

Minutes of the Parish Assembly

Date 22nd April 2010 **Venue** Newnham Clubroom **Commencing** 8pm

Present Chairman Roger Booth **Deputy Chairman** Jeff Ford

Parish Councillors Nigel Bell, Sue Mann, Sheyne Bauermeister **Clerk** Susan Turner

Guests Maria Miller, Borough Cllrs Sven Godesen, Stephen Marks;
Kate Tuck and Clive Pinder from SOLVE; PC Andy Reid **Parishioners** 27

- 1 INFORMAL SESSION** Grateful thanks to the Clubroom Committee for providing teas, coffee and biscuits. Information displays featured SOLVE (Save Our Loddon Valley & Environment), Community Plan, Clubroom, Newnham Green tree, Oppé garden, Newnham church bells, Grit bins, Villager comment book, Literature from OCH and St Michael's Hospice, copies of the Parish Council Annual Report, Footpath Officer's Report, Newnham Green Protection Association Report, Minutes of the 2009 Parish Assembly.
- 2 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**
 - 2.1 Welcome** The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the guests and all attendees.
 - 2.2 Apologies** Cllr Elaine Still, Cllr Ian Riley, Onnalee Cubitt, Thomas, Val and Paddy Buckley, Martyn Glover, Glenys and Robin Howard, Chris Broughton, Judy McNeil, Gill Rendall.
- 3 MINUTES OF 2009 PARISH ASSEMBLY** were agreed as a true record of the Parish Assembly of 23rd April 2009. Proposed by Peter Brown, seconded by Adam Rendall, carried unanimously. The minutes were published on the website and made available in the hall prior to the meeting.
- 4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA**
 - 4.1 Clubroom Planning Permission** had been approved on 15th April 2010.
 - 4.2 Comments book in the Hall before the Assembly** The Chairman thanked everyone who had left a comment in the book regarding the choice of new tree for Newnham Green, siting of new Grit bins, and the redesign of the *Villager*.
- 5. REVIEW OF 2009/10 ANNUAL REPORT**
 - 5.1 Annual Report** The *Annual Report* was posted on the Website and printed copies were delivered to all households two weeks before the Assembly. The Chairman asked the Assembly if they thought that delivering the *Annual Report* was a worthwhile exercise. The Assembly unanimously confirmed their appreciation of receiving the *Report*. The Chairman noted that at present the *Report* was delivered door-to-door by Parish Councillors and in future the Parish Council may be seeking volunteers.
 - 5.2 Review of 2009/10** The *Annual Report* covers the main issues of Planning, Traffic management, the Clubroom and Finance. The Chairman made particular mention of the following:
 - 5.2.1 The Villager** Changes have been made to the *Villager* and the Editor would appreciate ongoing feedback. Thank you to those who made comments in the book prior to the Assembly.
 - 5.2.2 Newnham Road Pavement** The Chairman thanked Judy McNeil for raising the petition for a pavement along Newnham Road. BDBC's budget for funding the project has been confirmed, and Jamie Daley, BDBC Neighbourhood Development Officer, will now investigate the options and prepare designs and costings for schemes on both sides of the road. Our thanks go to County Councillor Elaine Still for a grant of £2,000 towards the pavement from her devolved budget. Once the options have been prepared by BDBC, the Parish Council will arrange for full public consultation, including an open Saturday afternoon in the Clubroom.
 - 5.2.3 SHLAA** The Parish Council responded to BDBC's Key Themes Consultation on the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework, published on the Parish Council Website, and is now preparing for the SHLAA v4 Consultation (see 7.3). We have not yet seen the SHLAA for Hart District Council, but it will certainly include additional housing in Hook, which, even if built on the Hook House Farm site on the east of Hook, will further increase traffic through our Parish.

ACTION

- 5.2.4 Parish Council Precept The Precept or direct charge for the Parish Council represents less than 1.6% of parishioner's total Council tax for this financial year.

The Parish Council decided in November 2009 to increase the Precept for this year (20010/11) to £5,200, an increase of £600 over the previous two years. The decision was made because the Parish Council incurred additional costs for the hire of the Speed Limit Reminder (SLR) sign and speed recorder (Dec 09/Jan 10) plus a further rental period was proposed for Spring 2011. Also the Parish Council made donations of £450 to St Michael's Hospice in 2008/09 and 2009/10 without any Precept increase to cover this. In the event, it has been decided not to proceed with the second SLR rental and this money could be used to contribute to Country Watch funds.

5.3 Questions

- 5.3.1 Newnham Hill BEST Payment How was the £7,000 financial contribution from Newnham Hill to be used? The Chairman said that so far the Parish Council had spent £150 towards the Gateway feature at the entrance to Newnham on Old School Road. The remainder was ringfenced for Newnham for the next 10 years. Funds would possibly be allocated to the Clubroom Car Park or A30 road safety.
- 5.3.2 What were the recorded speeds in Newnham Road? PC Reid supplied a copy of the figures which indicated an average reduction of 2mph during the deployment of the SLR (see *Villager* March 2010).
- 5.3.3 Tylney Lane There was growing concern at the activities of people – including youths on bikes – congregating at the bottom of Tylney Lane; the previous week the horses had been let out of the field. PC Reid said that the police had extended their patrol presence but very few people had been seen. Beyond the gate toward the golf course was in Rotherwick Parish and he had asked Hook police to be vigilant.
- 5.3.4 Smartwater Do the Police still provide Smartwater? PC Reid said it was available at £15 and a good deterrent as its properties were widely understood by thieves.
- 5.3.5 Hand held speed guns PC Reid had previously mentioned an new initiative for Local Police Officers to be allocated hand held speed guns. This was to be in part funded by contributing councils and Newnham Parish Council had said it would be willing to contribute towards the purchase of a speed gun provided other parishes did the same. PC Reid said the Chief Constable, Mr Marshal, was piloting the speed guns in Winchester and they should be more widely available very shortly.
- 5.3.6 The Barracks Cars were occasionally parked at night on the road to the Barracks just beyond Hook Tyres, the occupants remaining inside. This was a concern if children were walking home, walking the dog etc. PC Reid said he will check out the situation.
- 5.3.7 Fly Tipping How did the Parish Council deal with fly tipping? The Chairman said that it was the responsibility of BDBC street cleaning team to remove and dispose of litter and rubbish that was dumped. PC Reid said that BDBC had powers to prosecute on behalf of the police if the items could be traced and the offenders caught.

6. BEAT OFFICER'S REPORT

6.1 Reports to Police from Nately Sures (2009)

- 6.1.1 Reported crime
- | | |
|---------------------|----|
| Reported crime 2006 | 13 |
| Reported crime 2007 | 5 |
| Reported crime 2008 | 17 |
| Reported crime 2009 | 7 |

PC Reid said that it must be remembered how much these figures were distorted by statistics from the Basingstoke Country Hotel. There had been a dramatic reduction in crime figures from the Hotel during 2009 with 16 fewer crimes reported than in 2008. PC Reid has written to the Site Manager informing them of this reduction. The 2009 figures included four thefts, a criminal damage and a vehicle-related crime, all at the Hotel. The only reported crime in Nately Sures not related to the Hotel was a dwelling burglary.

- 6.1.2 Other reports to the police The Police also received one report of a house burglar alarm (false alarm), and a report of dangerous driving on the A30. From the Hotel, the Police received a 999 call (then abandoned by the caller), a car accident in the car park, two youths acting suspiciously and an abandoned car, also in the car park.

6.2 Reports to Police from Newnham (2009)

6.2.1 Reported crime

Reported crime 2006	7
Reported crime 2007	3
Reported crime 2008	6
Reported crime 2009	7

The 2009 figures included one dwelling burglary, two non-dwelling burglaries, one theft of bee-hives, one theft from an insecure car, a theft of a motorcycle which was later recovered in Hook, (the offender, a prolific criminal, was arrested and charged). The other crime concerned a male who was seen with a large machete near the Old House at Home (which was closed for refurbishment). The man was arrested and subsequently sent to a mental health establishment.

6.2.2 Other reports to the police

included a report of an abandoned car, six house alarm activations (all false or faulty alarms), one road traffic accident, three reports of flooding in Crown Lane, a dead deer on the side of the road, a vehicle obstruction, reports of illegal fishing at Lyde Mill and suspected poaching in Newnham Lane, a man-hole cover lifted and two reports of fallen trees. We also received five reports of suspicious people or cars.

One report of suspicious men was of great assistance as, within 24 hours, Police received reports of a shed broken into in Tylney Lane and similar offences in Up Nately. A prolific criminal from Hook was arrested but unfortunately, despite excellent support from local residents, there was insufficient evidence to charge the youth.

6.3 Other Police Involvement (2009)

6.3.1 Newfest

On July 18th the village fête was held on the Green with a good attendance; 'no waiting' cones were placed out to filter cars into the correct parking area.

6.3.2 The Old House at Home caught fire

five days later on 27th July and was subsequently closed for several months for refurbishment.

6.3.3 Speeding

is a continual problem through the Parish during the year, with Old School Road to Newnham Lane being used as a rat run for commuters. In October 2009, PC Reid carried out high visibility patrols on the routes during the morning rush hour to make commuters aware of a police presence and as a reminder to keep within the speed limit. The Parish Council is taking an active role in speed prevention including hiring speed recording devices from the Borough Council.

6.4 Police Reports 2010

One theft from a car in Water End, one theft from a car in Newnham.

The Chairman thanked PC Reid for his time this evening and all he had done for the Parish over the year.

7 SOLVE

The Chairman invited Kate Tuck and Clive Pinder to talk about the Save Our Loddon Valley & Environment campaign. Kate said SOLVE recognises that economic development and housing is needed. SOLVE is not saying there should be no growth but that it should be in balance with its environment.

7.1 The scale of proposed development

The three sites between Old Basing and Newnham are collectively allocated up to 9,000 houses. Taylor Wimpey is already planning for this 'Loddon Village' which is three times the size of Old Basing and Lychpit, or a town the size of Tadley. The developers were frighteningly professional at projecting desirable images of the development and it was very important to see beyond these to the reality. Clive Pinder said that the Loddon Valley development would be akin to Carpenters Down on the other side of Chineham which used to be woodland.

7.2 The sites

BAS 121 Land East of Basingstoke:

Owned and to be developed by HCC with 900+ dwellings

BAS 102 Lodge Farm, owned by HCC, to be developed by Taylor Wimpey with 2,000 dwellings

BAS 103 Poors Farm, to be developed by Taylor Wimpey, with 5,000 dwellings.

7.3 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

is a technical document that identifies sites suitable, available and achievable for development. A further public consultation on the latest version of the SHLAA (v4) will be held from 10th May - 21st June. The final version (v5) will be published on 9th July. The list of Sites will be called in on 20th July and considered by the Planning and Infrastructure (P&I) Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting of 28-30th July. The final list of Sites will be published on 13th August.

7.4 Grounds for objection SOLVE has good grounds to object but no 'golden bullet' to guarantee success. The development would be in conflict with many local, national and EU policy, guidelines and legal obligations; it would be against Environment Agency and Hampshire Wildlife Trust advice and established Planning policies; it would contravene Water quality and Groundwater protection zone, Habitat directives and the Biodiversity Action Plan, Green infrastructure, and the protection of Historic sites.

7.5 What you can do... Help to raise public awareness; put your ideas forward; do you have expertise you would be willing to share with SOLVE? Respond to SHLAA consultation; Please talk about this 'challenge' when out and about; Contact SOLVE.

Kate stressed how the next two months are crucial; the SHLAA consultation from 10th May - 21st June will be the last opportunity for the public to persuade BDBC to drop the Loddon Valley sites from the SHLAA. Kate and Clive both insisted upon the importance of the weight of public opinion; the number of faces seen and voices heard at meetings carries the most weight. After the list of sites was published on 13th August the role of SOLVE would be that of damage limitation. The Chairman said Newnham Parish Council had been very active in its opposition to the current SHLAA and would shortly be asking the Assembly for an agreement in principle to contribute £1 per elector to Country Watch funds. Cllr Godesen reinforced Kate's message about the importance of action over the coming few months. He said when the public consultation was over SOLVE would still have a window of influence via the Ward Councillors who would be able to object to the decisions made in their own Ward. If there objections were not accepted by BDBC Officers, there was an appeal system. Once the SHLAA v5 was published, this would be the final version.

7.6 Questions

7.6.1 Were other local Parishes supportive of SOLVE The SOLVE initiative began in Old Basing; Old Basing and Chineham were the Parishes most affected (See 9.2 Cllr Godesen's address.). Mapledurwell and Up Nately were also very concerned and SOLVE was making a presentation to their Parish Assembly. The majority of Parish Councils/Parish Meetings to the East of Basingstoke were members of County Watch which proactively opposes the development.

7.6.2 Was there any alternative to the current housing strategy that would help to protect the Loddon Valley? The Assembly should look at the manifestos of all Political Parties with regard to their housing strategy.

The Chairman thanked Kate Tuck and Clive Pinder for the work they had done and the presentation that evening. Clive asked the Assembly to please leave their email addresses with SOLVE.

- 8. COMMUNITY PLAN** On behalf of all the Parish, the Chairman thanked Clive Pinder, Martyn Glover, Joe McCann, Sue Mann and Sheyne Bauermeister for their hard work designing the questionnaire. Special thanks were due to Martyn Glover and his team of experts at Newnham Corner for analysing the results. Clive Pinder and Joe McCann had sadly resigned from the Community Plan team. Sheyne Bauermeister reported on the Questionnaire results. In total there were 76 questionnaires returned with 178 respondents; for Newnham this was 36 returned, 94 respondents; for Water End 14 returned, 25 respondents; Nately Scures 26 returned, 59 respondents.

The Community Plan team needs volunteers to take the Plan to publication over the summer. From a Parish Council point of view, a published Parish Plan with a full description of the physical and human characteristics of the three Villages was a 'Material consideration' to refer to on any planning question. It was emphasised that the Plan was led by the Community, not the Parish Council.

- 9. COUNTY AND BOROUGH ISSUES** Each Councillor was asked to spend a short time highlighting what they saw as being the key issue or issues affecting Newnham at County and Borough level of Government. With the election so close, Councillors were asked avoid any party political comments.

9.1 County Councillor Elaine Still was unable to attend but forwarded at short report. She asked for any questions on County Council matters to be forwarded to her.

Road safety issues A30

Road safety meeting On 25th February 2010, Cllr Still arranged a meeting to consider road safety and a reduction in the speed limit on the A30. Present were the Chairman of Newnham Parish Council, a Mapledurwell Parish Councillor, PC Andy Reed, Cllr Onnalee Cubitt, HCC road safety officers and BDBC road maintenance officers.

Accident history At the Blackstocks Lane junction; four accidents in the last five years, three serious and one fatal (the recent tragic accident of 29th January 2010), but all different and with no pattern. From the The Hogget to the west of Water End there had been a reduction in accidents as a result of measures introduced in the last 10 years.

New measures agreed

- i. In Blackstocks Lane A new offside 'Give Way' sign at the junction (this has been ordered and will be erected in the next two weeks); the nearside 'Give Way' sign is to be lowered.
- ii. A30 Extend the 40mph limit from west of The Hogget to the dual carriageway, then impose a 50mph limit through the Blackstocks junction to the west of Water End.
- iii. A30 To consider the feasibility (in this financial year) of reducing the westbound carriageway down to one lane north of Blackstocks Lane and through the junction.

Police will need to be further consulted regarding any speed limit reduction. This road will be the subject of the 'A&B' speed limit review which is taking place countywide. It is very encouraging that priority will be given to these proposals which indicates we should receive funding.

9.2 Borough Councillor Sven Godesen said that Onnalee Cubit was not attending as she would be standing for re-election on 6th May and so could not speak on political issues. Cllr Stephen Marks could not speak with regard to the SOLVE campaign due to his declared interest. In response to a question raised by the SOLVE presentation, Cllr Godesen said that Old Basing Parish Council, on which he was a councillor, was extremely supportive of SOLVE and, like SOLVE, was an apolitical body. Old Basing Parish Council had a reserve of funds to channel towards Country Watch for legal help. Ward Councillors saw their role as a conduit for SOLVE to BDBC. It was important to establish that BDBC must be very mindful of its environmental responsibilities. The following motion was accepted by BDBC at its meeting on 6th April 2010 and was supported by all parties unanimously.

'Noting that the Council has an obligation under the South East Plan to "avoid a net loss of biodiversity" and also "to actively pursue opportunities to achieve a net gain across the region", this Council resolves to implement these obligations by pursuing positive policies which shall include setting meaningful, time-bound Biodiversity Targets on habitat improvements in this Borough for the duration of this LDF period to 2026.'

The Chairman thanked all Ward Councillors for the valuable advice and support they gave to the Parish.

10. FOOTPATHS

10.1 Footpath Officer's Report Copies were available in the Hall prior to the Assembly.

Report Summary

- i. FP2 Bridge over river Lyde has been replaced.
- ii. FP5 Tree branch across path to be removed SU707531.
- iii. FP717 Fallen tree across path and motorway fence to be removed SU470525.
- iv. With the exception of FP4 (from A30 to The Barracks) and FP720 (Heather Row) all paths are available and usable. Some works have been undertaken by HCC Countryside Services (and others) which have improved accessibility. However lack of regular use is causing paths to become overgrown and some routes difficult to define.

Clerk

A question was asked if there was any footpath in particular that needed walking, but the Footpaths Officer said that the underuse was general, the message was 'use them or lose them'. Nigel Downes will continue as Footpaths Officer and the Chairman thanked him for his time and commitment.

10.2 Unofficial footpaths on land between Newnham Road and Ridge Lane

Richard Fouracre, who has a life tenancy on the land in question, addressed the Assembly. The land agents (Savilles) valued the land for probate on behalf of the new landowner and found all the unofficial footpaths. The agents had fenced off paths, put up notices to say 'private land' and written to neighbouring residents who had opened access paths across the land. There is only one official footpath across the field but local residents have a long tradition of walking freely. As the tenant, Mr Fouracre is caught between the wishes of the landowner/agents and the people who want to walk the paths. The land is not farmed; due to its small size, irregular shape, the number of telegraph poles and the distance from the farm, growing corn is not economically viable. The land is topped once a year, the hedgerows kept in good order and environmental bands and nectar strips planted. Mr Fouracre invited any residents with concerns to speak to him personally or he could put them in touch with the landowner.

Paul Easto from 7 Kingsbridge Copse is gathering evidence to present a case for established use of the paths so that they can be made official. If anyone can make a statement to verify or provide evidence of use of the paths over a long period of time they are requested to contact Mr Easto.

11. PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET 2011/12 has to be decided this November.

11.1 Maintaining Current Expenditure The Chairman asked for the continued support of electors for current major items of expenditure:

- Newnham Green maintenance, up to £850, less £290 from BDBC grant, £280 from Newnham Green Protection Association giving a net cost of up to £280
- Clubroom £600
- Villager £450
- Odiham Cottage Hospital donation £450
- St Michael's Hospice donation £450.

Maintaining the current level of expenditure was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Nigel Downes. A question was raised as to whether it was right to use Parish Council (taxpayers') funds for charitable donations when the money could instead be used for projects within the Parish. The Chairman said that he understood this concern. However the donations to Odiham Cottage Hospital and St Michael's Hospice had received overwhelming support from the Assembly; in the past residents had needed both, and it was felt that in time some members of the community would again require their services and support. The Parish Council had a statutory power (Section 137 LGA 1972) to make these payments. The Assembly supported the proposal.

11.2 Contribution to Country Watch The Assembly also supported the Chairman's proposal for a c£470 (£1 per elector) contribution to Country Watch to fight major development between Newnham and Old Basing, if required.

12. NEWNHAM GREEN PROTECTION ASSOCIATION Copies of the Annual Report were available in the Hall prior to the Assembly.

13. FINAL QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Comment by the Chairman on the future of Newnham Parish Council The next Parish Council elections will be in May 2012. The Chairman and a number of other Councillors will not be standing for re-election, so if Newnham, Nately Scures and Water End are to continue to have a parish council, volunteers from the community must stand for election in 2012. The Parish Council meets six times a year plus the Assembly. Attendance at outside meetings (for example BDBC) are shared and most correspondence is done electronically. When a Parish Council maintains close links to Officers and Councillors at Borough and County levels, as Newnham Parish Council has done for many years, it helps to get things done, such as road repairs, speed limit changes. The Parish Council also helps to get extra funding for facilities and can influence Borough and County Council policies and decision making.

Without new Parish Councillors, Newnham Parish Council will cease to be a legal entity and would either be downgraded to a 'Parish Meeting' or compelled to seek a merger with a neighbouring Parish Council. Parishes with only a Parish Meeting do not have a Clerk or local budget, though still need a Chairman, and meet only once or twice a year. It is much harder for electors in such communities to make their views known to borough and county councils.

14. CLOSURE The Chairman thanked all the guests, the Clerk, all Councillors for their hard work and support during the past year, all present for attending the Assembly, and the Clubroom Committee for providing the refreshments. The next Parish Council meeting will be the AGM on Tuesday 18th May. Nigel Bell thanked the Chairman for the hard work he put in during the year.

The Assembly closed at 9.30pm. The Chairman invited all residents to stay for a short Clubroom AGM and enjoy a glass of wine in the five minute interval.