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2009 – 1

The Annual Open Meeting of the Wistow Parish Council took place on Tuesday 28th April 2009 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, with Mr Franklin in the Chair.

1. Apologies for absence: there were no apologies
- 1.1. Present: Mr Franklin, Dr Farrar, Mr Willams, Mr Leigh, Ms Robinson, Mr Bucknell, Mr Ward, Mr Lucas, Mrs Coles (Clerk), together with 7 members of the public.
2. To sign and approve the minutes of the Annual Open Meeting held on 29th April 2008
 - 2.1. The minutes, having been circulated around the Councillors prior to this meeting, being available at the meeting for the public to peruse, and there being no further comments, were voted upon and unanimously confirmed as being a true record.
3. Financial statement – Mr H Franklin
 - 3.1. Mr Franklin welcomed the villagers present and thanked them for coming.
 - 3.2. A copy of Wistow Parish Council's Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2009 were available for inspection, Mr Franklin asked for comments on the Financial Statement and there were none.
4. Chairman's Report – Mr H Franklin

2008 has been fairly uneventful in the village, David Titmarsh, our Parish Clerk for the past 6 years or so resigned due to pressure of his work as a District Nurse as well as the extra work of the Parish. However, he agreed to stay on until a new Clerk could be found. After several interviews, the Council decided to appoint Mrs Patsy Coles as the new Parish Clerk. Thank you Patsy, and we wish you well. It is also very nice to see Gordon MacInnes back on the Council after his illness. I would like to thank District Councillor Peter Bucknell for standing in for Gordon during his absence. We also welcomed Deborah Robinson as the first female Councillor for some years.

The Bridge seems to have been to some people some sort of catalyst to some of the latent thoughts and ideas. I will mention the Bridge again in my Road Report. On a brighter note (no pun intended) the Wistow in Bloom committee achieved another Silver Award, and on behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank the Committee for all their hard work and all the villagers who made the extra

effort to make Wistow look extra special. (Though I know that not everybody agrees with what is done). On a more somber note, the Youth Club that was set up some eighteen months or so ago folded in the Autumn through lack of support and shortage of helpers and as a Council we are very concerned about it. At the other end of the scale, it is nice to see the Toddlers Group is back. Perhaps it can be kept going long enough to be the next Youth Club! We also welcome the new Wistow walking club, set up by our Clerk, Patsy Coles, which had its first outing yesterday, thank you Patsy.

- 4.1. A question was asked regarding the cost of grass cutting and it was confirmed that the sum of £4067 quoted was for 2 years.

5. Streetlight report – Dr R Farrar

A full survey of the Parish's street lights was completed a year or so ago, yet the County Council still seemed to be working on their old numbering system, resulting in some confusion. The County Council's records have now been updated to reflect our register of street lights and the actual numbers on the street lamps themselves.

The Government consultation to propose a new lighting strategy to meet the conflicting requirements of better street lighting, whilst trying to reduce carbon emissions, save energy and reduce light pollution is still underway. The Parish Council is still monitoring this situation as any future lighting strategy for Wistow will have to fit in with these eventual guidelines.

- 5.1. A question was asked regarding the lack of a number on the light outside The Thatched Cottage in Church Street and Dr Farrar agreed to look into this.

6. Playground report – Mr H Franklin

You may have noticed several changes to the playing field over the last year. We have now completed the renewal of the rubber matting under all of the play items, which have all been repainted. New nets have been fitted to the goals, both have been cemented in place, and the vandalized obstacle course has been repaired. A monthly check of all the apparatus is now to be carried out by Council members to fulfill our grant conditions for the play matting and to ensure that the matting is kept in good condition. So, as I mentioned last year, this facility, while a very good asset to the village, is still a bit of a black hole money-wise. One pleasing note is that no acts of vandalism have been reported, though litter is still a bit of a problem despite the extra litter bin.

7. Allotment report

The Parish Council has undertaken further hedge trimming at the site. Ongoing consideration has been given to the Tenancy Agreement during the year and the new version is now ready to be issued. Rents will be reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure a fair rent is paid for the allotments.

8. Traffic and Road Issues – Mr H Franklin

The Group set up to look after road issues has not met for some time so it falls on me to give a short report on current issues. The major issue this year has been and still is the Bridge. Most of you have attended both of the public meetings and made your views known. The latest update (unless Patsy has any more) is that the purchase of the land is proceeding and both stages of the project will go ahead at the same time.

Traffic calming – a new group is being set up to deal with this and other matters, so I cannot say what they will come up with. Any recommendations will be put to the village. You will have noted that the damaged curbs have been repaired on the corner of Oaklands Avenue/Church Street. We have had several letters about the state of some roads and these complaints have been passed on to the County Council for their action.

Lastly some of you will be aware that Speedwatch cameras have been used in Wistow and local villages. Speedwatch is backed by the Police and their aim is not to book a motorist for speeding but to educate drivers to keep to the correct speed.

- 8.1. A question was asked regarding the scope of Speedwatch and Mr Lucas replied that any one observed speeding or tailgating would have their registration number taken and passed to the police who would issue a letter. Repeat offenders would receive a visit from the police. It was asked if motorists were reported if on the phone and it was confirmed that wherever possible this would be reported.

9. Pedestrians, footpaths and countryside – Mr R Cook

As Mr Cook was not present at the meeting this report has been added to the minutes.

Pedestrians: All the re-surfacing works are now complete, we had asked for drop kerbs for our wheel chair guys to get around more safely but that was not with in the budget.

Public Footpaths: We have further funding this year from the County Council to open up some of our lost paths, should any one wish to help to clear areas that are over grown etc please contact myself or Patsy.

Most of the bridges have been replaced but help is still required to keep them in good order.

The Country Side: Dog fouling is still a great problem now that the dog population of the village is still growing. It is an offence for a dog to foul the public high way; this includes verges, so please clean it up. The main problem areas are Harris Lane at both ends, and the footpath just over the bridge. We have more than enough poo bins for a small village.

10. Village Hall – Mr C Leigh

The Parish Council has two representatives on the Village Hall Committee to ensure that any relevant information is passed to the Village Hall Committee and visa versa.

The two representatives assist wherever possible and with the preparation and running of village hall events. Last year the Parish Council assisted in all events including Sports Day, Music Night, Flower stall and the Cricked Day. It is also working with the Village Hall on a number of projects including hall improvement

11. Youth Club – Dr R Farrar

Clubs and Societies

In response to requests from the villagers via the parish plan a youth club was set up in the village hall, running every Thursday evening. Unfortunately due to lack of support from the older children in particular, this has now had to close.

This is extremely sad for the village, bearing in mind that the youth club was set up as a direct response to the villager's wishes, yet when it was running those same villager's didn't seem to support it.

A big thanks must go to Veronica Barker and Samantha Newton for all of their hard work and effort in getting the youth club of the ground and for persevering with it for so long.

On a brighter note, a **History society** has been setup to research the history of our village, with the ultimate aim of producing a book on the history of Wistow. Good progress has been made with the discovery of a Romano-British settlement amongst many other things. The history society meets once a month at Jo Latter's house. If anyone is interested in joining, please contact Jo.

Communication

The village website www.wistovillage.info, launched at the end of September 2006, is now receiving over 1,000 page views each month. The website is continually being updated and improved. For example, **Parish council agendas** have been added to the website and are now posted on the website in advance of the parish council meetings.

Following the set up of the Wistow History Society, a new article has been added to the village history section of the website, detailing the **origins of the name Wistow**.

News and events are updated on the website on a regular basis.

- 11.1. A question was asked about funding for the disbanded youth club and Dr Farrar replied that any balance left from the Youth Bank funding would have to be returned under the terms of the contract.
12. Any other business from the Parish
 - 12.1. Regarding the Bridge, it was asked when work is planned to commence. It was confirmed that it is scheduled for October although repairs to the damaged parapet had been due to take place in April and have been chased up.
 - 12.2. Regarding the village sign it was asked where a draft of the design had been available and it was confirmed that it was on the website and had been in the Warbler. The sign will be sited on the village green, outside Lodes Cottage, at present there is just the concrete pad.
 - 12.3. The issue of parking was raised as parking on the pavements made it difficult for pedestrians, prams and wheelchair users. If there is a parking offence it can be reported to our PCSO but it is more about education of drivers. Hedges overhanging the road in Manor Street and the footpath at the corner of Rooks Grove Farm/Harris Lane were also a problem.
 - 12.4. The use of the funding from the Parish Paths Partnership to reinstate a foot path at the end of Harris Lane was questioned and this would be reported back. Blacks Lane (footpath to Broughton) was considered to be in need of urgent attention.
 - 12.5. Mr Bance reported that on 9th May between 10am and 2pm the Brownies would be doing a walk for the Duke of Edinburgh award and the older children would be walking through the night, from 7pm – 7am, also as part of the award.

- 12.6. There was a question whether adult exercise equipment for the playground could be considered but Mr Bucknell pointed out that there were many health and safety and RoSPA issues to overcome and that such equipment was very expensive.
- 12.7. It was asked whether any allotments were available for villagers to use for domestic produce. The allotments are all currently tenanted and they have been the subject of much debate over the years. The tenants have rights under the Agricultural Holdings Act and, with a new tenant, a tenancy agreement has been drafted to set up a line of communication and address the issues on the land. It was confirmed that payment of fees had not been made to any outside agencies for advice on this matter.
- 12.8. There was a request for new signage on footpaths requesting that dog owners keep their dogs on leads.

There being no further business, Mr Franklin thanked everybody for coming and the Meeting closed at 8.15 pm