

**A COPY OF THESE MINUTES WILL SOON BE ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE
WISTOW WEB-SITE: 'Www.wistovvillage.info'
- 2008 - 1 -**

The Annual Parish Meeting of the Wistow Parish Council took place on Tuesday 29th April 2008 at 7.30pm in the Wistow Village Hall, with Mr Franklin in the chair.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mr MacInnes, Mr Leigh.

1.1 PRESENT: Mr Franklin, Dr Farrar, Mr Latter, Mr Williams, Mr Cook, Mr Bucknell, Mr Ward, Mr Lucas and Mr Titmarsh (Clerk) together with 10 members of the public.

**2 TO SIGN AND APPROVE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL OPEN MEETING
DATED 24TH MAY 2007**

2.1 The minutes having been circulated around the Councillors prior to this meeting, and them being available at the door 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 members of the public present.

3.2 As a copy of the Wistow Parish Council's Annual Accounts for the year ending the 31st March 2008, were also available at the door for anyone to read, Mr Franklin asked if anyone had any comments at this stage. No one present commented on this Financial Statement.

As 2 members of the public needed to leave the meeting soon, it was asked if a couple of items under Agenda Item 12 could be raised at this point in the meeting. There was no objection to this, and so these members of the public addressed the meeting at this point.

12.1 One member of the public present, Sam helped to run the Wistow Youth Club currently for just over a year. It was stated that the younger age range attended the Youth Club fairly well, but the older teenagers were not coming to it at all now. Closing the club was mentioned, but the Parish Council Chairman asked that this be postponed for a little while yet, to see what could be done to boost attendance in this age group. Sam agreed to do an article for the next edition of the Wistow Warbler, and it was agreed that that the views of the village children should also be obtained somehow. An Internet connection in the Village Hall was discussed as a possible cause for these youngsters not coming to the Group. Sam also mentioned that if her or the other main organiser of the Youth Club, Veronica was unable to make it anytime, that some other Adult help would be beneficial. It was also stated that the Youth Club currently have to pay themselves for the hire of the Village Hall and any heating costs. It was agreed for the Wistow Parish Council to discuss this further at their meeting after this Open Meeting ended.

Sam was very much thanked for her time with the Youth Club and for coming to this meeting, and left at 7.50pm.

12.2 Another member of the public expressed an interest in taking over any Allotment land that might become available in the future. This member of the public, Dr Manwaring of Chepstow House, Mill Road passed his details to the Clerk, who agreed to contact him, when any land became available.

Dr Manwaring then also left the meeting at 7.55pm.

The Agenda then continued as previously.

4 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - MR H FRANKLIN

4.1 Mr Franklin then read out his Chairman's' Report for 2007 to the public present. 'The last year has been much better for the Parish Council and you may have noticed some changes throughout the village. You remember the Parish Plan? Well some more of the items you asked for have been achieved. A new post box in Oakland's Avenue. New litter bins have or are about to be installed. Communications, we now have a new Parish Council Noticeboard and our own village Web site. A Youth Club has been formed in the Village Hall, and seems to be flourishing for the younger children, but sadly not so well supported by the teenagers. On the negative side the Parish Council decided that the idea of a village shop and Post Office was not possible at this stage. The village sign project is still alive, but we are finding it difficult to obtain funding. Several of the other projects whilst still on our Agenda are mainly beholden on County Council decisions.... Other things you may have noticed include a new flag pole in the Church yard, and on behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank all those folk involved. A Hornbeam tree was acquired by the Parish Council in remembrance of Richard Cracknell, and is sited on the grass verge opposite the church.

The village was very successful in last year's Anglia in Bloom competition gaining a silver award and an award for the most improved entry. As a Council we would like to thank the Wistow in Bloom committee and all of the villagers who help in any way.

The hedge along the Allotments has now been trimmed back.

I have kept the bad news till last. I am sure that you will all have noticed that we have increased the Precept for this year by 100%. I would stress that this is a one off situation and has brought about by the dangerous state of the play matting in the playing field. (It may well be considerably cheaper than being sued in the case of an accident.) Lastly on a sad note, I am sure you are all aware of the illness of Gordon MacInnes, one of our Councillors. On behalf of the Council and this meeting, we wish him a speedy recovery and we look forward to his return. In the meantime Peter Bucknell, our District Councillor has agreed to take Gordon's place for a short period.

I am sure that you would like to ask questions of the Council?'

4.2 A member of the public asked about the Parish Plan Document, and questioned whether enough had been done yet by Wistow. Mr Bucknell also stated that the District Council had only just started taking the idea of Parish Plan's seriously.

4.3 The idea of new Play Matting in the Playing Field was queried by a member of the public, Mr Paul Turner at the meeting, and whether full thickness matting was necessary for low height equipment. Mr Turner suggested that the results of the ROSPA Report should perhaps have been questioned by the Parish Council, before the decision made to increase the Precept to pay for this new matting. Mr Turner went on to say that he believed the Parish Council should have consulted the village as a whole before committing to this Precept increase, and that this should definitely be done with any future large scale expenditure such as traffic calming measures.

5 STREETLIGHT REPORT - DR R FARRAR

5.1 Dr Farrar read out the following Report.

‘A full survey of the Parish’s streetlights has been completed and reviewed by the County Council Lighting Department. For the first time, this now gives us an accurate and definitive account of the Parish Council's streetlights.

A page has now been set up on the village web site, “<http://www.wistovvillage.info/info/lights.php>,” listing all of the streetlights under the Parish Council's direct responsibility, which also provides details of how to report faulty streetlights to the Cambridgeshire County Council Street Lighting department.

A major national government consultation is currently underway 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. The Parish Council is still monitoring this situation as any future lighting strategy for Wistow will have to fit in with these eventual guidelines, this is likely to take some time to complete.”

6 PLAYGROUND REPORT - MR H FRANKLIN

6.1 Mr Franklin read out the following Report.

‘The Playing Field is still a popular and well used village asset. Sadly we suffer from a certain amount of vandalism. Goal posts were broken due to continual moving, some of the picnic tables were damaged due once again to being moved about, two large planks were removed from the side of the Aerial Runway and damage was done to the small wooden obstacle course. All of the things are fairly minor but very frustrating and of course cost us all money. As I mentioned before, we are going to finish replacing the play matting as well as painting up all of the equipment, we have also purchased two new goal nets, these will be fitted when we have secured the goal posts. Lastly, we have acquired another litter bin so this may help keep the field a little bit tidier. So you can see that we are spending a lot of money on this facility, so if you see anyone abusing anything on the field please let us know.’

6.2 It was stated by a member of the public that adults were seen using the Play Equipment and dogs were also seen in the Playing Field, which is strictly banned.

7 ALLOTMENT REPORT - MR H FRANKLIN/ MR J LATTER

7.1 Mr Latter addressed the meeting, and stated that Mr Bance had recently given up his Allotment Land, and the land in principal offered to another resident in the village, Mr Bowd, following advertisements taking place, and representations being made at a meeting recently. Mr Latter also stated that the Allotment Title Deeds had tried to be located, but had proved unsuccessful. The Allotment Hedge being cut back recently was also mentioned, and it was stated by several members of the public, that this was done very poorly, even though it had been done by Lord De Ramsey's Contractor, and it was mentioned whether the hedge should be taken out completely.

8 TRAFFIC & ROAD ISSUES - MR H FRANKLIN/ MR R COOK

8.1 The following Report was read out.

'A small percentage of speeding cars through the village are in fact some of those who live in Wistow. I would like to set the ball rolling again as it has been quite quiet with nothing coming to the table from County, those still wishing to be a part of the working group, a date for another meeting will be set in the very near future.'

8.2 Mr Franklin also went onto say that speed cameras had been done in the last year, and meetings have taken place, but the points set by the County Council for Wistow are not enough to warrant any proper Traffic Calming Measures currently.

8.3 A member of the public, Mr Juggins stated that thought needs to be considered about businesses in the village.

8.4 It was mentioned that Heavy Goods Vehicles were coming through the village, and Mr Lucas stated that if anyone sees this happening, to report the number plate of this vehicle, together with where it was seen, to the Trading Standards Department, under the Lorry Watch Scheme.

8.5 Another member of the public, Mrs Bance mentioned about the plans for the Bridge, and Mr Lucas expanded on the current 2 options being considered for the Bridge, and that these options would be officially be put before the Parish Council. When this happens, it was suggested that these be put to the village as a whole to help decide on the final outcome.

8.6 It was also stated that at the bottom of the Bridge on the way to the Broughton Crossroad's, on the border of Wistow and Broughton Parishes, more reflectors were needed, as had been mentioned in the previous year's minutes. It was agreed for the Clerk to write to the Cambridgeshire County Council about this once again.

9 PEDESTRIANS, FOOTPATHS AND COUNTRYSIDE REPORT - MR R COOK

9.1 Mr Cook read out the following Report.

‘Pedestrians - due to lack of funds at the end of the last financial year, nothing could be done to improve our pedestrian paths around the village. The answer to my question of the Cambridgeshire County Council Highways regarding the resurfacing work long overdue was that we are a ‘W’ which as we all know is at the end of the alphabet therefore we fall towards the end of each financial year and the New Year starts with guess what, yes ‘A’.

Public Footpaths - As can be seen the old bridges are slowly being changed for a better and wider type. We hope in the near future to try and link up with the ‘Pathfinder Way’ across to Warboys, and we are in conversation with Warboys Parish Council and John Cooper who heads up the County's Rights of Ways to include Footpaths and Bridle ways. We may however require voluntary help to place a bridge over the stream. We are also looking into further possibilities of other Permissive Footpath’s.

The Countryside - Dog fouling is still a major problem as is 'Fly tipping', both carry heavy fines, but this does not seem to deter people. The dog problem in the main is the grass track opposite Harris Lane and the bottom end of Harris Lane just past the last house, there are poo bins in both areas. Also on the footpath towards Bury there is on order a bin for here. It’s not only dog walkers who use these footpaths, **‘so please clean it up.’**

9.2 Mr Cook also went on to say that the footpath marking was not completed yet by the County Council, and Mr Lucas stated that if he is informed of the work to be done, he’ll follow it up. Monks Wood area was also discussed, and that the Parish Footpath goes all the way around it.

9.3 A member of the public, Mr Benson asked what the public could do, if they witnessed any fly tipping taking place. Mr Bucknell stated that fly tipping was under the remit of the Environment Agency and the District Council, so to report any such incident with the Registration Number of the people seen leaving it, to them. Mr Bucknell also stated that the District Council try to clear away the rubbish as soon as possible, and try to identify whose rubbish it might be, at the same time.

9.4 It was also stated that the state of the bottom end of the footpath opposite Harris Lane was extremely muddy, and that this had been drawn to the attention of the respective landowner.

10 VILLAGE HALL REPORT - MR R COOK/ MR C LEIGH

10.1 Mr Cook read out an e-mail from Mr Leigh stating that quotations were currently being obtained for updating the Village Hall, but no decision had been made as of yet.

11 YOUTH CLUB REPORT - DR R FARRAR/ MR C WILLIAMS

11.1 Dr Farrar read out the following Report.

‘A Youth Club was set up in the village just over a year ago, running every Thursday evening in the Village Hall from 18.00-21.30. Unfortunately due to lack of support from the older children, this may rather sadly have to close. However, the younger children have supported the Youth Club very well, so it would be nice if this could continue, if a moderate source of funding could be secured.

A History Society has recently been set up in the village to try and research as much as possible about the history of our village, with the ultimate aim of producing a book on the history of Wistow. The history society meets once a month.

Communication - This village web site ‘www.wistowvillage.info’ was launched at the end of September 2006 and now attracts approximately 300 visitors a month. The web site is regularly updated with forthcoming events, news articles, village photographs, parish council minutes, free ads and lots of general village information, with the photograph section proving particularly popular. The web site has also attracted various e-mail's from people interested in the village over the past year.’

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS FROM THE PARISH

12.3 The Grass cutting in the Churchyard was discussed, and a complaint had been received by Mr Bucknell about the state of the last cut. Reverend Dowman was aware of this complaint, but it was stated that this contractor also did the Bury Churchyard area.

12.4 A member of the public, Mr Paul Turner reported that the Church Clock face needed some attention, and that he was in the process of obtaining some quotations for this. Mr Turner asked if the Parish Council could possibly contribute something towards this maintenance cost. Mr Turner agreed to pass these quotations to the Clerk when received, when it would be discussed more fully.

12.5 In Oakland's Avenue behind the garages, it was reported that a grassy hill had been built up, and some items burnt on it, including some wooden drawers. Mr Bucknell stated that he was aware of the grassy hill, but not of the burning of the items, as it was on Huntingdonshire District Council's land.

Thanks were made to the members of the public for their attendance tonight.

There being no further business, the Annual Open Meeting closed at 9pm.