

MINUTES OF THE ONEHOUSE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 27
APRIL 2009 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE CHURCH ROOM.

Present: Mr M Chase – Chairman Onehouse Parish Council
Mrs P Fuller - Clerk to the Council
District Cllr Matthissen
County Cllr Otton
6 members of the public.

1. To receive apologies for absence.

These were received from Mrs M Ellam, Mr R and Mrs G Raisey.

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 28 April 2008.

It was proposed, seconded and carried to approve the minutes.

3. To receive the audited parish accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2008

The Clerk presented the accounts of the Parish Council audited by BDO Stoy Hayward. During the year a precept of £9,950.00 was raised. Donations were given to Onehouse Mother and Toddler Group, Stowmarket & Area Opportunity Group, Stowmarket Community First Responders, Suffolk Accident Rescue Service, Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau, East Anglian Air Ambulance, West Suffolk Victim Support, Ipswich & East Suffolk Headway and Suffolk Family Carers.

The balance of the Income and Expenditure Account as at 31 March 2008 is £12,547.07. Funds held in earmarked reserves total £5,539.99.

4. Parish Council Report – Mr M Chase

It has been another productive year and again we are carrying a vacancy as Alex Moss-Eccardt had to resign due to family commitments. I am happy to report that at our last meeting two gentlemen came along to say they would be happy to serve. It now leaves us with the decision of who we can invite to serve.

Our most important challenge at the moment is the Land Bid process which seems to be interminable. Alongside this is the Stowmarket Masterplan which encompasses all of Chilton Fields. At the moment there are no concrete proposals only rumours. We as a council are trying to keep abreast of everything that is happening but it is not easy as Mid Suffolk District Council likes to keep everything close to their chests. We have, with the help of John Matthissen, been to many meetings where we had hoped that we could find something out but to no avail. It is especially like that with the new road which came back into life in a meeting which we had with the planners of the Masterplan but they didn't really tell us anything but left it open. So we do not know anything about it only a map with some arrows that may or may not be a road in the future.

There is better news about Footpath 20/cycle route 51. It has been agreed that this will now be upgraded to a bridleway and hopefully it will continue along to 22 Forest Road. The main problem is that they want to change the route which is a bit of a problem for us as owners of Paupers Graves as this will run alongside the graves on two sides. We will have to decide how we will safeguard the graves from entry away from the entrance gate. Suffolk County Council has agreed that yellow lines are to be put onto the junctions of the estate. This is solely for the reason to help these junctions with the parking problems. We have again been experiencing problems with the distribution of OHSMag. Mrs Dodge has resigned and Gill Raisey has taken over this role. As always I thank Andrew Sykes the editor very much and appreciate his help over this difficult period.

I would also like to thank the local Police who in appointing PCSO Claire Cox have changed our perception of the police. We find she does listen to us and answered our questions and her help with speeding through the village has made our lives much better. With the Paupers Graves we have had another fruitful year and we enjoy our time clearing up. There is not a lot of tree felling to do now but we will keep going and enjoy this peaceful place.

We have continued to provide help to local groups with money. This year we have put aside money for Jubilee Players, The Management Committee of the Community Centre and others. We have also provided for the local Citizens Advice Bureau, Headway local First Responders, Doctors on Emergency call-out and East Anglian emergency helicopter and many others.

Finally I would like to thank a number of people who have helped the Council to be able to work this last year. Penny Otton our County Councillor who has been a great help on many issues. John Matthissen our District Councillor who always gives 100% especially against Mid Suffolk Officers, who want to run things without answering to parish councils especially Onehouse. Thank you to all serving councillors who all keep working for the Parish. Finally I must say a big thank you to Peggy our Clerk, who hasn't had the best year but has worked hard for the Parish Council. I always know when I have any questions I can rely on her and her judgement.

5. Matters arising from the previous items on the agenda.

Mrs P Llewellyn asked regarding the revised route of Footpath 20.

6. County Councillor's Report – Mrs P Otton.

It has been a funny old year for local government!! The County Council has yet again been extremely busy with the preparation of business cases for the continually delayed Local Government Review as well as preparing and setting the yearly budget in February. Then there was the economic crisis. Fortunately the council had no money in Icelandic banks! There have also been a number of county led consultations, with both the Schools Organisational Review and on the potential waste incinerator sites.

The fiasco of the A14 Haughley bends work and the delay to the opening of the slip road caused real problems. I and the parish councils worked hard to get this sorted. Some residents are finding it noisy now the new road is in place and I have asked that the Highways Agency gets on with the tree planting. SCC is now asking for views on what to do with the old picnic site.

Along with Gt Finborough there is a wish to have Wash Lane closed to through traffic but this is proving difficult.

The road traffic order for parking restrictions in Onehouse has been agreed.

The bad weather caused a lot of accidents so I am pleased to report that I have got the road through Buxhall upgraded: this should be gritted next year.

I have asked if there can be any county farm land available for allotments and have got all councils to look into giving free bus passes to those carers of the blind and the disabled who are under 60.

I am pleased the extension to the bridleway from Stowmarket to Onehouse has now been given the go ahead although there are still some questions to answer. Community Boards with representatives from parish councils including Ron Raisey from Onehouse, young people and business reps have been set up and there is money to spend but so far we are still at the discussion phase.

In May 2008 SCC agreed to allow public questions in full council meetings. Questions have to be submitted four days in advance of the council meeting.

Over the last year I am please to have been able to help a number of organizations in my division from the Locality Budget. The projects include Buxhall church, Gt Finborough speed watch scheme, Shelland Church bell wheel repair, Onehouse Mother and Toddler Group and OHS Jubilee Players. There is now also a Locality Budget for small transport schemes but there is only £10,000 per county councilor.

I am please that the NATS proposal for aircraft stacking over our villages has been put on hold.

SCC's administration continues to push ahead with the SOR to change all schools to a two-tier system.

The County Council has set a council tax with an increase of 2.45% for 2009/10. This in conjunction with an extra grant from the Government of £8.8m meant that SCC has to find a further £12.5m of savings from the budget.

7. District Councillor's Report – Mr J Matthissen.

The Local Development Framework is beginning to unfold with development expanding into Chilton Leys Fields. I am hopeful of a better outcome than originally feared. I would like to see a decent gap of green space between the development of Stowmarket and the main housing of Onehouse, protection for the Paupers Graves site by designation of what can be built beside the area. I ask the Parish Council to write again to MSDC Planning Department insisting that the Paupers Graves is designated a Visually Important Open Space.

There is concern regarding housing to be built and whether there will be a link road to the A14. Infrastructure needs to be put in ahead of any development but MSDC want to delay this. It is good to see that cycling/walking facilities have been put in place. I regret that the proposal for a joint development committee was rejected by MSDC administration. The main issue is the timing of when the development will take place and lessons need to have been learnt from the Cedars Park development. If all areas are started at the same time then there is no way that infrastructure will be controlled in all areas.

Thanks to all that have taken part in litter picking. I have continued with planting trees in my ward and have planted many on Shelland Green and will look at thickening up the northern boundary of the Paupers Graves.

MSDC budget process has been very difficult with severe belt tightening for 2009/10.

MSDC Planning and Enforcement activity is better this year. There are 300 cases on the books and staff have attended planning enforcement training.

I have requested a review of the provision of allotments at Harleston as the Sect 106 agreement doesn't extend to providing a new site.

Mrs Cruickshanks asked if changes to Section 106 is national. Cllr Matthissen advised that each council writes their own policy.

Mrs Llewellyn asked if an alternative site has to be provided. Cllr Matthissen advised that there has only been a loose agreement, there is no statutory requirement.

Mrs Llewellyn asked if the LDF would involve changing the parish boundary. Cllr Matthissen advised only the settlement boundary would be moved.

Concern was expressed regarding the clearance work being carried out at Forge Caravan Park, in Combs Lane, Gt Finborough. Cllr Matthissen is to take action.

8. To receive reports from Local Organisations.

Police

There were 19 reported crimes between 27 April 2008 and 27 April 2009. These were 1 theft of pedal cycle, 3 theft various items, 4 theft from motor vehicle, 1 burglary from other building, 3 burglary of dwellings, 2 criminal damage to motor vehicle, 1 criminal damage to fencing, 2 fraud by false representation, 1 interference with a motor vehicle and 1 taking of

a conveyance. 3 of the crimes have been detected and 16 undetected or no further police action.

Mrs Llewellyn thanked the Police for their presence in the parish during the year.

OHS Community Hall and Playing Field Trust

The last year has been a difficult one for the committee, with Bill Wood resigning as Chairman for legal reasons after having done a huge amount of work getting the Trust back on a firm footing and Mike and Kay Smith resigning from the Sports & Social Club. Ron Raisey took over as Chairman of the Trust in October, with Bryan Jones taking over as Chairman of the Sports & Social Club. Both the Trust and S & S Club now have very hard working people on their committees, people who want to raise money to update the Community Centre to make it a much nicer place to hire out.

Jackie Jones took over as Administrator and has done a marvelous job in sorting out all the paperwork and figures. There has been a tremendous turn around in the financial state of the S & S Club who handed over a very large sum of money to the Trust after their first three months under new management, a lot coming from a very successful New Year's Eve party which was sold out. Weekly takings from the club bar are good, and there was an enjoyable chocolate bingo session held just before Easter superbly organized by Jackie, Laura and Dawn. Even more money was handed over for Katie to bank.

A new door and serving hatch has been put in the kitchen by volunteers and this has improved the room no end. We are very grateful for the help given.

At last the Trust has a substantial amount of money in the account and the committee has decided that the first improvements will be to block up the existing entrance and put a window in there and open up what was the old main entrance again putting in new doors, a disabled ramp and new windows to the kitchen.

The main hall will get a good spring clean and repaint. We will then look at the heating also in the toilets. Once our accounts have been audited we will be applying for various grants to upgrade facilities in the hall.

I can honestly say that the Trust and Sports & Social Club are both going from strength to strength, finances have improved considerably and the future is looking extremely good.

This is in no small way down to both sets of committee members, who have made the job of Chairman very easy and gratitude and thanks go to them all for their unstinted and mostly unheralded work that they do for our village.

OHS Sports and Social Club

Since October 2008 the bar is thriving. Profits have been handed over to the Management Committee and this looks set to become a regular occurrence with the bar making a profit.

The S&S Club and Management Committee are working in harmony and there is absolute transparency and accountability and as such bar staff are much happier to volunteer.

We have had a couple of teething problems, one being the new till which is programmed with itemized purchases and user numbers. Unfortunately this has failed to work for longer than a couple of days and we have now enlisted the help of Karl at the Shepherd & Dog public house whose services we have called on a few times!

We had a very successful New Year's Eve party. Everyone pulled together to put on a brilliant evening of live music and food with tickets selling out in advance.

The S&S Club was able to purchase a new bingo machine for the Managements Committee's Chocolate Bingo evening which was a success. Plans are underway for a Barn Dance to be held in July with live music and food.

Jubilee Players

Another very successful pantomime this year with 4 nights selling out a week before shows and a waiting list for seats! The Committee is a mixture of old faces and new which is a good balance of experience and fresh ideas. The cast is growing in numbers each year with more children of all ages becoming involved.

After years of use the stage is finally giving up and we are in the process of applying for funding for a new one. We have received some contributions which has allowed us to begin with Phase 1 of the project which is to replace the beam which supports the lighting equipment and this has now been purchased. John Roe has kindly donated some stage lights which will be a permanent fixture for the hall to use at any time.

All in all the Jubilee Players are growing again by the year with lost of help and support from many people in the villages, back stage crew and cast. Long may it continue!

OHS Youth Club

The Youth Club is continuing to be very well attended and enjoyed by all. Thankfully we have a few more parents willing to help out as we always need a bank of people to call on. We are entering our 6th year and now have 40 members on the register.

During the winter months we have had fun and games indoors playing soft ball, table tennis, team skipping etc along with arts and crafts, playstation games and our newly acquired wii player. The chill out zone is very popular with the older children and we now have a nice clean piece of carpet to use. The tuck shop is also well used and makes a small profit to put back into funds. Three older members help set up the equipment and run the tuck shop.

Weather permitting we will be able to use the playing field most Thursdays for football and rounders.

At our last session we were able to give each child an Easter egg due to a donation. An Activity Day was organized at Finborough Hall with lunch provided. Everyone had a great time quad biking, crate stacking, rock climbing, canoeing and kayaking. Although they did get wet, they came home tired and happy. We were able to subsidise the day again with money donated.

Our next big project is to enter a float in Stowmarket Carnival in July. The theme is music through the decades. We are still at the planning stage and have a lorry lined up and a few ideas coming forward so we will soon be busy.

Onehouse Church

2008 was a very busy year for the church. The PCC supported by other members of the parish have worked very hard not just to maintain the two buildings of the church and Church Room but have taken on initiatives to further the Christian faith in the community. We have undertaken a Stewardship Campaign and within this is the refurbishment of the Church Room. The worshiping side of life is underpinned not just by regular attendees but by many who touch the life of the church through regular contact with the various activities under the umbrella of the church life. This includes weekly coffee mornings with 25 regular attendees, Skylarks for 5-9 year olds, Explorers for a slightly older age range, Mothers and Toddlers, Table Tennis, Ladies Lunch and Mens Breakfast. A Community Action Group from which has sprung Singing for Pleasure group with the idea of helping various groups in the community such as providing entertainment and refreshments for the History Group at Christmas etc.

Worship includes a monthly Family Service, usually in the Church Room and a Pram Service in Buxhall Church. There are 2 Communion services a month and an evening service. The ministry team consists of the Priest-in charge Rev Lindsay Llewellyn-Macduff assisted by 3 Ordained Local Ministers, 3 Readers and 5 Elders. They all play their part in helping the benefice to function.

Singing for Pleasure

This is an opportunity for those who just enjoy singing but have no ambitions to perform in public, to learn the techniques and disciplines of making use of their voices and exploring different kinds of vocal music. The group has been meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of the month since September and come from all over the Benefice. This is part of the Community Action Group program, an offshoot of the PCC.

Footpath Warden

I have walked most of the footpaths during the past year. Most of them seem to be in an acceptable condition, although this year being rather a cold, frosty and wet winter a few of them were very sloppy and slippery.

The footpaths in Onehouse Woods have been very muddy as they were last year. With all the tree felling and other work going on the footpaths seem to have been rather neglected. They could do with a lot of wood chippings spread over them.

The fence and gate are still knocked down on the footpath going from Lower Road up past the lakes at Onehouse Hall and has been like this for at least four years. We have received some complaints regarding the barbed wire fence along the footpath to Onehouse Hall. This could cause some nasty cuts as the path is quite boxed in with a hedge the other side of the footpath. It has been reported to SCC.

Tree Warden

As I have walked the footpaths I look at the trees around the village and there seems to be no problems although one or two dead ones were blown down in the gales earlier this year.

One has been cleared from Forest Road/Chilton Farm Drive.

Neighbourhood Watch

In the past 12 months there have been few crimes in our village, although the last few months has seen a spate of break ins to motor vehicles, criminal damage to motor vehicles and burglaries.

Surprisingly enough we have been told by the police that a lot of people still leave their cars unlocked with sat navs, cameras, laptops and ipods in full view – an open invitation! Similarly doors and downstairs windows are left open or unlocked in houses.

With the current economic situation, more people are turning to crime to get money to make ends meet. Particularly vulnerable are the elderly, who are often the victims of distraction burglaries and we should all be looking out for our neighbours, helping them whenever we can.

Speeding is an issue that the police are looking at very closely as at least 30 out of the 39 parishes that our Safer Neighbourhood Team looks after have speeding problems. We ourselves have experienced cars and motorbikes racing along Forest Road, unfortunately some of the culprits are from our own village.

We are coming up to the holiday season, so remember to cancel your milk and papers, make sure everywhere is secure. Tell the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator you are going away and they will keep an eye out for your home. Let us know if a neighbour has keys in case of an emergency.

Finally a plea for more volunteers to help us cover the whole parish – two of us can't do the job properly. Ideally we should have at least one person in each road and a particularly vulnerable area at the moment is Lower Road where there are some isolated properties.

Onehouse Mother and Toddler Group

We continue to meet every Monday morning during term times in the Church Room and our numbers have remained constant over the year.

In February 2009 we had to vacate the Community Centre hall where all our equipment was being stored. We are extremely grateful to Kathleen Butt for allowing us to store the majority of equipment in her garage and spare room. We also appreciate the use of the Church Room for storing items that are heavy and used weekly.

We have continued with our regular fundraising to cover our weekly costs, expand our toy and book collection and to purchase items for craft sessions. Our last fundraiser was an Easter Egg hunt in Northfield Wood, followed by refreshments in the Church Room. We also had activities indoors for the children and donations from sales of books and jewellery. Our next fundraising event will be a Pampered Chef evening in May.

This year we aim to raise enough money to purchase small tables and chairs for the children. We hope to store these items in the new shed.

We have arranged two trips to Banham Zoo, one in the summer and one at Christmas which were both well attended. We also enjoyed a trip to Baylam Rare Breeds in March. At Christmas we had a meal for all the adults at Claydon Crown. For the second year running the children enjoyed a party arranged by Arlene Cruickshanks and Kathleen Butt. We thank everyone who has supported us throughout our second year.

OHS Women's Guild

Over the past year the group has taken part in a variety of activities including running the refreshment tent at the OHS village fete. Our membership remains steady at 23 but we are always hopeful to see this increase.

Some events included on the programme were a walk around Needham Lake with MSDC Ranger, a visit to an open garden in Rickinghall, a very enjoyable evening with Karen Kenny of Radio Suffolk, a recipe swap with eats, a talk by Canine Partners, reflexology, a trip to Corncraft in Monks Eleigh, flower arranging for Christmas, a silent auction, a trip to Maroque in Needham Market, a talk by Stowmarket First Responders, an antique valuation by Lacy Scott, a visit to Thornham Owl Project and finally a talk on using a digital camera.

We all enjoy eating and held a garden meeting and supper in Harleston during July. We held our Harvest Supper in the Church Room, prepared by committee members in October and finally a Christmas Party and supper in December at a member's home. The Annual Dinner was held at the Golf Club in Onehouse. The coming year has an equally adventurous programme.

C.A.T.S Report

CATS was started in August 2008 by a small group of residents and we have been involved in tidying up the village, litter picking, various repairs and building work around the Community Centre, cutting grass and cutting vegetation around the estate. We have now installed 14 flower boxes which we have planted up and maintain.

A grant of £750.00 was given by MSDC and donations from residents so far come to £75, which we have used to buy mowers, timber, compost, plants, tools and safety equipment. A big thank you for your generosity.

There has been a great deal of interest in the work and 100% positive feedback and comments. Another 2 people have joined the team and several residents have offered to water plants and help with grass cutting. This makes such a difference and spreads the load so that together we can achieve more.

We will be planting up with summer bedding plants when the spring flowers have finished, other residents are growing some of these.

While we have been working around the village, we have had the help of several young children who are showing a healthy interest in what we are doing and some have offered to look after the plants near to where they live. We thank everyone who is getting involved in any way, the workers, people who donate, the waterers, the growers, refreshment providers, encouraging words and all who enjoy and appreciate the results.

Local History Group

The group has had another successful year. Four members of the Stowmarket Local History Group have visited: Janette Baldry updated on her research of Abbotts Hall, Sue and Steve Williams on Stowmarket Charities and Richard Gale on the history of golf and, in particular, the Stowmarket Golf Club. In June we had a wonderful evening at Westhorpe Lodge Farm with a tractor ride, a browse around the museum and refreshments. We had a lovely meal at the Shepherd and Dog and at Christmas the evening was run by members of the Church Group. Numbers at meetings remain constant at 12/14 but greater numbers for some speakers.

This year we are looking at the changes that have taken place in this area during the 20th century, and these meetings are being recorded. In March Clive Taylor led us through schools and schooling with input from former members of Onehouse School and in April Richard Gale gave an illustrated talk on golf. We will be looking at farming and visiting the Transport Museum in Ipswich in the coming months.

Local History Recorder

I rely on the minutes of the Parish Council and the OHSMag. The Ipswich Records Office in Ipswich confirms they have one or two copies of early OHSMags but would welcome copies to date and I am in the process of arranging this.

As far as the parish is concerned work is continuing with the erection of a new bungalow on land that was part of and lies in front of 28 Forest Road and there is activity on the south side of Lower Road. For many years the Highways Department adamantly refused permissions as it was considered the nature of Lower Road at this point was unsuitable for additional ingress/egress of traffic. Changes have taken place at Reed Farm, farm buildings are being converted, additions and alterations to the main building, while the adjacent bungalow has been razed and a new building being erected.

The Stowmarket Golf Club has leased further land on the north side of Lower Road in order to create a Pitch and Putt course alongside the Driving Range. The hedge at Lodge Cottage, Lower Road has been trimmed back and revealed the milestone.

In Northfield Wood the Muntjac have been culled but the Roe deer appear to be thriving. Further work has taken place within the Wood. Footpath 4 from Forest Road to the Church has deteriorated badly during the winter months. The daffodils which were planted by members of the Parish Council around the parish several years ago have given a splendid show this year, the visibility splays around Forest Road and the Estate have been tidied, wooden containers sited and planted by members of the newly formed CATS team. Work has continued at the Paupers Graves, which was officially rededicated last year. The George Ward Memorial Service took place in May and included a very nostalgic flight over the church by a Halifax bomber from the British War Memorial Group at RAF Coningsby. Both these events were recorded and placed with the East Anglian Film Archives in Norwich.

Social life within the parish continues quietly and successfully according to need. The Youth Club and the recently formed Mother and Toddler group are flourishing. Activities lead by the church are widening thereby making full use of the Church Room. All groups are run on a voluntary basis and it is a healthy sign that younger people are coming forward to help. Grant aid continues to be sought for the more expensive items needing attention i.e. the east wall window of the Parish Church, staging for Jubilee Players, surfacing and fencing of the Church Room car park, this being necessary following Police advice so that their Officers can support the removal of any illegal parking.

9. Any other business

The PCC has asked for extra copies of OHSMag for out of the parishes church members to receive a copy. This will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

Concerns were expressed again regarding hogweed growing by the footpath at the back of Chilton Meadows. DEFRA has responsibility for notifiable plants.

The meeting closed at 8.36 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....

