

**BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup>. May 2010 AT**  
**7.30 PM IN BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs A Edmonds (Chairman), C Beesty, B Beinder, J Corfield, M Esdale, M Gulvin, J Hill, T Wilmshurst, Philip Wicker, BEST, Janet Larkinson, Chairman Harbledown & Rough Common PC; No Man's Orchard, Jon Shelton KSCP, C Seath (Clerk), and 11 parishioners

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Lewis, County Councillor M Northey and City Councillor John Anderson,

**2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>st</sup>. May 2009**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup>. May 2009 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**3a. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2009/2010**

Councillor Ann Edmonds welcomed the speakers and residents of Bridge to the meeting. She outlined the projects which had been undertaken in the village during the past year. Speedwatch equipment was being hired from Lower Hardres Parish Council on a monthly basis and any volunteers to help with this project would be very welcome.

At long last, planning permission had been granted for the affordable housing scheme in Brickfields. The outcome of the application for village green status for Brickfields and the water meadows would be known by the end of the month. The greater crested newt survey was under way on the site and an archaeological investigation was being organised.

Negotiations to buy the Mill Centre had stalled. Following the closure of the oil depot it was possible that the city council would use the site for housing. The parish council was concerned about the potential loss of this facility for the youth of the village.

A skateboard ramp had been hired for the recreation ground over the May Bank Holiday. This would test out the local interest. Full consultation with the village would take place before any decision was made to purchase a ramp for Bridge. A grant had been received from the city council towards to cost of adult outdoor exercise equipment for the recreation ground. Both the bridge over the Nailbourne at Patribourne Rd and the spider climbing frame would shortly be refurbished.

Tenders for the new bus shelter near the pharmacy had been received and planning permission granted. Cllr Northey had provided funding from his local projects fund for build outs by the zebra crossing and he had also donated £618 from his members' fund for the refurbishment of the sports pavilion. The poor surface of the road by the zebra crossing had been reported frequently to Kent Highway Services but potholes on minor roads are their present priority.

A replacement bench for the corner of Beech Hill had been ordered because the previous bench was vandalised in April.

Councillor Edmonds thanked the villagers who took part in the litter pick in April and the Spring tidy up of the recreation ground. She expressed particular thanks to Councillor Lewis and his team of volunteer litter collectors and to those who again helped to put up the Christmas trees.

Six councillors had attended the meeting in Bishopsbourne the previous evening to discuss the pumping of sewage into the Nailbourne. It was anticipated that the Environment Agency & Southern Water would work together to prevent a recurrence of the problem.

The chairman thanked Liz and Bill Oakey for once again planting the chicane and Mr & Mrs Possee who continue to plant the tubs in the High Street.

Councillor Edmonds concluded by thanking the Village Hall Management Committee and also Councillor Hill and Esdale for their assistance earlier in the year when she was unwell. She thanked Councillor Hill for chairing the planning committee and Councillor Esdale for the fantastic website and keeping the parish council on target with the

finances. She particularly thanked the councillors and the clerk for their hard work and support during the past year.

Councillor Edmonds announced that a tree in memory of the late John Purchase would be planted on the recreation ground the following Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May at 12 noon.

**3b. THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2009/10**

Cllr Esdale presented the accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. He explained, with the help of pie charts, the sources of the parish income, how the money had been spent and the plans for the use of the reserves over the next year.

**4a. PRESENTATION BY JANET HORSLEY – HON CHAIRMAN, BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Bridge village hall would be renovated thanks to a grant of £19,000 from KCC and £9,000 matched funding from CCC. A new storage corridor would be created with cupboards and a trolley table. The kitchen would be remodelled and would be slightly smaller with new units and a new floor. There would be three toilets including a disabled toilet and a new water heater. Work would begin on 26<sup>th</sup>, July and was due to end on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. New chairs had been bought for the hall during the past year.

**5a. PRESENTATION BY PHILIP WICKER – CONVENOR - BRIDGE ENERGY SAVING TEAM**

BEST grew out of the previous year's Annual Parish Meeting when a speaker from Ashton Hayes made a presentation about becoming a carbon neutral village. A group of enthusiastic villagers formed a committee to provide good quality advice to local people on low carbon issues. A short video had been made, which was shown to the meeting. An information event had been held in December and a coffee morning in March. The group had a website that could be accessed via the village website [www.bridgevillage.org.uk/BEST](http://www.bridgevillage.org.uk/BEST). In addition to lots of helpful advice, there was a quiz on the website which residents might find interesting. BEST would have a stall at the village fete in June and would be promoting the 10;10 campaign and asking people to sign up to the energy saving campaign. Residents were also invited to enter their energy consumption figures onto the website and join the group which meets at 47 High Street, the home of Philip Wicker.

**5b. PRESENTATION BY JANET LARKINSON - NO MANS ORCHARD CHARTHAM HATCH & JON SHELTON - KENTISH STOUR COUNTRYSIDE PARTNERSHIP ON COMMUNITY ORCHARDS**

Mrs Larkinson explained that the orchard belonged jointly to Harbledown & Rough Common PC and Chartham PC and had been acquired as an established orchard about 15 years ago. The orchard was run by a committee of 8, with 4 representatives from each parish. The group was advised by the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership which helped with obtaining funding and sourcing old varieties of apple trees. One or two trees needed to be replaced each year and orders had to be placed about 2 years in advance. Residents paid £15 per year to rent trees or could pay £50 for life ownership, although this was now being increased to £75. Eight years ago the site gained Local Nature Reserve status and aimed to promote biodiversity. Many community events had been run in the orchard including bat and moth evenings, poetry readings, musical events, an Apple Day in October etc. The site was some way from Chartham and had no toilets or parking facilities. The North Downs Way ran through it.

Jon Shelton of the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership showed pictures of the orchard and some of the events that had been held there. He explained that the site covered 10 acres but other much smaller community orchards existed in the area. There were four main varieties of apple grown including some cider apples. KSCP gave advice and Natural England were occasionally called in to give expert advice. The main cost was pruning the trees, which was required every two to three years. This cost around £2,000 and had to be done professionally. The cost was borne by the project not by individual tree owners. KSCP volunteers had helped with fencing and other maintenance tasks.

Funding was available to purchase land and start up orchards. Orchards could be any size from one acre of 15 trees up awards. Longer-term maintenance was expensive for apple or pear trees but less so for cherry or plum trees.

**6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Tony Walder proposed a vote of thanks to the parish council for its on-going work on behalf of the village.

The meeting closed at 8.45p.m.

Chairman .....

Date .....