**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 28th APRIL 2016 AT 7.30PM**

**GEORGE V MEMORIAL HALL, HOLCOMBE ROGUS**

**Present:** Sheila Muir, Nikki Orchard, John Butler, Rupert Snook, Pete Davies,

Adam Pilgrim, Andy Cooling, Michael Haskins and Leslie Findlay (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Stephen Hasell and Dave Authers

Sheila Muir welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting. A statement was read out from the Chairman of the Council as he was unable to attend.

**Chairman’s Report**

The parish council have worked hard for the community discussing planning and finance at committee level and David and Andrew have been on standby with snow shovels just in case. All the footpaths have been covered by Pete and Rupert with new gates going in where needed.

As a parish council we have one meeting a month held in the village hall which normally lasts an hour with planning meetings if needed held in between. We also have finance meetings which tend to happen once or twice a year. Our finance situation at the moment is very strong due to monies coming in from the solar farm. We need some ideas as to what to spend it on.

I would also like to thank our parish clerk Leslie who has been up to speed with every aspect of the job and has become an expert on web sites.

Thank you on behalf of all of us.

**Stephen Hasell**

**Parish Council Reports**

**Planning Report by John Butler, Chair of Planning Committee**

1. **Planning Applications considered in 2015-16**

The Council and its planning committee considered some 20 applications for planning permission, listed building consent and notifications to carry out tree works in the Conservation Area during the year. In the main, these were small scale domestic residential works and works to trees. The decisions taken by Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) were largely consistent with views of the Council, as statutory consultee.

The most significant planning applications considered by the Council in 2015-16 were as follows;

* 15/01108/MFUL-Proposed solar farm on land at Wiseburrow Farm to which the Council objected. This was a revised application. Planning permission was refused by MDDC but this is currently subject to an Appeal by the applicants.
* 15/00983/FULL – Erection of a 250 KW wind turbine with maximum blade tip height of 45m, hub height of 30 m and associated infrastructure including turbine foundation, cabling and transformer/substation cabinets at Knowle Chicken Farm. The Council objected to this planning application. The applicants did not proceed with the application after the issue of a government ministerial statement to the effect that turbines should not be permitted unless they are in an area identified by the local planning authority Council as suitable for a wind turbine and have the support of the local community.
1. **Redhill Solar Farm**

Planning Permission for this development was granted by Mid Devon District Council as reported in the Planning Report for 2014-15. This development has now been carried out. The developers of the solar farm have now entered into a Community Deed under which payments are to be made to the Council to provide some funding for projects approved by the Council.

1. **Monitoring development granted planning permission**

The Ecological Land Co-operative (ELC) have issued their Annual Monitoring Report relating to the development at Greenham Reach. ELC is a social enterprise established to provide affordable sites for ecological land-based livelihoods-low impact living. The Council has been pleased with progress that has been made so far.

The Council is aware of concerns about the presence of caravans on site and the adverse visual impact that this creates. This is recognised by the latest ELC Monitoring Report and has been drawn to the attention of MDDC.

1. **Planning Policy**

**Revised Local Development Scheme**- there is an updated timescale for the review of the MDDC Core Strategy and the Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan. It is currently proposed that the revised plan will submitted for approval in June 2016 with hearings in September 2016 and target date for adoption in January 2017.

**The Landscape Implications of solar PV Proposals** for a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) have been the subject of a consultation. This proposed SPD incorporates a Landscape Sensitivity Analysis already carried out by MDDC which categorises the different types of landscapes in Mid-Devon.

**Devon Minerals Plan**- the Council supported the submissions made by Burlescombe and Uffculme Parish Councils in relation to inadequate road infrastructure and the adverse impact on residents and the local community.

The Council’s submission stated that the allocation of the Penslade site in the Draft Minerals Plan as suitable for mineral extraction was premature. The development of the site did in the opinion of the Council raise fundamental issues (as identified by Burlescombe and Uffculme Parish Councils) that should be addressed before the site can be considered suitable for development.

1. **Planning Briefing- change of use**

**Use classes of land and buildings**

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as “Use Classes”. The categories give an indication of the types of use which may fall within each use class. There are four main categories:

• Class A covers shops and other retail premises such as restaurants and bank branches;

• Class B covers offices, workshops, factories and warehouses;

• Class C covers residential uses; and

• Class D covers non-residential institutions and assembly and leisure uses.

These categories are then further split up into a number of subclasses. Not all uses are put into a use class; these are called “sui generis”. A further regulation, the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 grants what are called “permitted development rights”. Permitted development rights are basically a right to develop without the need to apply for planning permission (see below). Under the 2015 Order planning permission is not needed for changes in use of buildings within each subclass and for certain changes of use between some of the classes.

In some circumstances local planning authorities can suspend permitted development rights in their area, under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

The former Government made several changes over the course of the last Parliament. Betting and payday loan shops were moved into the “sui generis” category of use classes, meaning that a planning application is now necessary before a building can be converted into those uses. From April 2015 change of use permitted development rights which had allowed a public house to be demolished or change its use were removed where the public house was listed as an asset of community value.

Some permitted development rights for change of use have attracted controversy, including allowing offices to change to residential use. This was originally a temporary permitted development right that was due to expire on 30 May 2016, but new regulations will put this right on a permanent footing from 6 April 2016.

Regulations will also allow for launderettes to change use to housing from 6 April 2016 and for light industrial buildings to change use to housing from 1 October 2017.

There are calls to protect pubs further from change of use permitted development rights and to curb the change of use of shops to charity shops.

1. **Planning Briefing- Permitted Development Rights**

Permitted development rights are basically rights to make certain changes to a building without the need to apply for planning permission. These derive from a general planning permission granted by Parliament, rather than from permission granted by the local planning authority.

As mentioned above local planning authorities can, in certain circumstances suspend permitted development rights in their area, under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

In May 2013 changes came into force to allow permitted development for home extensions; to increase the size limits for the depth of single-storey domestic extensions from 4m to 8m (for detached houses) and from 3m to 6m (for all other houses), in non-protected areas, for a period of three years. A neighbour consultation scheme on new extensions was introduced by the then Government in response to concerns about the original proposals. This temporary permitted development has now been extended until May 2019.

From 15 April 2015 the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 consolidated and revoked the previous 1995 legislation relating to permitted development in England. It also introduced a number of new permitted development rights, including the provision of click-and-collect services by shops and to enable greater use of non-domestic properties to provide renewable energy.

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2016 (SI 332) came into force on 6 April 2016. It introduces new permitted development rights in connection with petroleum exploration monitoring and appraisal. It also introduces a number of change of use permitted development rights –see above.

In a March 2016 written statement the Government confirmed it will increase some permitted development rights to allow for taller mobile masts.

The Government’s August 2015 rural productivity plan, towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting productivity in rural areas and the subsequent February 2016 Rural planning review: call for evidence asked for views on the planning system in rural areas, with specific interest in how permitted development rights are being used.

1. **Assets of Community Value –Briefing**

Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011 provides for a scheme called ‘assets of community value’. This requires district and unitary councils to maintain a list of ‘community assets’. It has also become known as the ‘community right to bid’.

Community assets can be nominated by parish councils or by groups with a connection with the community. Individuals cannot nominate community assets. If the nomination is accepted, local groups will be given time to come up with a bid for the asset when it is sold.

The right to bid only applies when an asset’s owner decides to dispose of it. There is no compulsion on the owner to sell it. The scheme does not give first refusal to the community group, unlike the equivalent scheme in Scotland. It is not a community right to buy the asset, just to bid. This means that the local community bid may not be the successful one.

Certain types of land, most notably residential property, are exempt from being placed on the register. Owners of property placed on the register may appeal against its listing and can claim compensation if they can demonstrate its value has been reduced. Also, certain types of transfer of land or assets do not count as ‘disposals’ for the purposes of the legislation.

The community right to bid extends to England; the Welsh Government has not yet commenced it with regard to Wales.

**Highways Report**

The Parish roads have been increasingly maintained by the Parish Council rather than the County Council. Andrew Cooling and David Authers have done a sterling job of cleaning drains and gullies with only an occasional visit by our county Lengthsman. This will be backed up by a program of hedge ploughing later in the spring to try and decrease the time the gullies fill back up again. We are aware the funding for rural roads is getting less and this has been shown up by the time it takes to get pot holes mended on the minor roads. This has been very true at Higher Besley and on the road above the canal at Waytown.  In coming years the Parish will have to be involved in this type of repair and we are preparing for this eventuality.
Our snow wardens and gritting team have not been called upon too much this year and hopefully this will continue into next year!

 **Rupert Snook**

**Parish Councillor**

**Parish Footpaths Report**

There are nine designated footpaths within the Parish amounting to some 5.33 miles in length. Whilst most are reasonably maintained and accessible, there is clearly scope for improvement including signage, clearing and incorporation of user friendly gates.

A number of parishioners have made representations to the Parish Council on the issue of footpaths generally but the main emphasis has been that of accessibility, namely the replacement of stiles with gates. The other real main issue has been the re­ establishment of the footpath between Ford Farm and Lowe Besley Farm. These aspects have been investigated by the Parish Council and this has culminated in a meeting with Devon County Council Parish Paths Liaison Officer, Rosalind Davies. Attended by Parish Councillors Peter Davies and Rupert Snook, the baton has now been left with the Parish Council to pursue a Partnership Agreement with The County Council.

The Partnership scheme is an initiative to ensure the public rights of way are legally defined, maintained and publicised. This will hopefully result in an annual grant to undertake works and improvements. Before this can occur, a Parish Paths survey has to be arranged prior to the grant being awarded. This will be arranged very soon and will hopefully involve members of the community who would be keen to walk the routes and provide constructive comments on condition, improvements and proposed maintenance.

 **Peter Davies**

Parish Councillor

**Grand Western Canal Report**

The first mile of the navigable Grand Western Canal Country Park is in the Parish of Holcombe Rogus. It is the tempting start of the beautiful countryside corridor through varied countryside and villages to Tiverton.

Councillor Adam Pilgrim has the Grand Western Canal as one of his Parish Council responsibilities. He attends the Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee meetings on behalf of this Parish Council. While these are only held in March and October, Adam maintains regular contact with the Canal Manager throughout the year.

He also checks Mid Devon District and Devon County Councils’ weekly on-line listings of Planning Applications and Decisions and alerts Parishes to those that may have an impact on the canal.

The canal towpath is maintained to a very high standard in Holcombe Rogus and all the way to Tiverton; one of the best rural towpaths in the United Kingdom.

Following the major canal embankment breach in 2012 improved canal water level monitoring equipment has been installed and this year newly designed “stop planks” for emergency section isolation have been tested and are available for faster and safer deployment.

The Canal Rangers have recently taken delivery of a new general purpose lightweight maintenance boat and a more efficient weed-cutting craft.

These continuing improvements to the Grand Western Canal and the willing communications between the Canal Managements and the Parishes have been key factors in the canal having been awarded its seventh consecutive Green Flag award in 2015!

 **Adam Pilgrim**

**Parish Councillor**

**Clerk/RFO Report**

It has been a challenging year with the new transparency code regulations coming in but it has ensured that the Council has all the necessary documents required. So there are now new policies on freedom of information, reserves and the requirement for a website.

The Council applied for a grant from the Transparency Code Fund and received £1030 to enable a website to be designed by Vision ICT, with a government domain and new email addresses for all Councillors and Clerk.

 The new website is at [www.holcomberogus-pc.gov.uk](http://www.holcomberogus-pc.gov.uk)

The Parish Council received the following funding in this financial year:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | £ |
| Precept | 6136 |
| Council Tax Grant | 254 |
| TAP Fund grant 2014/15 | 443 |
| TAP Fund Grant 2015/16 | 899 |
| Reclaimed VAT | 180 |
| Transparency Code Grant | 1030 |
| DCC Locality Budget  | 500 |
| Lightsource Solar  | 4797 |
| Interest | 5 |

The TAP Fund grant for 2014/15 was for the defibrillator and the 2015/16 grant purchased a bench on the Grand Western Canal. This was a joint purchase with Burlescombe Parish Council.

The DCC locality budget assisted with the drain clearing expenditure in the village.

The largest amount of income (excluding the Precept) has come from the Redhill Solar Farm and this is the first year the Council have received this grant. A new Finance Committee has been established to receive any requests for funding projects within the Parish and take them forward to the Full Council for approval.

The largest expenditure in this financial year has been a grant to the Village Hall Committee of £1,500 and £1000 on parish maintenance (drain clearing throughout the village).

**Leslie Findlay**

**Responsible Financial Officer**

**Annual Report from County Councillor Ray Radford**

Dear Residents.

I have been very proud to be your County Councillor for this last year and look forward to the next year. It is difficult to please all the people all the time, but I try to do my best.

 This current year County has had to take out £27m from their budget. The canal was threatened with huge cuts from MDDC and was diverted by strong representation from local councillors, therefore funding for the canal is the same as it was this last year.

Generally, the cut of £27m will have an effect on Holcombe Rogus Parish somewhere, the commonly affected will be the highways, as always, because of the reduced funding, County will have to continue prioritising where it spends its funds. County has worked up a marking system for their roads, A and B roads will attract a higher funding, because it is claimed that 80% of traffic travel on 20% of the roads, quite understandably why we must keep A & B roads up to scratch.

Because of the cut backs and because Town and Parishes are being asked to do more for themselves, I have always supported that Parish Councils should be able to increase their precept, I feel that Parishes then have to opportunity to raise local money to fund local initiatives/projects. For County to be cut by £34m worth of funding from Central Government, this is one way Parishes can provide services that County has no option but to reduce, while devolving more responsibility to Parishes. This applies to District as well.

From a wider perspective, I serve on four of the main committees that cover the whole of Devon, and those committees are; The Place committee, which covers all infrastructure and environmental issues, Planning committee, Corporate Services committee, Investment and Pension, HOTAC as well as many other sub committees and Liaison Groups, as well as attending 11 Parish Council meetings.

But I like my job and please contact me at any time, I may be able to help over something.

Ray Radford, Your local County Councillor. 01884 820000; ray.radford@devon.gov.uk;

**PARISH REPORTS**

**Holcombe Rogus Line Dancing**

We meet in the Village Hall on Wednesday evenings, our group has been

going well for many years with lots of regular faces and this year we have

had a sudden influx of new faces!! It is lovely to see how popular this

has become. For more information please contact Nikki Orchard.

**Holcombe Rogus Bridge Club**

**The Club meets twice a month on the first and third Thursday evening at members’ homes. We usually have two or three tables. New members including beginners are welcome to join. Please contact Michael Lloyd Davis** lloyddavies505@btinternet.com

**Holcombe Rogus Village Lunch**

This monthly (for eight months of the year anyway!) event continues most successfully.  With the skills of our chef, Jane Neusinger, attracting the lunchers, numbers fluctuate from the lower 20s to the mid-30s depending largely on holiday times and the intervention of grandparental duties!  Our pre-Christmas lunch with the usual festive additions usually attracts the lower 40s.   Jane provides a two-course lunch of constant variety, and the Village Hall is the welcome setting.  The lunchers include many from within the village but happily also former residents now living outside the parish who still enjoy being part of this lunching scene. For any information please contact Helen Dingley helen@theshieling.eclipse.co.uk

 **Holcombe Rogus Short Mat Bowls Club**

The club meets every Monday evening in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm. Currently there are 22 members. The club have two mats and while bowling for about 2 hours, everybody gets a few games as the average attendance is 12 to 14 people. There is a £12 subscription and a weekly fee of £2 which includes tea and biscuits. The club is a friendly and fun loving group avoiding competition and leagues, enjoying one another's company, conversation and a good laugh whilst employing some skills. All bowls are provided. New members are welcome to have a free trial. This is a great way to meet people in the village. For any more information please contact Nick Wilson nickw111@btinternet.com

**Dancercise**

Dancercise meets every Tuesday evening from 7-8 for some exercise and a giggle.  We have been running since the autumn of 2003 when I stepped in to replace Zena who had been taking a stretch class.  As a trained Exercise to Music teacher, I find it much easier to take people through routines or movements with a good tune.  If they're enjoying the music, they don't always realise they are actually working!   I use music from shows such as Hairspray, Chicago and Mama Mia and a very eclectic choice of songs and tunes. We have danced to Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, the Last Night of the Proms and every decade from the 50s to today.  I have ladies in their 20s up to their 60s and people come from outside HR.   The class starts with a warm up of 3 tracks aimed at waking up the body, starting with the neck and shoulders and working down through the torso and legs to the toes.  I stand in front and everyone copies me.  It doesn't matter if you can't dance - as long as something is moving and you're enjoying yourself. We then stretch all the major muscles to a slower piece of music.  Once we've warmed up, we do 3 or 4 routines that we have been practising for several weeks. We do a bit of salsa, sometimes some jive.  We use ribbons some weeks to work the upper body and we have worn scarves with bells to belly dance.  I do the routine with my back to the group and occasionally sneak a look over my shoulder just to keep an eye on what people are up to.  By now we're 40 minutes into the hour and stop for a cup of water.  Some people get hot and bothered, others don't but the body has been taken through a set of exercises to stretch muscles, take joints through their range of movement and get the heart racing.  Then it's time to lie down, and do some abdomen and bottom or tums 'n' bums work - still to music.  After the hard work we spend the last 10 minutes on our backs doing a variety of Pilates inspired stretches for the back, hamstrings, shoulders, necks and so on.

The classes follow the school timetable so at the end of each term, we finish a few minutes early and head to the pub for supper and a glass of wine.  Two or three times a year I organise a minibus trip to Bristol or Plymouth.  Last summer we went to see Jersey Boys and Hairspray at Bristol and in April we are off to Mama Mia.  Although the word dance frightens some people, this a non-competitive class designed to be fun but get you moving and keep you moving.  If you enjoy bopping around the kitchen to the radio, you should come along and have a go.   It costs £5, pay as you go and we wear t-shirts, tracksuit bottoms or leggings and secure, soft shoes-trainers or jazz shoes.   As you get older, you really must use it or you will lose it. Linda Wyeth 673022

**Holcombe Rogus Bell ringers**.

We ring for two 11 am Services each month and other special services like Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Weddings.

Our practice night is usually Wednesday, unfortunately we have not managed that this year gone. We currently have 8 ringers who all live locally.

Last year we had several visiting teams ringing, a team were on tour from Kent.

Tower and the 6 bells are all in good order.

Hugh Palfrey Captain of Holcombe Rogus Ringers.

**Holcombe Rogus WI**

Holcombe Rogus WI currently has 22 members and we meet on the first Thursday evening of each month in the village hall at Holcombe Rogus.

The meeting starts with business followed by a variety of speakers throughout the year. We end our meeting over tea or coffee with delicious cakes and a good catch up. We also arrange a couple of trips out during the year which include our partners and we regularly meet out for meals.

Members have the opportunity to attend either Devon Federation or national WI events which range from locally arranged talks to events like the Hampton Court Flower Show, Pamper Days or horse racing (or even Buckingham Palace if you are lucky!).

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Angela Palfrey on 01823 672700.

**George V Memorial Hall Annual Report**

The George V Memorial Hall AGM was held in July, at which Sheila Muir retired from the chair and Lynn Cross from the Secretary’s post. Our thanks go to them both for their work for the Hall over many years. The Chairman’s post fell to Jane Pilgrim and the Secretary’s to Carol Davis.

The major achievement this year has been the arrival of the defibrillator. Raising the funds for this and the organisation of the installation is to the credit of Nikki Orchard. We now have an event booked so that anyone interested can come and learn how to use it. Diary date 19th May at 7pm in the Hall.

New events have included a children’s Christmas Craft afternoon in November and the very popular 80’s Disco which was a combined effort of the Memorial Hall and Webbers PTFA with profits shared.

We have made small increases to the charges for the Hall and tried to simplify them.

The Hall grounds are showing signs of neglect and we have organised a community tidy-up day on 21st May 10am to 4pm. We are also trying to get the owner of Hollycroft to attend to the Leylandii that form part of the boundary between his property and the Hall, so far with little success!!

Crimes Recorded - 01/05/2015 to 30/04/2016 - KU2D

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Offence** | **Recorded Crime 01/05/2015 to****30/04/2016** | **Recorded Crime 01/05/2014 to****30/04/2015** | **Recorded Crime % Difference** |
| Violence with Injury | 2 | 1 | 100.0% |
| Burglary Non-Dwelling | 1 | 1 | 0.0% |
| Vehicle Offences | 1 | 0 | - |
| Other Theft | 1 | 1 | 0.0% |
| Criminal Damage | 1 | 1 | 0.0% |
| **Total** | **6** | **4** | **50.0%** |

**Non Notifiable Offences 1 3 -66.7%**

Incidents Recorded - 01/05/2015 to 30/04/2016 - KU2D

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Incident Closing Category** | **Incidents - 01/05/2015 to****30/04/2016** | **Incidents - 01/05/2014 to****30/04/2015** | **Incidents % Difference** |
| Anti Social Behaviour | 1 | 3 | -66.7% |
| Crime Not Recorded | 1 | 0 | - |
| Crime Recorded | 3 | 2 | 50.0% |
| Public Safety | 33 | 18 | 83.3% |
| Transport | 0 | 1 | -100.0% |
| **Total** | **38** | **24** | **58.3%** |

**to display**

There were no members of the public attending so no further issues were raised. It is hoped to encourage more people to attend next year.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

Leslie Findlay