restrictions being planned for the B676 do not negatively impact us.

With this in mind we must engage with Highways directly and investigate the full range of measures that can be effectively brought to bear against the speeders, whilst sensitively observing the impacts to the conservation area. This year's consolidation gives us a firm foundation, moving into the extremely uncertain territory of the next few years.

Thank you.

Appendix 2

Wymondham Village Hall Report to Annual Parish Meeting 15/05/17

Wymondham Village Hall has been consistently well used throughout the last 12 months. Weekly users are: 2 Badminton groups, a Pilates class, U3A Wood Carving group and Circuit Training. Occasional user groups have been: Melton Borough Council, Neighbourhood Planning Committee, St Peter's Church PCC, St Peter's School, WI, Wymondham and Edmondthorpe Parish Council and Wymondham Players. Private Hire has included: 4 Badminton Sessions, 5 Children's Parties, 3 Christenings, 2 Funerals and 2 Fundraising Functions.

The Village Hall Committee run regular fundraising functions. Weekly Coffee Mornings, Fortnightly Music Sessions, Monthly Sunday Sizzlers, Monthly Quiz and Film Screenings every 2 months. We have also had screenings of the Cup Final, Wimbledon Men's Final, Rugby World Cup, Last Night of the Proms, Strictly Come Dancing Final, New Year's Eve 'Hootenanny' and Rugby Six Nations. Other fundraising functions held throughout the year have been The Queen's 90th Birthday, 8 Pub Nights, 2 Live & Local Performances, and the Burns' Supper.

The main maintenance project has been the floor joist repairs, costing approximately £6,000, which the Parish Council kindly gave us a grant towards. We were reluctant to commit ourselves to any other major projects until this work was done, as there was the possibility that once the floorboards were completely removed the condition of the joists could have been worse than expected and cost more than originally quoted. Fortunately, this was not the case. Once the work had been carried out a working party thoroughly cleaned the hall, including removing all the cobwebs from the rafters! The Stage Curtains, which had never been cleaned since being installed approximately 18 years ago, were taken down and cleaned and re-fireproofed at a cost of £1,200.

Geoff Milnes, who is a qualified surveyor, carried out a survey of the whole building for us and prioritised the maintenance which should be carried out within the next 5 years. His main concern was the damp problem along the South and West sides of the hall, which he advised could be improved greatly by replacing the flat roofs and having insulation installed underneath them and the Storeroom behind the stage, being single brick, needed to be lined with damp-proof material. He also suggested that the hall would benefit from a new boiler system.

Two builders have now examined the flat roofs, quoting around £12,000 to replace and insulate. Both said that the roofs have at least another 5 years of life before needing to be replaced and one suggested that the insulation could be carried out by covering the existing ceilings with insulated plasterboard. We have decided to go with this option and are awaiting quotes. We have decided to accept the quote of just under £2,000 to line the walls and ceiling in the Rear Storeroom with insulated plasterboard.

Appendix 2

In April the Boiler Service Engineer stated that the boiler was as efficient as a boiler of its age could be expected to be for a single pipe system. Modern systems are 2 pipe and to comply with regulations all the pipework and radiators would also have to be replaced. We have therefore decided to leave this as it is for the next 2 to 3 years.

We are at present looking into replacing the existing tables, which are well past their sell-by date, with new ones which will stack on a trolley. We would also like to replace the existing chairs, but given the cost of doing so, we will probably only replace the tables for the time being. We have replaced the Blu-Ray player, used for film screenings, which broke down in March.

We will carry out some of the minor repairs as and when we can afford to do so.

Our Annual Meeting will be held on June 12th when a financial statement for the current year will be available. We will send the Parish Council a copy of this following the meeting.

Jenny Weston
Chairman

Appendix 3

Wymondham Edmondthorpe Journal Report to Annual Parish Meeting 15/05/17

The 'Wymondham Edmondthorpe Journal' has just entered its 51st year as an independent village magazine. To mark this we have reproduced the first cover illustration which was drawn by the late artist Rigby Graham.

We have a circulation figure of 200+ copies which are published on the first Sunday of the month. As we are a registered publication, copies are also sent to the National copyright office in Scotland and the British Library.

The annual subscription remains unchanged at £5 and the advertising rates also remain the same. The combination of these covers the cost of printing at present and any postage costs.

The vast majority of the groups and societies in the two villages submit copy on a regular basis, and although we welcome articles on subjects which may be of interest to the community, priority is always given to information regarding events and meetings which are taking place in the current month or near future.

Our band of voluntary distributors do a great job delivering the Journals punctually and we are very grateful to all of them for turning out in all weathers to do so.

Jenny Weston
Editor

Appendix 4

**Wymondham Players
Report to Annual Parish Meeting 15/05/17**

Wymondham Players performed the Pantomime 'Robin Hood' in January, involving 156 performers and 10 Backstage and Door Staff. 3 New Members were involved in this production; one adult, one 14 yr old and one 11yr old. We attracted good audience numbers to all performances and made a healthy profit.

Our Annual Meeting which was to be held in April had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances and will now be held sometime towards the end of June, date as yet not confirmed.

We are optimistic about the future continuance of the Players and hope to attract more new members for next year's production.

Jenny Weston (Admin Secretary)

On behalf of Barry Watkins (Chairman)

Appendix 5

PC Grants

The Parish Council Community Fund grant scheme has this year helped to fund the urgent repairs to the rotten floor in the Village Hall and to provide servicing, tuning and potentially, extra bells for the hand-bell ringers. This is the fourth year of this funds operation and it is open to any and all community groups to apply for help in the creation of schemes that benefit the community.

The funding arrangements for Wymondham Village Hall have changed. Financing the utilities bills has been placed back in the hands of the Village Hall Cttee, where previously it was done by the Parish.

Also the grant used to help run the Village Hall, has now changed and the mechanism altered to allow other groups that provide similar functions to apply for a proportion of this original amount of £1500. The Village Hall cttee should be congratulated on their efforts to increase revenue whilst making incremental, but material, improvements to the building's structure and facilities in an environment where we are seeing diminishing community participation and involvement. Hopefully we can begin to see this unfortunate demographic trend reversed.

Thank you.