

Boldre Parish Council - Annual Assembly held on 23 March 2015

Minutes of the Parish Council Annual Assembly held at 7.00pm in
Boldre War Memorial Hall

Council Members present:

Mr Ian Wild (Chairman)	Mrs Alison Bolton	Mr Paul Tanner
Mr Richard Channell (Vice Chairman)	Mrs Angela Grainger	Mr Colin Wise
Mr Ken Thornber (County Cllr)	Mr Oliver Moore	Mr Alan Wooldridge
Mr Peter Lock (Clerk and RFO)	Mr James Puttick	

There were 18 members of the public in attendance

1. Jane Coe

Cllr Wild explained to the meeting that Jane was leaving her post as Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer after some 5 years work. He thanked Jane for her time with the Council and made a presentation to her. Jane, in reply thanked Cllr Wild and all the Boldre Parish Council members for their support and help over the past five years. She also made special mention to thank the two grounds men who had worked with her - Mr Adrian Drodge and Mr David Jenkins.

2. Minutes of the Annual Assembly 2014

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2014 were agreed as a true record, and signed by Cllr Wild

3. Chairman's Report - An address by Cllr Ian Wild

The civil Parish of Boldre has an approximate area of ten square miles and consists of varied landscapes; open forest, some well populated areas such as Sandy Down, Pilley, Undershore at Walhampton, and Norley Wood. There are agricultural landscapes which lie mainly, but not exclusively around the old estates of Walhampton, Newtown and Pylewell There is also the Burrard monument and the Walhampton Golf Course. The ancient church of St. John can be found in Boldre while South Baddesley has the 'newer' church of St. Mary. The Lymington (or Boldre) river runs through the parish and forms the western boundary in its lower reaches, while the Solent forms its southern boundary. There are around 2000 registered electors and 10 elected parish councillors. The council has three committees; Finance, Amenities and Planning & Highways.

Finance

Like most organisations the parish council needs money to conduct its' business on behalf of the parish. It gets this from the parish precept via NFDC which collects it.

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The Boldre precept for 2014/15 has not changed for the last five years and has remained at just under £20,000. So the precept for a Band 'D' property has been just under £18.50 a year.

The money received by the Parish Council was spent on the salary for the Parish Clerk, the remuneration for the grounds men, as well as grants to the Boldre and South Baddesley PCC's for the upkeep of the churchyards, but not the churches themselves. Other grants were given to the Boldre Outings Club and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

There were other expenses, but I will come to those in a minute.

Besides payments the council also received some modest income. By the end of the financial year it will have received a refund of VAT paid, probably in the region of £1,000. Further income has been derived from the hire of the football pitch.

The council also received a grant from Hants County Councillor, Ken Thornber, to cover the cost of the defibrillator which cost £847. This has been bought and was demonstrated here on February 20th. It is now sited in the foyer next to the doorway. Hopefully, its use will not be necessary, but it is there just in case.

Amenities

Maintenance of parish assets also required expenditure. This committee looks after all the outside assets of the council. Grass cutting at the recreation ground, Portmore Common, Perkins Piece; maintenance of the pavilion and the seats around the parish; making sure that the parish notice boards were in good order, as well gates and fences under the care of the Parish Council. The play equipment was regularly inspected and maintained, while the football pitch was marked out when it was needed. All these things were done over the last year. As you can imagine all this cost money.

One of the more major things being dealt with by Amenities at the moment is the proposed car park for the recreation ground. The council has long felt that a designated car park for 18 or 20 cars is needed. A public meeting was held in May last year when councillors put forward suggested locations for such a car park. Consultation were also made with the National Park and it was that authority that indicated a preference for the proposed site next to Burnt House Lane. A planning application has now been lodged and a decision is expected shortly.

Planning and Highways Committee

Planning

So far for the year 2014/15, it has received, visited and considered 101 Planning Applications ranging from the demolition and rebuilding of properties to work needed on trees. Most of these applications were straightforward, but there were still some where the National Park was not in agreement with this parish council's views. In September 2013 the National Park adopted the Boldre Parish Design

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Statement, which is to be taken into account whenever planning applications for this parish are considered. The Planning Committee felt that there were applications when the Design statement was ignored by the National Park Planning Committee, which, as you might well imagine, has led to a great deal of frustration. However, the committee felt that it won a small victory very recently concerning roofing materials for a new property.

Highways

Road surfaces, particularly on minor roads of which there are many in the parish, have continued to need attention. Potholes are regularly reported and eventually repaired. But they do need to be reported. This can be done either by the Parish council or direct to Hampshire Highways via its web site. Some roads are waiting to be resurfaced under Operation Resilience but the volume of work needed on the county's road due to water damage from rain and flooding during the winter of 2013/14 would seem to be the delaying factor.

Talking of flooding, we have been slowly mapping drains and ditches within the parish and have encouraged landowners to keep their ditches and hedges in good condition. Councillors are pleased to see that many landowners have done this, but many more still need to do this by maintaining ditches so that water can flow away as required so that roads are less likely to be flooded and surfaces will not be so easily damaged. Recently councillors have had site meetings with Hants. Highways to try to alleviate flooding in Portmore and Pilley and we are hopeful that these meetings will have been successful. It is fortunate that the weather has not been so inclement this winter, but we must still keep getting the message across to parishioners. With this in mind I must tell you that some time ago we had discussions with the Barker Mills Estate about clearing ditches in Shallows Lane, this to be carried out in conjunction with drainage work by HCC. This was done but the lower portion was not completed. So on a Saturday morning in July 2014 Cllrs Richard Channell, Brian Goodall and Paul Tanner (the younger councillors!) together with Adrian Drodge our grounds man spent time clearing and cleaning the lower part of Shallows Lane. As the result of this work it was deemed that the use of a digger was no longer necessary. This surely shows that councillors not only talk about what needs to be done; they get out and do it!

You will have noticed that line marking has recently been done from Rope hill to Bull Hill. It is a start but more still needs to be done.

One problem that Boldre Parish council was involved in together with HCC was access to the shore at Tanners Lane. There was a meeting about this organised by the Parish Council, but no real resolution was achieved. However, the issue now seems to be less prominent.

Parish Council Meetings

Parish Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, August being the exception. These meetings are open to the public; notices and agenda about the meetings are posted on the parish notice boards. Eventually they will be

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posted on a re-vamped BPC website. Councillor Oliver Moore is researching and advising the council on the best way forward to achieve this. So there will be more options to obtain council information.

As I have shown Boldre councillors don't just meet once a month and do nothing else. They 'get out there' and do things, meetings and physical work, all in aid of the community!

During the year people came to council meetings to make representations; mostly about planning. In fact anyone may come to meetings to make a 3 minute representation about anything within the parish provided that notice is given to the clerk a few days before.

Conclusion

I have tried to give you an overall picture of what Boldre Parish council has been doing for its parishioners during the last year. If you believe that I have missed anything out which is important, please let me know later in 'question time'.

To round off this part of the evening I would first of all like to thank Hampshire councillor, Ken Thornber. Ken has attended many of our meetings and has kept us up to date with events and listened to our complaints; we value his input. Next I would like to thank Cllr Colin Wise. He is our NFDC cllr as well as being a Boldre Parish councillor. He has kept a strict eye on our finances.

Next I would like to thank the hard working Boldre Parish Councillors, Richard Channell our vice-chairman, Alison Bolton, Brian Goodall, Angela Grainger, Oliver Moore, James Puttick, Paul Tanner and Alan Wooldridge.

Thanks are also due to our diligent grounds men. Adrian Drodge and David Jenkins.

All those I have just named have been, and are, assets to the Parish of Boldre; they are second to none and I count myself fortunate to have worked with such a team.

4. Don MacKenzie - The Lymington Society

Cllr Wild then introduced Don Mackenzie of the Lymington Society.

Mr MacKenzie gave the meeting an informed and very interesting talk about Sir Harry Burrard Neale entitled *Awakening Memories of a Forgotten New Forest Naval Hero*. A project is well underway to restore the Burrard Memorial on the Walhampton site which overlooks Lymington on the Solent Way, jointly sponsored by The Hampshire Garden Trust, Lymington & Pennington Town Council, and The Lymington Society.

Sir Harry was a member of a long standing Walhampton family and was at times Lymington Mayor, the local Member of Parliament, and at some time Groom of the Bed Chamber! Sir Harry had a distinguished naval career eventually becoming a Lord of the Admiralty and C-in-C of the Mediterranean Fleet. He was famed for quelling mutinies at Spithead (in the Solent) and the Nore (a Thames Estuary blockade). He was presented with the Nore Drum for his services which now resides in the Maritime Museum in London.

The 'Burrard Neale 250' project has several elements:

- Raising awareness
- Restoring the Walhampton site and monument to their former glory
- Maintaining the attraction of the Walhampton site
- Celebrating Sir Harry's 250th Anniversary

The Key aims are to awaken memories of a forgotten naval hero; to restore the monument; to facilitate Solent Way improvements; to raise the necessary funds.

Much of the site has been cleared of dense vegetation, new trees planted, a pond prepared, and the pathway drained and restored to a dry condition. Fundraising is underway toward restoration of the monument which has suffered water penetration, staining, whilst the plaques are largely unreadable. Some £25,000 has been raised so far and a Heritage Lottery bid to assist the restoration is being made. A local schools programme to increase awareness is ongoing which concurs with the history curriculum.

Mr MacKenzie illustrated talk with several slides, demonstrating the progress to date. Several questions followed resulting in lively discussion of the initiative:

- Initial discussion centred on the tridents that were part of the original railings around the monument - one of the pair has been found
- The next questioner asked if the monument would be clearly visible from Lymington, but this may not be possible as the oak trees near the site may only be subjected to crown reduction as Preservation Orders are in force
- Litter and dog waste bins were thought very desirable by some present
- A request for improvement and rolling of the new footpath was mentioned and Cllr Thornber advised that he would investigate an alternative surface material.
- Mention was made of future maintenance of the restored monument and its surrounds. Mowers and strimmers will be used

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- Floodlighting may be used on occasions, and new signposting is being considered

Overall, the meeting was pleased with the project, and with the work completed to date.

Related discussion centred on the walk from Pilley to the monument. A potential gate from a field near the Walhampton school was mentioned. Pavement and roadside repairs along the route were discussed. Cllr Thornber agreed to investigate the potential requirements, with particular regard to Health and Safety issues.

5. Further Questions

A question was raised concerning access to the proposed car park for the Boldre Playing Field

Cllr Channell replied that of the options proposed, only one was supported by the New Forest National Park Authority - that was the plan to access the new car park from Burnt House Lane. Cllr Wild stressed that the NPA had vetoed the option of accessing further parking via the Village Hall site.

The need for no-parking (double yellow lines) in Tanners Lane was raised

General agreement that these would be unsightly, but were a necessary evil.

The meeting closed at 8:20 pm

Peter Lock

Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer to Boldre Parish Council