

# Minutes of the Ellisfield Annual Parish Meeting held in the Memorial Hall on Friday 11 May 2012 at 8.00 pm

## Present

Tim Guinness (Chairman of Ellisfield Parish Council and Chairman of the Meeting)  
45 members of the public

(including Parish Councillors Caroline Cazenove, David Richards, Rose Taplin, Andy Webb and Julian Wright)

## Minutes

Taken by Jacqueline Matthews (Ellisfield Parish Clerk)

## In Attendance

PC Andrew Reid, Local Beat Officer, Hampshire Constabulary  
Sergeant Martin Cullis, Hampshire Constabulary

1. **Apologies for Absence.** County Cllr Anna McNair Scott, Jane & Gavin Park-Weir, Tony & Julia Simmons, Maggie Heath, Natasha and Mark Selby, Doreen & Chris Lonergan, Jenni & Steven Gould, Susie Deane, Margaret and Julian Evans
2. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20 May 2011.** The Minutes had been circulated at the beginning of the meeting but time was allowed for reading. It was agreed and minutes were signed as a true record.
3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes.** (None.)
4. **To receive a report from the Chairman of the Parish Council.**  
Chairman presented his report (Appendix 1), which included draft 2011/12 Accounts and details of the 2012/13 budget and Precept Calculation.
5. **To receive a report from the Trustees of Ellisfield Educational Trust.**  
Bernard Cazenove reported on behalf of the Trust; a slight drop in capital due to Stock Market conditions, last year's overspend of £81 balanced by this year's underspend of £395. The Trust had received a cheque for £175 from Open Gardens and would be making a £175 contribution to the children's play area on Lower Common.
6. **Any other Village Matters.** Tim Guinness reported that Bernard Cazenove had kindly agreed to oversee the Ellisfield Jubilee celebrations and after thanking him, Tim asked Bernard to run through the programme which would be printed in Hill & Dale and delivered to all houses.

Ted Dowson proposed a vote of thanks to the parish council for all their hard work.

**The meeting closed at 8.30pm**

**Chairman**.....

**Date**.....

The formal meeting was then followed by presentations (Appendix 2) from PC Reid and representatives of Ellisfield Village Organisations.

# ELLISFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2011/12

### Section 1: Chairman's Report

#### Your Councillors

Members of Ellisfield Parish Council are:

Caroline Cazenove Vice Chairman	Brocas, The Green
Tim Guinness Chairman	Widmoor Farm, College Lane
David Richards	September, College Lane
Rose Taplin	3 Hill Farm Cottages, Green Lane
Andy Webb	Dragon's Holt, Green Lane
Julian Wright	Ivy Cottage, Bell Lane

We met nine times. In June, July, September, October, December, January, February, March and April. We published three newsletters.

Glen Horgan resigned in June, In December your Council co-opted Julian Wright in his place.

Individual councillors are tasked with keeping a watching brief on specific areas of interest. During the past year these have been:

Caroline Cazenove	Burial Ground, Hill Farm Pond, Neighbourhood Watch
Tim Guinness	Website, Affordable Welcome Packs, Planning, Housing,
David Richards	Highways, Allotments, Environment, BDAPTC,
Rose Taplin	Memorial Hall, Environment
Andy Webb	Land & Property, Footpaths/Rights of Way, Allotments
Julian Wright	Broadband, Planning

Glen Horgan made a number of complaints about my chairmanship to the BDBC Standards Committee. A 505 page report was submitted to that committee by the Monitoring Officer in April 2012 in which the complaints were rejected.

#### Report on 2011/12

#### **MAIN AREAS OF FOCUS**

**Change of use of 38 acre site north of Bushywarren Lane to allow new solar farm of 5 MW generating capacity**

Despite objection by your Council this was approved in June. Very recently an application has been received for retrospective approval of various changes to the original plans which again your council was unhappy about. Our objections have been submitted.

#### **Affordable Housing**

The discussions which might have led to the provision of affordable housing by C-Zero involving a subsidy from a possible development of two private homes and a new Rectory on land next to the Rectory did not bear any fruit as BDBC indicated to C-Zero they would be unlikely to support it. C-Zero have indicate they might be interested in progressing a similar scheme on another site but this has been put on ice until the approval of BDBC's new Core Strategy and your council develops a good understanding of what may be possible as a result of the recently enacted Localism Act and if we create Neighbourhood Plan (see further below).

Caroline Cazenove and I went on an information gathering tour of several affordable housing sites in north Hampshire organised by Community Action Hampshire and Mags Wylie Rural Housing Enabler.

#### **Children's play equipment on Lower Common**

The proposal, referred to last year, for installing some children's play equipment on Lower Common to be funded by voluntary donations was looked into by a working party comprised of Caroline Cazenove (chairman) and Andy Webb who worked tirelessly on this. Discussions involving many residents, both those in favour and those with concerns, took place over most of the year. Finally a relatively modest proposal was settled on and a village consultation established support for this.

It is hoped the equipment will be installed in the next two months.

#### **Construction of an anaerobic digestion installation for rotational arable crops and local food waste together with landscaping and highway improvements on Bushywarren Lane**

In early February we were informed that an application for planning consent for this was likely to

be submitted. It was submitted a few days ago. In the intervening period we set up a working party of Julian Wright (chairman) and me to look into the potential impact of this and a Questionnaire was submitted to Barfoots the developer to which they responded. They in turn held an open meeting in Herriard Village Hall and organised a tour of their existing Anaerobic Digester operation near Bognor Regis. The village was consulted with a questionnaire at the end of March and a strong consensus opposing this was the response (96% of over 60 responses against).

As I write the working party – to which Dee Haas; Susie Deane; Mark Thomas; Debbie Scholey; and Hannah Houston Lacey have been co-opted to assist with research and response drafting – are producing a very full response submission to the consultation by Hampshire County Council to this application. HCC are the planning authority for this as it falls in the Minerals and Waste category of planning applications.

### **Village Plan/Neighbourhood Plan**

Over the summer the possibility of setting up a group to create a Village Plan was considered in some detail and it was decided not to pursue this. One important reason was that the new Localism Act contemplates parishes developing Neighbourhood Plans. This is something we are quite likely to want to create and it was felt our efforts should be focussed on that. These are a new concept and we decided in February to set up a working party to investigate whether or not to pursue this. Little progress has been made on this as our efforts were shortly thereafter diverted onto the Anaerobic Digester project. However discussions with BDBC seem to indicate that from a timing point of view there is no immediate urgency as they will have no standing in planning terms until 01 January 2013 and there is little point in formulating one until the new BDBC Core Strategy is in place.

### **ROUTINE AREAS OF FOCUS AND OTHER ITEMS**

#### **Highways & other rights of way**

There has been regular contact with Hampshire Highways about potholes, grips, gullies, ditches, silt-traps and grit bins. On the positive side many potholes were filled in the weeks before the Basingstoke half marathon in October. On the negative in some cases the quality of the work was poor and further liaison was needed to rectify this. Another positive was the installation of extra Grit Bins.

As regards grips, gullies and ditches some work was done on gullies in Axford Road. However on the negative side despite numerous requests for a proper exercise to clear the grips; ditches and gullies down Green Lane and College Lane and promises from Highways that the work would be done by end April in fact nothing was done and as residents will

have seen the very strong rains two weeks ago led to torrents down Green Lane. [We have been assured this will now be attended to very shortly]

#### **Burial Ground**

Sadly there were two cremations during the year.

#### **Maintenance of Land and Property**

Andy Webb organised an excellent refurbishment of the Bus Shelter at the bottom of Green Lane including the addition of steps and a rail to deal with the fact that it had become very hazardous during icy spells

Ellisfield Volunteers continue to mow the Burial Ground; Lower Common; and Gravel Pits for the Parish Council and their quote of £1,050 for 2012/13 was accepted.

It became necessary to address the question of provision of storage for the mowing equipment used on Lower Common. For a number of years this has very generously been provided at Lower Farm but the space became needed for their own requirements. It was decided therefore to rent one of the garages at Cannon Close for this and also to use it for storage of the ever increasing volume of Parish Council archives...

#### **Hill Farm Pond**

The advisory group of local residents – Caroline Cazenove; Neil Popkin; and Seamus Foster, along with Tony Matthews, Pond Warden organised snowdrop planting; a tidy up day of action and the replacement of one of the seat plaques..

#### **Phone Box**

Your council decided to convert this into a mini library/book/DVD exchange. Andy Webb did great work overseeing the implementation of this.

#### **Footpaths and Rights of Way**

A missing finger post on the Lower Common to College Farm zig-zag path was replaced.

#### **Environment**

Matters of significance in the year included a major water leak occurred at Northgate reservoir and a shelving of a government proposal that all septic tank emptying events would have to be registered.

#### **Village Website**

Mark Thomas continues to do sterling work maintaining this. Missing minutes were added as was the 1998 Village Appraisal. The keeping of pages for village organisations up to date is not always as good as one would like and I would like to encourage village organisations to make sure Mark Thomas receives updates in a timely fashion.

Out of the blue we were informed in April that BDBC were intending to cease supporting our and other parishes' sites. We have asked Paul Turner to investigate our options now. And he has kindly agreed to do this for us.

### **Broadband**

HCC have obtained £XXXm funding for helping the roll out of faster broadband in Hampshire. Julian Wright and I are seeking to engage with HCC on this. Ellisfield's speeds remain atrocious. An effort was made to get as many internet users in Ellisfield as possible to register their poor speeds with HCC and the response was good.

### **Planning**

In addition to the solar farm, C-Zero and anaerobic digester matters referred to above, the Council was involved in commenting on seven planning applications. One of these – involving Coopers Farm – necessitated our speaking in favour at the BDBC planning committee against the planning officers and we were pleased our advice was accepted

The Council also responded to BDBC's questionnaires entitled "Opportunities for small scale developments in rural areas".

### **Welcome Packs**

During 2011/12 six 'Welcome Packs' were given to the following new residents who moved into Ellisfield.

Malcolm Ryde and Jonathon Waddoups at The Fox Inn, Janet and Dave Waters and Terri at Water Rose (previously Benvenuto), Julia and Tony Simmons at Firs Cottage, Stephen and Julia Mourant and family at The Rectory, Laura and Stephen Fellowes and family at Mulberry House, Sally Clifford Brown at 1 Widmoor Cottages and Natasha and Mark Selby and family at Copper Beeches.

Welcome Packs continue to be prepared and delivered by Jacqui Matthews and Judith Richards who has made the delicious 'welcome cakes;' many thanks to Judith.

### **Police and neighbourhood watch**

PC Reid regularly attends Parish Council meetings and thankfully reports low crime figures for our village

### **Conclusion**

I would like to thank my colleagues (Caroline Cazenove, David Richards, Rose Taplin, Andy Webb and Julian Wright) who all contribute to our common goal of looking after the interests of the village. Jacqui Matthews, whose calmness, professionalism and enthusiasm has been invaluable since her appointment as Parish Clerk in August 2004, has also to be especially thanked; as must be Ted Dowson for giving of his time in completing the Internal Audit of the 2010/11 Accounts and who has kindly agreed to carry out this role again for 2012.

It has been a privilege being Chairman for the past year.

**Tim Guinness, Chairman**

whilst warning against complacency, particularly regarding distraction burglaries. Tonight his boss Sergeant Martin Cullis is attending our meeting and is going to share with us his view of the world of crime and policing in north Hampshire.

The council responded to a questionnaire from Hampshire Police as regards our main requirements. We indicated these as Burglaries; roving sales people; speeding.

### **Litter Picking and other environmental concerns**

Litter picking. Our thanks go to Ellie Rudd and Adam Claessens who performed this very necessary task.

### **Memorial Hall**

Rose Taplin continues to attend Memorial Hall meetings as the parish council representative.

### **Jubilee Celebrations**

An offer from Bernard Cazenove to coordinate Ellisfield's activities over the Jubilee weekend was accepted with gratitude.

### **FINANCE 2010/11 Accounts**

Last year's draft accounts are in Section 2 of this Report. Please note that these accounts have not yet been presented formally at a parish council meeting, nor have they been checked by our internal auditor.

### **2011/12 Budget and Precept**

The budget for the coming year is in Section 3 of this Report. Once the budget had been discussed and agreed at the December 2010 meeting, the council then had to decide on the actual precept.

As you will see, the amount required was estimated to be £5,521 – an increase on last year reflecting a small increase in our Clerk's very modest remuneration, and it was agreed that this would be the precept in 2012/13. (£4,477 2011/12)

It should be repeated that the precept we are levying is lower than it might be because of the great contribution by the Ellisfield Volunteers to keeping our public spaces tidy at well below contractor's rates.

### **Hampshire Constabulary, PC Reid reported:**

Ellisfield saw an increase in reported crime during 2011 when 5 crimes were reported, an increase of 2 on reported figures for 2010 (3) 2009 (6) and 4 in 2008. Crimes consisted of a theft which was detected, two non-dwelling burglaries of which one was an assault where police action was not supported and a possession of drugs incident in Furzen Lane which was also detected.

One of the non-dwelling burglaries took place from an office where a laptop was stolen, enquiries were made and as a result of information received the stolen item was retrieved from a grocery shop in Basingstoke. A Basingstoke man later appeared in court and was convicted.

Other incidents in the parish included four reports of trees across the road, burglar alarm activation. A fire reported in a farm pit, a suspicious vehicle, an injury road traffic incident (accident), a missing resident who came home and a group of people sleeping on the recreation ground. A call was received from a local resident concerning this group and a check on the police computer revealed that one was wanted on a court warrant so was arrested.

We also had two reports of men going door to door offering goods for sale; one had come from Gloucestershire and was selling teak furniture, at a time when most residents would be at work. The other was being abusive to residents when asked for his pedlar's certificate; he is now awaiting a court appearance.

Also received, a report of a dumped fridge in the village, photos were taken and working with BDBC Environmental Services, the fridge was traced to the previous owner, a resident who was cautioned and ordered to pay removal and disposal costs.

Sadly there were three reported deaths in the village, one elderly resident and even sadder two suicides.

The first three months of 2012 have seen thefts of heating oil, severe flooding in Northgate Lane and youths from Basingstoke in a car being a nuisance in the early hours.

Several speed-enforcements were carried out in the village resulting in several drivers receiving enforcement action or attending driver awareness training as an alternative.

P C Reid also attended the annual Horticultural Show and Christmas Fayre held in the village hall.

P C Reid extended his thanks to Hannah Houstin-Lacey and all the neighbourhood watch co-ordinators and to the parish council for their support.

### **PC Reid's superior Officer, Sergeant Martin Cullis spoke for 20 minutes about how local policing had evolved over recent years, points raised included;**

- The safer neighbourhood team is based in Whitchurch and covers 250 sq. miles under the care of 10 police officers of which PC Reid is unique – he is always on duty and answers calls at all times of day and night.
- Crime remained low in rural areas, rural Basingstoke & Deane still a safe place to live, the biggest threat being travelling criminals, including those selling door to door who target the elderly and vulnerable
- The influence of changing technology and communications.

Finally Sgt Cullis confirmed the importance of Neighbourhood Watch particularly in rural areas, reporting suspicious people, vehicles etc.

### **St Martin's Church:**

Associate Rector, Stephen Mourant thanked the village for a warm welcome and said it was good to get to know people and organisations, mentioning the 'sponsor a pew bible' initiative, enabling bible reading to be followed in church, also he said he would be happy to make bibles available to anyone who doesn't have one at home.

Peter Chilton, Churchwarden had submitted a written report on the fabric of the church;

Quinquennial Inspection: completed by Diocesan Architect and report received. Copy of report can be provided on request. No urgent items noted. Issues identified will be actioned in due course.

### Lightning conductor

Lower 6 ft of copper conductors stolen on 30<sup>th</sup> January. Replaced in aluminium at a cost of £293.

### Chancel Floor

Tiles being discoloured by "spots" which are difficult to remove. Resolution being reviewed.

### Altar rail

Woodworm has reappeared. Local contractor has treated the wood. No guarantee, but he will re-treat if necessary. (30 year guarantee issued by previous contractor useless as they have closed.)

### Cluster flies

Infestation in bell tower sprayed during dormant season to reduce the problem later in the year.

### Future projects

Kneeler boards in need of refurbishment; Competent individuals or companies being sought to carry out the work. Option to provide more individual kneelers in place of the boards being considered.

**Memorial Hall:** Bernard Cazenove, reported; the finances were healthy and encouraged residents to support events organised.

**Neighbourhood Watch:** Hannah Houstin-Lacey thanked PC Reid and fellow co-ordinators (Roger Graham, Ray Reid and Peter Hopwood) for their hard work over the last year.

NW information is circulated mainly by email with an article included in the Hill and Dale publication. Hard copy information is also posted on the village notice boards.

Anyone who would like to be included in the scheme email circulation, please let one of the co-ordinators has your email address. If you don't have access to email, please let co-ordinators know and they will ensure you receive hard copy information direct or via a neighbour.

Finally, confirmation that everyone is encouraged to report anything suspicious they see – it may just be the vital link needed to help the police to solve the crime! Please help the Police to help you!

**Horticultural Society:** Meg Freeman, Horticultural Society Village Representative, reported the sad loss of Club President Gordon Snook (Cliddesden) who had died at Christmas followed by the Chairman, Steve Bowcutt (Cliddesden) having a stroke. The five committee members were keeping things going and the Spring Show and Plant Sale had been well attended and monthly meeting continued with a garden visit planned to Ash Park on 15 July.

**Volunteer Group:** Andy Swanston Chairman, reported that the group had been in existence for 10 years to maintain the grounds of the Burial Ground, Lower Common, and The Gravel Pits and to save all villagers money by keeping the precept low whilst generating community spirit, the work is done purely with volunteers from the village.

Andy thanked outgoing chairman, Ted Dowson for his work over the past four years and recognised the contribution of Treasurer Zani Robinson and Secretary Hannah Houstin-Lacey.

Andy reported that after much discussion, a garage had been rented in Cannon Close for storage, the ride-on mower had been taxed and insured and Lower Common footbridge widened. The grass cutting schedule had been filled before the start of the season and he would co-ordinate cutting on Lower Common, Margaret Evans at The Gravel Pits and Steve Brown at The Burial Ground.

Andy thanked all volunteers and reminded residents that new volunteers always welcome.

**Ellisfield Ladies Club:** No report

**Ellisfield Allotment Gardeners Association (EAGA):** Andy Webb, Ellisfield Parish Council representative, reported all allotments currently occupied and growing well. No one currently on the waiting list. Hope to hold EAGA AGM by end of month

**Oil Syndicate:** Coordinator Ted Dowson, reported that the syndicate orders 4 times each year, in May, August, November and February. All village residents welcome to join. Ted sends out an email to all syndicate members about a week before the order is due to be placed. Richard Haas negotiates and generally achieves a 2 – 4p reduction. New syndicate members need to set up an account with Total Butler.

All communication is done via email and there is a buddy system for those without internet access. Currently have 50 members within benefice; in past 5 years, orders have been processed for 280,000 litres of oil, saving residents more than £6,000.

**Ellisfield Village Association (EVA):** Tim Guinness, Chairman of Ellisfield Parish Council stated that he would like to dispel the myth that EVA were in competition with EPC, explaining the parish council were restrained by statute and EVA will be able to channel residents enthusiasm for issues affecting the village.

EVA Chair, Dee Haas reported that EVA had grown from the need for the village to campaign against several recent large planning applications (Solar Farm and Anaerobic Digester) that posed particular threats to the countryside surrounding our village. There had been two meetings of EVA attended by residents from all parts of the village who are passionate about protecting our environment. A constitution has been drawn up and officers elected; Dee Haas Chair, Hannah Houstin-Lacey Secretary, Tony Simmons Treasurer, a bank account has been opened and 25 members already joined with other residents expressing a wish to join.

Mrs Haas continued to make the following points;

- Aims will be circulated shortly along with the minutes and mission statement; the group's ethos is to protect, enhance and celebrate or cherish.
  - Protect - Umbrella for different campaigns so that vital experience not lost. The Village Association gives us a chance to consolidate skills ready for the next threat
  - Cherish - Would like to celebrate our beautiful village
  - Enhance – hoping to get involved in projects that would improve life in the village
- EVA provides a properly constituted body for people to join if they wish and which can hold funds raised in a completely proper manner enabling a pro-active approach.
- Total transparency, EVA AGM will be held in the village hall.

Mrs Haas thanked everyone for the huge support received and the massive amount of work that had gone in to organising both EVA and all the research to discover the true impact of the proposed AD Plant noting that there was still much work to be done and much help and support needed over the next few weeks. EVA to be a positive legacy of the campaign to save our countryside initially under the *Waste Not Wanted* banner, enabling consolidation all the lessons learned/systems put in place, and give villagers, a united front to have a stronger voice in the future of our village.

Finally Mrs Haas stated that help and funds still needed for *Waste not Wanted* campaign, confirming the politicians are on side but not out of the woods yet. A massive amount of research had been conducted involving more than 10 people contributing to a planning response document coordinated by Julian Wright, to be used by EPC, EVA and *WnW* to put together three layers of opposition to the proposal by Herriard Estate and Barfoot Energy.

**Reports and Presentation Session ended at 9.22pm**