

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the electors of Stoke Fleming Parish
held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 15th April 2015 at 7pm

Present Parish Councillors: Katie Franks(Chairman), Mary Newman (Vice Chairman), Struan Coupar, Martin Judd, Nick Wood, David Harris, Paul Bond, Charles Wreford-Brown
County Councillor Julian Brazil, District Councillor Richard Foss, District Councillor Michael Hicks
Parish Clerk: Marion Foster
Gail Dorrington, Carol Coupar, Nigel Duckworth, Nick Teague, J Hall, Jarl Hall, Mary Heywood, Hugh Heywood, Pascale Hadley, John Belli, Barbara Roope, Julie Hunkin, Peter Hunkin, Jill Griffiths, Gill Jordon, S J Dodsworth, M Dodsworth, Jeff Phillips, Barbara Phillips, Jenny Farmer, Juliet Lambert, Anne Bailey, Peter Bailey, Martin Nutt, Tony Henderson, Nicko Franks, Mike Simons, Paul Smith, Chris Hitch, Jo Hitch, T F Larson

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 121st Annual Parish Meeting.

1. Apologies

Hilary Atkinson, Bill Atkinson, Barbara Goddard, John Goddard, Jacky Neild, Sue Tweed, Joan Mason, Trevor Mason

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2014, were circulated. Cllr Wood proposed, Cllr Judd seconded and all agreed that the minutes be accepted. They were then signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report – Katie Franks

We are delighted to welcome you all here tonight and thank you for attending this evening's Annual Parish Meeting. There is sometimes confusion about this meeting – it is a Parish Meeting convened by the Parish Council but it is not a Parish Council Meeting. Rob Clements, Operations Manager for the Dartmouth RNLI will be here as our guest speaker after the Interval to give us an account of their activities this past year.

You will have had a chance to view how the Neighbourhood Plan is moving along and I'm sure with the Choices for Change Survey have had the opportunity to state your views. Any further questions may be asked during the Interval and after Rob Clements' presentation. The Neighbourhood Plan can only move on with your input of opinions and help. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Coupar and the Steering Group for all their research and diligence in formulating your opinions for the Neighbourhood Development Plan. I'd also like to thank Cllr Coupar for masterminding the new website which is now up and running. We had good service from Bob Eaglesfield for our earlier website and would like to pass on our thanks for his contribution.

With all the financial cuts from Central and local Government, the Parish has to take on more of the jobs in maintaining the Village and surrounding areas. There has been a very successful launch of a Village Action Group - Mary's Maintenance Mob - thank you to those who have participated. We were granted £2000 from the Town and Parish Fund to be shared with Strete Parish for weeding. There will be more wild flowers blooming in front of the Village Hall. We are awaiting grass cutting from DCC. We have a new sporting arena - the Petanque Pitch. Much activity goes on behind the scenes which the Parish Councillors work hard at maintaining so you have a strong team working for the good of the Parish. Everyone is welcome at Parish Council Meetings and please let us know if you have a problem regarding Parish Matters.

We are fortunate in having Devon County Councillor Julian Brazil and District Councillor Richard Foss guiding us and working on our behalf which we appreciate hugely. Owing to ward changes we shall be losing Cllr Foss so thank you Richard for all your work and good luck for the future. Please enjoy this evening and thank you all for contributing and being here.

5. Financial Statement

The Clerk presented a Summary Accounts Statement of Expenditure and Income for 2014/15, copies of which were distributed, confirming a surplus income over expenditure of £3,470.54. A copy is attached to the minutes.

6. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Struan Coupar thanked those who had returned their Choices for Change Questionnaires, which had been circulated with the Parish Magazine to all households within the parish, the percentage of replies received could be in the region of 40%. The questionnaire, focusing on local needs, required householders to either support or oppose options, and these responses would now be gathered together to form the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The draft Plan would be put to the Parish Council and if approved forwarded to SHDC, and then in turn to an External Examiner.

7. County Councillor's Report

Cllr Julian Brazil confirmed that it had been a difficult year, with no good news, and massive cuts to services, DCC were struggling to cope with various problems. The bus service No 93 had been cut, certainly from Sundays and Bank Holidays, the roads were in a poor state of repair with no funds to make improvements, and he believed the more rural roads will suffer the most. On the positive side, the Childrens Centre in Dartmouth had stayed open, and the grit bins would be refilled this year. His Locality Fund of £10,000 could be allocated to parishes within his area, and he encouraged suggestions of good schemes that might make use of this funding. Cllr Brazil finished by thanking Councillors for their support and congratulating them on their huge efforts, especially with the Neighbourhood Plan, but also for the extra services and work being put upon them.

8. District Councillor's Report

Cllr Foss confirmed that he had covered this area for four years, but due to a change in the Wards he will lose Stoke Fleming. Massive re-organisation had taken place at SHDC, there were problems in Planning at the moment, but within 6-12 months times service should be better. There would be one Officer working within the local area, who will deal with everything, rather than dealing with different departments. He also praised Stoke Fleming Parish Council for their work, and especially Cllr Coupar for the amazing amount of work he had carried out on the Neighbourhood Plan. Part of his Dist Cllr Locality Fund had assisted with the N. Plan, Website and the new Drinking Fountain in the Playing Field.

Cllr Foss was hoping to access further funding for the Slapton Ley road, together with funding the new footpath from Strete Gate to Strete and remove the dangers for pedestrians walking up the main road. The West Dart Development, within the Stoke Fleming Parish, was still on-going, with affordable housing being the big issue. He also reiterated his thanks to the Councillors for their support.

9. Friends of St Peter's Church Report – Anne Bailey

Friends of St Peter's is a secular organisation dedicated to raising funds towards maintenance of the fabric of St Peter's Church, in order to help keep this 13th century building in a good state of repair as an important feature of the Village. As you'll appreciate, a building of this age requires continual maintenance if it's to remain in a usable condition. Friends was founded 5 years ago. The original concept was to recruit members of the community to pay a small regular subscription towards the funds. We've currently got 61 members who pay what they feel able to afford; a typical contribution is between 50p and £1 per week.

As well our regular subscribing membership we've had several donations from individuals and other local organisations, including the Parish Council and Loam Rangers in 2013, and the Scarecrow Trail and the

Christmas Fayre last year. Last night Loam Rangers voted us another generous contribution and we understand that SODS will be donating some of the proceeds from their event this week. We are very grateful for all this generosity.

We've also staged several fundraising events of our own. Since this time last year the BRNC Volunteer Band has given a concert for us in the Village Hall and in the autumn the group "Slip the Mooring" gave a very moving performance to commemorate the start of World War I. We split the donations from that event between Friends and the local branch of the Royal British Legion.

Next week the Venus Company are generously sponsoring a 3-course dinner and cabaret evening in the Café at Blackpool Sands. I'm glad to say this is fully booked. Then the Kingsmen (the barbershop singers from Kingsbridge) are going to give a concert in the church in September. We aim to make our events as varied as possible, to appeal to a wide section of the community and their friends.

Our principal target over the last 2 years has been to raise money for the complete overhaul and renovation of the Victorian church clock, including re-gilding the face and converting to electric winding. At the moment it is wound manually twice a week, which involves climbing 50 stone steps in the tower and spending 10 minutes winding 3 heavy weights, so electrifying this process will be much welcomed by the 4 volunteers who do that. I'm pleased to say that we're now well in sight of that £15,000 target.

The overhaul of the clock is an integral part of a much wider project to renovate the tower and the bells, where some of the girders are severely corroded. Because of the layout in the tower, the work on the clock can't be done in isolation, and there's still an amount of fundraising to be done before we can place orders for the total project. Part of this is an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant, which we're currently waiting for.

Just because we've almost reached our target for the clock, that doesn't mean we can rest on our laurels – there's plenty more to do, so we'll ask the members at the AGM next week to consider what other church maintenance tasks they'd like to support as our next major target. Two things on the list are replacing the weather vane and renovating the window frames in the church. If you've got any other ideas we'd be very glad to see you at the AGM in the Green Dragon next Tuesday evening.

The Friends of St Peter's thank everyone involved for their generous contributions so far, and if you know of anyone who would be interested in becoming a subscribing member, please do get in touch.

10. Petanque Report – Martin Nutt

Martin Nutt reported on a fantastic year for the Petanque Club. He thanked the Parish Council for their support during the building of the new Terrain, and confirmed they currently had thirty members, but hoped to increase this to forty five, and were busy promoting the Club. Everybody is welcome to come along and have a try at Petanque, club sessions ran from 10.30 am on a Wednesday and Sunday morning, all necessary equipment was available, and he would encourage anybody to come along and play.

Friendly events organised included a visit from a group of "2 CV Owners" on 26th April, and the Dartmouth Twinning Association on the 23rd May 2015.

11. Wednesday Ladies Club – (read by Clerk)

Wednesday Ladies is now in its fifth year and we shall be celebrating our birthday at the end of 2015.

We meet on the second Wednesday of the month in the Ron Harris Room. Nearly every month we have a speaker on a variety of subjects and once a month members take it in turn to host a coffee morning in their home, which gives time to catch up with each others news and views!

We also organize outings for members and friends to places of interest. This year we are going to Ladies Night at Exeter Racecourse and cruising the Tiverton Canal on a horse drawn barge.

The club is organized by Jill Fell and Barbara Goddard with other members organizing the coffee mornings and the tea rota and any other jobs that occur during the year. For further information contact Jill on 771137 or Barbara on 770794.

12. Stoke Fleming Horticulture & Sport Show Report – Gill Jordan, Chairman

This year Show Day is on Monday, 31st August and is the culmination of a year's preparation. After a Show, we have a "wash-up" meeting, when we look at the successes and the faults and where we might make changes. Then the booking of the Entertainment and the Marquees has to be completed to ensure we can arrange our programme as we wish. As far as the Entertainment is concerned we try to provide something for everyone. In February the Schedule Committee meet to look at all the classes to see what needs to be added, changed or left alone in the schedule.

We are a committee of 12 but obviously depend on many people for their help on the Sunday and the Monday. Without you all there would be no show. May I take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support no matter how small.

Fundraising takes place throughout the year starting with a Coffee Morning and Mini-market in October, Quiz Night in February and a Plant Sale and Coffee morning in May. This year this is being held on the 2nd May at 10am. We have been promised two sums of money in order to purchase two marquees which will be a great advantage to us especially if the weather is going to do what it did last year and two years previously. More of this news will be published in the magazine when we have more details.

I would like to give you the news that from next August, Shirley Ruddlesden is taking on the position of Show Secretary from Joan Mason and they will be working in tandem until Show Day. Joan will continue in the position as Minute Secretary. Many thanks to Joan for the stalwart job she has done since taking over from Evelyn Baigrie.

Please keep an eye on the magazine for future information and useful contact numbers. I would like to thank the Magazine "staff" for giving us the chance to advertise our activities and keep the link that we have forged with the Village over the years. Thank you for listening.

13. Stoke Fleming Library Report – (read by Clerk)

Plans are being unveiled to set up an independent organisation to run Devon Libraries. The new community owned mutual would be commissioned by the County Council to run the service on its behalf. Similar models are already running elsewhere in the country. In response to overwhelming support from communities prepared to work more closely with their local libraries, the Council is now looking to set up an independent community led organisation to continue to deliver an affordable sustainable and innovative library service keeping the community at its heart. It will also mean greater flexibility and give the service the freedom to secure additional funding and income as well as offering communities the opportunity for a far greater involvement in how their libraries are run. A mutual service with charitable status could be eligible for up to 80% relief on its business rates and could also apply for grants etc not available to local authorities. The Friends of Stoke Fleming Library are waiting to see how this will apply to our library, and thank all those who have volunteered so far.

14. Loam Rangers Report – Mike Simons, Hon Treasurer

The Loam Rangers recycles compostable garden material delivered to its site on School Road by scheme members. The site is open every Sunday morning from 10.30am till 12.00 noon for the reception of material. It is manned by a team of volunteers. The material provided is periodically shredded for us by a team from SHDC and stored in bays where it composts down. It is then passed through a riddler and bagged up by our volunteers. It can then be collected by members for use on their gardens.

The scheme has approximately 90 active members representing approximately 15% of the households in the Village. 10 new members joined during the year.

During the year the Loam Rangers donated £319.00 to the Parish Council for seeds. Larger donations could not be made during the year for reasons of prudence. We rebuilt the storage bays and purchased a new shed for a total cost of £3326.00.

The amount of compost produced this year was 27 tonnes. This is the amount that members took away and was well down on the previous year when 44 tonnes was collected by our members. The reason for the decrease being the hiatus caused by the collapse of the storage bays and their rebuilding. The amount that

our members delivered to the site was approximately 50 tonnes and this was stored in the new bays after shredding by the team from SHDC. It could not be utilised during the year having not composted down sufficiently.

We are most grateful to farmer Dave Harris for periodically turning the compost in the bays and shifting it to the riddling bay when required. We also thank Mr John Lewis for auditing the accounts and Elliott Construction for rebuilding the bays and providing and installing a new gatepost free of charge.

Also we thank our team of loyal volunteers who give up their time on Sunday mornings in all weathers when they might well have better things to do.

Following their AGM a donation of £500.00 had been awarded to the Parish Council, ring-fenced for seed/tree planting and various horticultural work to improve the parish for residents and visitors.

15. Youth Club Report

No report

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.50pm thanking everyone for attending, inviting them to take refreshments and then continue the evening with a talk from Mr Rob Clements of the RNLI, who would be happy to answer questions following his presentation.

The evening closed at 9pm.