

RAMSBURY & AXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD ON MONDAY 21st MAY 2007 in Ramsbury Memorial Hall

PRESENT:, Diann Barnett, Cllr Susan Findlay, Graeme Fearon, , Sheila Glass, George Hawes, Chris Morgan, Geoffrey Rissone, Ian Ritchie, Geoffrey Treherne, Sue Arnold (clerk), & 15 members of the public.

- 1. Reading of the notice convening the meeting.**
- 2. Welcome by the Chairman:** The chairman welcomed members of the public present.
- 3. Apologies for absence:** Paul Court, Anne Dixon, Cllr Brian Twigger, PC Batchelor, PC McDonald, PCSO Mills.
- 4. Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2006:** The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting were approved as a correct record and were signed by the chairman.
- 5. Matters Arising:** None.
- 6. Chairman's report:** The report is attached in Appendix A *Sheila Glass*
- 7. Parish Council Committee reports:** attached in Appendix B *Various*

- 8. Axford Ward Report** *Geoffrey Treherne*
The continuing absence of any action on speeding traffic through Axford is a constant worry. WCC appear to run a points system and the more crashes, deaths etc you can clock up, the more likely the authorities are to do something. I can't help wondering how many points Marlborough had to clock up to produce the ill thought out pedestrian crossing controlled by lights, recently installed on The Green.

A new development has been the decision by Sarsen Housing to demolish the garages on the Axford car park because they are deemed unsafe. Those who rent them are trying to persuade Sarsen to rebuild them; others fear that the area may be being cleared for possible new housing in the future.

The state of the road between the east end of the village and the Priory gates is causing concern as the southern edge is crumbling into the field below.

The 'Axford' sign at the west end of the village has disappeared. I am told that many such signs have been stolen around here for their aluminium content! It will be replaced soon. Otherwise all seems calm in Axford.

- 9. Public Conveniences**
The Parish Council took over responsibility for the Public Conveniences in June 2006. Soon afterwards the doors were vandalised. The PC decided to do nothing immediately as it was felt they were likely to be defaced again.

Much time and effort has been spent in trying to sort out the electricity bills received from British Gas and this is still on-going.

The Parish Council is looking for ways to cut down the maintenance costs associated with the public conveniences. Anyone interested in volunteering for cleaning is asked to get in touch with the PC.

10. District Councillors' Reports:

Susan Findlay & Brian Twigger

Susan Findlay reported that this has been another year when the District Council has had to make budget cuts and a number of senior officers have gone.

The main issues have been recycling and unitary status. Kennet is opposing the County Councils bid for unitary status - next Monday 21st May an officer from KDC and an officer from WCC will come to give views to the Parish Council.

Cllr Finlay has served on the Standards, Regulatory, Licensing and Community Development Committees. She has also represented to the Council on the Sarsen Board.

Cllr Findlay reported that the residents in Knowledge Crescent are delighted with new surface put down in front of their garages. The garages in Axford have been deemed unsafe; all tenants have been asked to remove their belonging and cars so that the garages can be cordoned off. A decision will be made what to do with the site.

KDC has an extremely good web site when information is available, also the switchboard is now a Call Centre and most queries can be answered by the person answering the telephone. Cllr Findlay ended by thanking residents for their votes on 3rd May and said she was looking forward to representing everyone again.

Brian Twigger presented his report in the form of the KDC leaflet 'What We Have Done for You in 2006/7'. This is attached in appendix F.

11. County Councillor's Report:

Cllr Chris

Humphries

No report was received from Cllr Humphries who is in The Great Western Hospital in Swindon recovering from a road traffic accident in Thailand.

12. Ramsbury Parish Council Representatives' Reports

Various

Reports were received from:

- Nature Reserve rep
- Oral History rep
- School Governor

See Appendix D.

13. Reports by village clubs and Organisations:

Various

Reports were received from:

- Amenity Group
- Bella Voce
- Holy Cross PCC
- Horticultural Society
- Link
- Meals on Wheels
- Memorial Hall
- Parish Charities
- Pre-School
- Ramsbury Fire Station
- Ravensbury Players
- Ramsbury School PTA
- Recreation Centre
- Ramsbury Roxy
- Royal British Legion
- Scout group
- Silver Band
- Women's Institute

See Appendix E.

14. Public Question Time:

Bowls Club. Georgie Brookes asked if the Bowls Club has a future, as this is the Club's last season at the current location. Land for the Bowls Club has been purchased at the Rec Centre site and planning permission granted, but funding is needed to develop the necessary facilities. The current green is protected by a TR17, so cannot be used for another purpose. However this does not mean that it must remain available to the Bowls Club. The priority for the Bowls Club is a playing surface at the Rec Centre which would cost in the regions of £60K. Unfortunately sports funding is very hard to get at present as much of it is being put towards the Olympics.

Footpaths. Sylvia Judge reported that the fencing is broken on the footpath to Bolstridge farm from Knowledge Crescent, and there are 2 fallen trees on the sloping path going up Holloway.

Action: Clerk to report.

Ben Tottenham proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and fellow Councillors. He described Ramsbury as a thriving village and said a debt of thanks was owed to all the District and Parish councillors.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.30 pm.

APPENDIX A
Annual Meeting Chairman's Report May 2007

As you will hear in reports from various committee chairmen and representatives, the Parish Council has been busy this year trying to improve facilities and conditions in the villages. We became the reluctant possessor of the public conveniences in the High Street which were promptly vandalised. Subsequent dealings with British Gas over the bills have driven the clerk to distraction and thoughts of murder.

The baby swing on Whittonditch play area was well received-our decision to fell the conifers on the area had a more mixed reaction-we intend to plant some deciduous trees in the autumn. The light on the path between Ashley Piece and Whitehill Close was finally repaired-this involved a tree lopper and a scaffold tower so I only hope they put in a long life bulb.

We resisted an attempt by KDC to rename Swan's Bottom which someone there thought sounded rude-not nearly so rude as some of the alternatives I heard mentioned!

We helped the Youth Club to have a rebirth-so far very successful-and appointed a new School Governor, Tim McQue, on the resignation of Paul Court.

I attended meetings about the proposals to close Savernake Hospital and Minor Injuries Unit and the Parish Council expressed strong views against this.

The village gained-if that's the right word-alternate weekly rubbish and recycling collections-not universally popular particularly when it appeared that the bins were spying on us. We had a talk about KDC's new litter policy-apparently the fewer litter bins there are the less litter there will be-I don't know which expensive consultant came up with that idea-

We also have a new neighbourhood policing system which started with a flourish but seems to have gone off the boil. Police have been monitoring speeding which was identified as one of the greatest concerns among parishioners-so be wary speed checks are done regularly as some chastened motorists will testify. Police Surgeries are held every two months in the Alexander Room before the Parish Council meeting.

The first Parish Council newsletter was issued recently-this seems to have been well received and is intended to be an occasional event.

Petty vandalism has plagued both villages this year-anyone who knows anything about the perpetrators can speak in confidence to a policeman at the Police Surgery or leave a note in the Police Box in the Post Office.

A word about personnel-Hilary Farnsworth did a grand job deputising for Sue in November. Alan Plenderleith resigned in December and Ian Ritchie was co-opted to replace him. There should have been an election on May 3rd but unfortunately Ramsbury is 4 short of filling existing vacancies-Axford have filled their two. Mora Abell, Steve Cook, Anne Dixon, Fiona Kimber and Debbie Marshall all stood down and we had one new nomination-Tim McQue. I'd like to thank all of the departing Councillors for their efforts over the years, especially Steve who has been on the Council for many years most of them as Chairman of Finance Committee. If you or anyone you know is interested in co-option then please contact the clerk.

Finally Ramsbury has entered the Best Kept Village competition this year so let's see if we can keep the place clean and tidy