

## **Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Pluckley Parish Meeting held on Monday 15 May 2006, 8pm, Pluckley Village Hall**

Present:

Parish Councillors: Janet Gwillim (in the chair), James Ashby, Andrew Buchanan, Alan Davies, Ann Murray, Cllr Andrew Wickham (ABC), Russell Keep, Trevor Oliver

Parish residents: Jean Campbell, Lois McCulloch, Andrew Mole, Ian Mills, Sue Whatman Mike Whatman, Jackie Allen, Ros Rowan (Pond Warden), Sarah Dean, Michael L\*\*\*, Martin Newman, Angela Bates, Jane Carter-Lilley

Other parishes: Stephanie Banham

Kent County Council: Cllr Richard King

Ashford Borough Council: Tony Jarvis, Compliance Officer

Kentish Express: Guy Browne

Clerk to the Council, Mrs Jackie Grebby

1. **Apologies for absence:** these were received from Tony Rowan
2. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 4 April 2005**, having been circulated, Ann Murray proposed that they were taken as read and approved, seconded by Andrew Buchanan and carried unanimously.
3. **Matters arising:** There were no matters arising.
4. **Chairman's Report:** Chairman, Janet Gwillim presented her report of the Parish Council's activities over the past year, in which she commented on the good news that the Environment Agency had rejected the waste management licence application. She thanked the councillors, members of the Brickworks Sub-committee, and other residents for the hard work they had put in over the past two and a half years.  
 The parish council had met 12 times during the year, and the plans committee during those months when planning applications had to be dealt with prior to full council meetings. All meetings are open to the public and time is allocated at the beginning of the meeting for them to speak. The parish council open morning 'surgeries' continued to be held, usually on the fourth Saturday of each month when one or two councillors together with the Clerk to the Council were present. During these sessions, which last from 9:30 to 10:30am, the council Minutes Book and details of current planning applications are always on hand. Other documents may be brought to the meeting if requested in advance.  
 The speed management program is now in place and the parish council continues to fight for further speed reduction on some roads. In February the public were invited to attend an open meeting to discuss plans for junction improvements at The Street with Forge Hill and at The Pinnock with Smarden Road. This resulted in the parish council rejecting both proposals. They will continue to press for improvements to the footway on forge Hill, although it had been resurfaced lower down on Smarden Road.  
 The Hog Fair and Halloween celebrations were a success and funds were raised for the new sports pavilion and the village hall respectively. The Halloween event was held to try and make the occasion more of a family affair and a public meeting was held in September 2005 when there were no objectors to the project, which raised nearly £2,000 for the village hall.  
 The parish council decided to honour a resident whose contribution to the village has been outstanding. The award of Freeman of the Parish confers no material honours, or special privileges, nor does it entitle the person to participate in the proceedings of the council meetings or in any ceremonial events. It is purely and simply for merit. Open to any village inhabitant, except for parish and district councillors, and paid employees of the parish council, they must be nominated by an elector.  
 Finally the chairman thanked the clerk and members of the council for their support during the past year.
5. **Pluckley Brickworks Waste Management Report:** On 24 February 2006 the Environment Agency formally rejection the Waste Management Licence Application at Pluckley Brickworks, Station Road. The EA was not satisfied that the proposed site's operations would not cause serious detriment to the surrounding amenity because they considered that the site would have the

potential to create noise disturbance from vehicle movements to and from the site, from plant operating on the site, and from vehicle movements on the site. It would lead to a reduction in highway and traffic safety; Create dust on the site migrating to residential areas, dust production on site access roads and public highways; Create mud or debris tracking on to highway surfaces; and Create litter to escape the site.

The EA was unable to mitigate the potential adverse effects on the surrounding amenity from traffic (e.g. lorry routing) by licence condition. They stated that 'the site is not well related to the Primary Road Network and the roads serving the site are unsuitable for the licensable activities proposed, being rural in nature and sub-standard in width and alignment. The Agency considers that the serious detriment to the amenities of the locality cannot be overcome or controlled by conditions attached to a Waste Management Licence.'

The applicant has the right to appeal. This should be done within 6 months, but the Secretary of State may allow notice of appeal to be given after the expiry of the time period. If an appeal is lodged, then any information received by Pluckley Parish Council will be passed on to the community.

6. **Pluckley Station Action Group:** Andrew Buchanan reported that the group had been actively involved throughout the year, going to all meetings when possible. They were still pressing for an efficient timetable and had some success.
7. **Wealden Wheels:** Report from Alan Davies. Since Pluckley joined together with Egerton, Charing, and Smarden to form a Community Transport Company, Challock, saw the benefits of the scheme, and asked to join and Leader+ recognised that there was a significant transport need here and agreed to fund a second vehicle equipped with wheelchair access. This arrived in time for the start of our second year of activity.  
During this second year membership passed the 100 mark and when a similar transport scheme elsewhere in Kent was not successful they offered their vehicle. The newly installed High Sheriff of Kent, Amanda Cottrell, who is also Challock's representative on Wealden Wheels, recently launched the third vehicle and the start of the third year of operation at Smarden Parish Hall. Wealden Wheels now have a very flexible fleet of three vehicles of 7, 9, and 15 seats respectively available at very competitive rates to the 128 members, together with an operation run by a combination of paid staff and village volunteers.  
The grant funding will start running down during 2007/8 and they will need an increasing number of volunteers, both for occasional driving and for office support to keep it going. They thanked all the volunteers who've helped get to this stage but contributions, of even half a day a week, to join the current team and help ensure that Wealden Wheels were welcome.
8. **Pluckley Sports Association and the New Sports Pavilion:** Report from Alan Davies: in the eight years since fund raising started for a new sports pavilion for the village on the recreation ground they are in a position to start building it this year. The new pavilion will be a village resource in a central location. It will be available for all village groups, cricket, tennis, football, netball, for the local school and as a meeting place for senior citizens and other village groups. Currently there is not enough funding to provide such final luxuries as a kitchen, but this year's Hog Fair will be the last one dedicated to this project and hopefully it will help to complete the fund raising. A new, temporary access to the site in order to start the construction was refused and it is planned to start work on 24 July
9. **Speed Watch:** report from Ann Murray. Speed Watch was started to educate drivers to keep to the speed limits in the villages. The equipment used is a Speed Indicating Device (SID), which shows the drivers the speed they are doing. The speed is recorded by volunteers, along with the time, number, make, and colour of the vehicle if the speed is over the speed limit. The list of vehicles exceeding the limit is sent to the police. If this vehicle has exceeded the speed limit twice, over the weeks of recording, then a letter is sent by the police to point this out.  
The cost of the equipment is £1,925 (plus vat) and in order to fund this the parish council has contacted Egerton and Hothfield. County councillor, Richard King, has agreed with KCC to fund this operation with a grant of £1,000. Egerton has offered £300, and an official reply is awaited from Hothfield. Meantime, the police have loaned the parish the equipment for three months. There are several volunteers living in the village but anyone who would like to become a speed recorder, just once a week for half an hour, would be most welcome and should contact Ann Murray
10. **Pluckley Tree Warden:** not in attendance

11. **Pluckley Pond Warden:** Report from Ros Rowan. Being a pond warden is a lot of fun and Mrs Rowan has participated in several courses, some lasting two to three days, gaining certificates. The pond warden studies village ponds and is currently surveying for great crested newts. One of the problems she has encountered were goats eating her notes. It is possible to get a grant for a community pond and it was suggested that this could be considered as a future parish project. Owners of ponds should be aware that several species of pond plants can become invasive if allowed to get into natural water courses.
12. **Award of Honorary Freeman of Pluckley.** Chairman Janet Gwillim said that the council was delighted to make the award to Miss Angela Bates, who had received more nominations than anyone else in the parish. It acknowledged the indebtedness of the community to her for the untiring and notable manner she has always been there to help things run smoothly and cheerfully. Miss Bates was presented with an illuminated certificate.
13. **Any other business:**  
**Pluckley Village Hall.** The annual report of the village hall management committee was circulated to the meeting. It stated that the committee met six times during the past year, members of the committee being: Michael Barton, Andrew Buchanan, Alan Davies, Jackie Grebby, Cyril Hoad, Ann Murray, and Judy Pool. At the May parish council meeting Messrs Buchanan and Davies and Miss Murray were again nominated to serve on the committee for the ensuing year. Mr Hoad, Mrs Pool and Mrs Grebby will be standing for re-election at the annual village hall meeting on Monday 22 May, 2006, 8:30pm in the committee room of the village hall. There was be a vacancy for another member and nominations were requested. In October, with the income from the Hog Fair going to the New Sports Pavilion Fund, it was suggested that the loss of fund-raising income could be recouped if an event was held at Halloween. A public meeting was held in September to gauge the feelings of the village. There were no dissenting voices and the event went ahead raising almost £2,000 for the hall – a figure similar to that raised at earlier fireworks events. (These could no longer be held because of new regulations.) As a result of the recent village fairs and the cost of hiring suitable marquees, it was decided to purchase two. These are let out to other organisations and individuals and are, in a small way, contributing to village hall income. Although not fully booked, hall hire continues to be at a fairly constant regular rate with a dance club meeting every Wednesday evening, the Senior Citizens once a month, and flower shows, antiques fairs, a beading club, ceramics days making regular appearances. The new licensing regulations that came in last November have meant that in future anyone wishing to hold an event where there is alcohol on sale will have to send a Temporary Events Notice to Ashford Borough Council. The hall is restricted to just 12 such events per year. It is hoped that, eventually, the premises will have its own licence to sell alcohol. The accounts for the village hall last year showed an income of £4,447.30 and expenditure of £7,273.56 making a deficit of £2,826.26, which is funded by the parish council.
14. **Tony Jarvis, Compliance Officer, Ashford Borough Council.**  
 Mr Jarvis gave an interesting talk on permitted development rights, how the planning system works and what enforcement action involves.
15. **Cllr Andrew Wickham, Ashford Borough Council.**  
 Mr Wickham discussed briefly the Ashford Local Development Framework, which is concentrating on the Ashford Action Plan for the town area before focussing on the rural areas next year.
16. **Cllr Richard King, Kent County Council.**  
 Mr King congratulated the parish on such a positive result for the Brickworks situation and the consistently high turnout by the parish in elections. He spoke briefly on the new Kent and Medway Structure Plan, which endeavoured to protect and preserve the countryside.
17. **Question time:**  
 Boundary hedges and fences: these were allowed to be no more than one metre in height if against the highway. Mr Jarvis advised that the parish council should be aware of boundaries in planning applications and request conditions. There followed a wide-ranging discussion regarding trees and hedges.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:55pm and members of the public were invited to join the parish council for light refreshment.