

Wimbish Parish Council
Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held on 3rd May, 2017 7.30 p.m.
in the Sports Pavilion, Tye Green, Wimbish.

Present: Mike Young (Chair), Edward Browne, Lynne Ward-Booth, Lindy Scanlan and Phil Northern.

In attendance: Tracy Coston (Clerk), Tina Knight

Public: 1 (David Corke)

1. Apologies for absence: Mark Westbrooke and Cllr Walsh.

2. Annual Report by Chairman

Throughout the year I have been very grateful to have had the support of my fellow councillors and I would like to thank them for their efforts and contributions towards the various issues facing the council. I would particularly like to express my thanks to Ted Browne, our Vice Chairman, who continues to do numerous voluntary jobs around the village.

The Parish Council has continued to have had the strong and able support of our District Councillor, Tina Knight, and our County Councillor, Simon Walsh. And, of course, we continue to benefit from the services of our extremely capable and professional Parish Clerk, Tracy Coston, who continually surprises us with her ability to discover and succeed in obtaining grants for various improvements in the village.

Unfortunately, as in the previous year, no-one from the barracks attended our meetings during the year.

There follows below a brief summary of each of the main activities during the year.

The defibrillator, acquired last year at no cost, was fitted outside the school and the local First Responders team gave a very helpful training course. As far as we are aware it has, thankfully, never been needed.

Last year, with the aid of a grant from UDC, the Council planted daffodils and other bulbs around village entry signs. These continue to be growing and flowering very successfully.

A long standing problem with flooding in the path to the recreation ground has now been resolved. The problem was probably caused by the building contractor for Ravenscroft but it was difficult to prove.

The new "DART" (demand response service) bus system was introduced in 2016 and after a considerable number of teething problems is now working smoothly. It is quite popular and seems to be a very good system. Unfortunately the indications from ECC are that it is not attracting sufficient numbers but we understand that it is guaranteed for a few more years.

Last year the Parish Council, along with district councillors, took the issue of free school transport for children at the barracks to the Local Government Ombudsman. Unfortunately our appeal was not successful although some compensation payments were made to parents who did not qualify for free transport.

After years of persistent pressure we thought that Essex County Council finally agreed to introduce 30 mph limit in Howlett End. Sadly this proved not to be the

case, although the reasoning for refusal seemed strange and has been challenged. The Parish council intends to recommence its campaign once the county council elections are over.

Meanwhile we have pointed out to ECC that all four VAS signs in the parish are not working and that important road signage in Thaxted Road has disappeared. ECC are unable to give us any timescales for dealing with these!

Last September saw the official opening of the 11 properties developed by the Hastoe Housing Association in Munson Mill Close. All the properties were built to Passivhaus standards. Wimbish was the first village in the country to have a Passivhaus development and is now the first village to get two such schemes. Concerns have been raised about developments on some common land within the parish and the council agreed a formal policy on common land. Meanwhile we continue to seek advice from the Open Spaces Society on the subject.

We have been advised of a problem regarding postcodes in Lower Green where two different areas have the same postcode. A local resident is sounding out opinion to see if changes can be made. The Parish Council will support any change that has public approval.

The government recently announced that a number of military barracks will close over the next 15 years. Carver barracks is scheduled to close by 2031 but it is near the end of a very long list and there are three general elections before the proposed closure date.

The Parish Council rate for 2017/18 was set in January and remains unchanged from the previous year. This is the ninth year running that we have been able to set a rate at virtually the same level.

A number of poplar trees on the recreation ground needed to be felled for safety reasons. Meanwhile work was carried out to tidy up ponds within the village.

The village pump, which had been kindly stored by the school for many years, has now been reclaimed and has been placed in the green beside the bungalows at The Leys.

The last event of the year was the litter pick, now in its fourteenth year. A few regulars were unavailable but there were also some new faces. Rather less rubbish was collected this time which was a welcome development.

3. Annual Report by Responsible Financial Officer: The Clerk distributed the accounts and the PC approved them.

4. Annual Report from District Councillor:
UDC is still working through the Local Plan. The increase of traffic in Saffron Walden was discussed.

5. Annual Report from County Councillor: Report sent.

6. Any other questions:
Questioned why there was only one member of the public at the meeting. The PC agreed to advertise in the Church News and wider in the Community next year.

The meeting finished at 8pm

Signed

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Date

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