

MINUTES OF EAST PECKHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, HELD IN THE CURRAN HALL, ON MONDAY, 3RD APRIL 2006 AT 19.30 HOURS

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: Mrs Cresswell [Chairman], Messrs. Bearman, & Crawford;
Mrs Curry; Messrs Gardner, Poole, Street, Shead & Whiteside
Mrs Eileen Jones [Temporary Clerk]
Guest Speakers: David Williams, TMBC Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership
Shirley Fiddock, Community Warden
Karena Harmer, Youth & Play Development Officer, TMBC
Sue Finnigan, Community Project Officer, Small Change Project
Borough Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Holland
County Councillor Mr Richard Long
29 Parishioners

APOLOGIES: Parish Councillors David Boyle and Stephen Cresswell

The Meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Council, Mrs Cresswell, who welcomed all present and introduced the Parish Council members and the invited Guest Speakers.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th April 2005 were read and there was an objection to their being signed as correct by Mrs Poole. The Minutes were set aside pending clarification of the item in dispute.

2. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs Cresswell presented the Annual Report, which had been distributed by Council members to all households within the Parish. Apologies were given for the fact that reports from the Emergency Planning Group and the Community and Police Working Group had been omitted from the booklet, but these have been printed and copies are available this evening. Attention was drawn to the list of Emergency telephone numbers from the Kent Community Safety Partnership, which is printed on the back of the Community and Police Working Group report. Questions were asked about the Village Sign and the Parish Council Website. Those present were advised by Cllr Whiteside that the Village Sign will be delivered on Thursday, 6th April 2006 and Cllr Poole reported that the website should go live in about 2 weeks' time, meanwhile printed cards, containing information about the website, were distributed.

3. BILLY CAN AWARDS

It was noted that the Billy Can Shields for 2006 have been awarded to:

- Julia Bevis, for her Youth work in East Peckham, particularly the Holiday Club
- Margaret Lawrence, for a lifetime of commitment and work for Christian Aid

The award was presented to Mrs Lawrence by Mrs Joan Boyle, who thanked her for doing so much. Mrs Bevis was unable to be present; arrangements have been made for the shield to be given to her tomorrow.

4. GUEST SPEAKERS

The following Guest Speakers were introduced by Mrs Cresswell and each, in turn, made a presentation:

David Williams spoke about the efforts of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to prevent young people from going to prison. He gave statistics to illustrate the number of young people from disadvantaged and unhappy backgrounds who are currently given custodial sentences and it was also noted that the number of prison places are almost filled to capacity. He felt that every young person who can be prevented from going to prison is likely to be prevented from a life of crime and went on to outline the work of the agencies in identifying and supporting these young people and their families: a long-term scheme to help them avoid prison.

Shirley Fiddock supported what Mr Williams had said and agreed that such problems must be addressed at a young age. She reported that the problems in the Village with motorcycles and cars do appear to have subsided, but she asked people to be vigilant now the evenings are lighter in order that footways and roads may be safe places. Ms Fiddock advised that a graffiti kit is available and urged residents to report any graffiti in the area to her and she will do her best to get it removed, provided the permission of the owner of the property in question is forthcoming. Attention was drawn to an article in the April edition of the Parish Magazine about under-age drinking, which often leads to vandalism and abuse. Any information regarding the source of the alcohol being obtained by young people would be welcome. It was noted that closing the gates at certain times at the Sports Hall appears to have been effective, but Ms Fiddock felt that CCTV, which has been successful in Hadlow, should be considered by the Parish Council. Other points raised during this presentation were formation of a Youth Club and the car sales at the Hale Street/Old Road Junction. *Residents commented that vehicles are moved after complaints are made, but they are subsequently moved back., also that the Police do not appear to be interested. In response to these comments, residents were asked to keep on reporting the problem as it is then more likely to be dealt with urgently by the authorities concerned. Mrs Cresswell advised that this item had been raised during a recent meeting with the Highways Liaison Group and it was noted that a Planning application has been submitted for change of use on this site. When consultation begins the Parish Council and local residents will have the opportunity to comment. If the matter should go to Appeal a long process will follow. The speed limit in Hale Street was also raised and it was noted that a 30 mph limit has been requested throughout the village. A promise has been given by the Highways Department that if such requests are refused, a full explanation will be given. In response to a question regarding police response, David Williams explained the mapping system which is used. If a STORM number is requested then the call will be logged, regardless of whether or not the police attend. Residents should persist with their calls as the police do target patrols to areas from which the highest number of calls are received. Members of the Parish Council raised the question of large lorries using Hale Street and felt consideration must be given to the direction signs. It is felt that professional and accurate answers are required from the appropriate authorities on all these matters.*

Karena Harmer outlined the Aims and Objectives of one of the Borough Council's key priorities for 2006/07: "Involving and meeting the needs of young people". She spoke about links with other Council shared priorities, such as Crime reduction, Healthy Lifestyles, Sport & Leisure, etc. She went on to draw attention to the Summer Playscheme for 5 – 11 year-olds

and provisions during the Easter and Summer holidays for 8 – 16 year-olds, such as abseiling, windsurfing, equestrian care and sculpture. Y-2 Crew, which is linked to crime reduction, provides opportunities for 11 – 16 year-olds. Outdoor Leisure provides skate parks, ball courts and childrens' play areas. Youth Arts projects, such as break-dancing and street art, as well as environmental issues and drug education are also covered. Both Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council are involved in the Youth Forum, where they meet young people and hear what they have to say. It is planned to visit all Secondary Schools in the area.

Asked whether the scheme would be in conflict with the police as far as street art is concerned, Mrs Harmer advised that the youngsters are given an area in which to personalise their own art and this works, as has been proved at the Millennium Park in Maidstone. David Williams observed that during the four weeks of the Summer holiday when activities are taking place in the Tonbridge and Malling area the level of criminal damage goes down, where in other areas, where such facilities are not available, there is an increase during the school holidays.

Sue Finnigan explained that the Small Change team is a group of 6-8 households who meet once a month for four months to share ideas and work together to learn simple yet effective lifestyle changes to become more environmentally friendly. Members look at the following topics:- Rubbish & Shopping, Energy & Transport, and Water. Members discuss extreme weather; traffic volume; CO2 emissions from households; recycling of waste; use of water and shopping habits to explore what small changes may be made in daily life to protect the environment. It was noted that during a pilot scheme in Nottingham the amount of rubbish disposed of was reduced by 28%.. Ms Finnigan advised that she has some leaflets with her if anyone is interested and she is able to facilitate meetings in private homes.

A question was asked as to whether the scheme is more successful in Villages or Towns, and it was noted that the scheme has been operating successfully in Tonbridge and Malling for a year and there is no clear division between the response from Towns or Villages. Mrs Kirk from the Residents' Association urged local people to give the scheme a try. In response to a question regarding recycling of plastic, Mrs Cresswell explained that the only facility for recycling plastic at present is in Holland. David Williams added that the damage done to the environment by the collection and transport of plastic material is currently greater than that caused by putting it in the bin. Ms Finnigan urged residents to keep asking the Borough Council to provide a recycling facility for plastic.

Cllr Peter Crawford proposed thanks to **David Williams** on behalf of the Community and Police Working Group; he also thanked Shirley **Fiddock**, who has made a significant contribution to Village life.

Cllr Alan Gardner extended thanks to **Karina Harmer**, wishing he had been in the right age-group for kayaking. Her presentation had been proof that, in this area, more is provided for underprivileged young people than has ever been done before.

Cllr Terry Shead thanked **Sue Finnigan**: he agreed that everyone must learn to recycle and commended what the Small change project is trying to do in and out of the village. He suggested the traffic in East Peckham as an ideal environmental project.

4. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

a. Kent Village of the Year Competition

Cllr Shead drew attention to the achievements of East Peckham in the 2005 Competition, particularly in the Young People category, where it was Runner-up. It was

noted that an entry has been made in the 2006 competition, where it is hoped to do even better.

b. Childrens' Play Area

A resident asked how long it would be before there is a play facility suitable for younger children locally. Mrs Cresswell advised that there are plans to re-vamp the play equipment. A meeting was held last Summer to establish what people would like and the suggestions made have been taken on board. Negotiations are currently taking place with the Borough Council for the Grant which was awarded for the skate park to be used to provide play equipment; a decision is expected soon. This will be discussed at a meeting of the Playing Field Management Committee on 11th April 2006 and at the Parish Council meeting on 24th April, where it is hoped to reach agreement with regard to the siting of the equipment.

c. Scarecrow Competition

Mrs Kirk reminded everyone present, on behalf of the Residents' Association, about the forthcoming Scarecrow Competition. She urged people to submit an entry.

In conclusion, Mrs Cresswell extended grateful thanks to the following:

- The Salvation Army and Mr Stuart Boyle for providing the sound system
- Mr & Mrs Buckland for co-ordinating the Poppy Appeal
- The Clerk for producing the Annual report
- The Parish Councillors for their unstinting work on behalf of residents.
- The 29 parishioners who had attended the meeting.

There being no additional business, the meeting was closed at 20.58 hours.