

HUNSTON VILLAGE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2007 AT HUNSTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT:	Parish Council	Mr J Carroll (Chairman) Ms L Kenney (Vice Chairman) Mr S Baker Mrs D Bonthrone Mr B Wilkins
	Parish Residents	15
	County Councillor	Mr A Chaplin

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the May 2006 Parish Assembly were agreed and signed.

2. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed the residents and talked about the importance of the annual assembly to the village. He then introduced the County Councillor, Alan Chaplin, and the new Vicar, the Rev James Russell. He said that the new District Councillor, Tricia Tull, was unable to attend due to a prior commitment. He also explained that the Parish Clerk, Carol Smith, was unable to be present due to a family bereavement. Apologies were also made on behalf of two members of the new Parish Council, Andrew Gueterbock and Julian Broad. He then asked all the members of the Council to introduce themselves to the residents.

3. PRESENTATION BY DIANNE AND ANDY BONTHRONE

A presentation followed by Dianne Bonthrone, with excellent photographs and historical slides managed by Andy Bonthrone, on the history and development of the Chichester Canal. Dianne talked about why the canal was first built and the intention that it should form part of a longer waterway stretching from the River Thames to the South Coast. She outlined key dates in the canal's development and the formation of the Canal Trust to ensure that it remains a viable amenity for the people of Chichester and the local area. She also talked about the recent day organised to celebrate the 185th Anniversary of the opening of the canal, and Andy showed us photographs taken on the canal of the boats taking part in the flotilla. Finally, there was a brief discussion about future plans to open a fully navigable waterway from Chichester Basin to the Harbour. The Chairman thanked Dianne for her excellent presentation.

4. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Following the elections at the beginning of the month, I am delighted to say that the council is back to full strength. Welcome back to Andrew Gueterbock and Liz Kenney who were re-elected and a big welcome to the four new members, Stephen Baker, Dianne Bonthrone, Julian Broad, and Bruce Wilkins.

The Martlet Homes development behind the hall opened in September. The Parish Council challenged closure of the footpath behind the hall and this is still being pursued; I remain optimistic that it will eventually be re-opened.

The village hall has needed work to keep it safe and in good condition. The following notable tasks were carried out:

- a) a section of the southern boundary wall was rebuilt - before it fell over;
- b) the Gentlemen's toilets have been upgraded;
- c) the sports store annex has been rebuilt after damage by a car;
- d) the hall exterior woodwork was repaired and repainted;
- e) the front car park has been enlarged and re-surfaced;
- f) sketch plans for a new roof and budgetary estimates have been obtained.

The village website has been acquired by the Parish Council and is regularly updated. We would welcome any offers of help to run all or part of the site as it is there for the benefit of the whole village.

The soccer goalposts on the playing field were replaced after being declared dangerous on Health and Safety grounds.

The playing field has been maintained, with grass cutting, tending of the 'mounds' and surgery on some of the trees.

Foxbridge car park has been kept tidy, encroaching shrubbery cut back and the surface kept weed free. Arrangements to keep the gate locked overnight have been introduced.

Plans for lighting the footpath between Westlands and Orchardside have been made.

The Parish Plan has been printed and every household in the village had a copy delivered at the beginning of this month.

None of the above would have happened without the interest, enthusiasm and support of all your councillors. I thank the other councillors and the Clerk for their support during last year and would like to present plaques to Ray Harle, John Kirkland and Brian Snelling, to mark their retirement from the council and in recognition of their services to the village as Parish Councillors.

5. VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Richard Netley, Honorary Secretary, read a report from the Village Hall Management Committee, a small dedicated, unpaid group of volunteers. In brief, the Hall continues to provide a well equipped and attractive venue for the villagers of Hunston. Numerous local organizations hire the hall on a regular basis and details of all activities are now on the village website. The support of the Parish Council was acknowledged, particularly for their role in financing of ongoing maintenance and improvements.

Richard ended by stressing that the Village Hall is becoming increasingly reliant on a very small group of volunteers and has found it very difficult to identify and attract new volunteers and committee members. The Management Committee has worked very hard over the past year to consolidate the ongoing improvements and use of the facility, and hopefully the lack of supportive volunteers will not stop this process over the coming year.

6. COMMUNITY CLUB REPORT

A report was read by the Chair of the Community Club Management, Sam Fry. She talked about the length of time that the club has been trading and how it is organised. She said that the club tries to organise an entertainment evening at least once a month, and all events are advertised throughout the village. Club membership has remained fairly static over the past few years, with 306 members made up of adults, seniors and juniors. Membership fees continue to be competitive. The financial standing of the club is sound, with a deficit of £943 in 2005 becoming a surplus of £393 in 2006. Sam then talked about changes that would be taking place during the coming year, particularly the challenge of the total smoking ban with effect from 1st July 2007. Arrangements were in hand to provide a smoking area outside the rear door. She stressed particularly the state of the flat roof over the club and talked about arrangements that were being made for two members of the Club Committee to work with the Parish Council to progress the roofing project.

7. PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

Ray Harle then presented a report on behalf of the Parochial Church Council. He mentioned in particular the appointment of the new vicar, the Rev James Russell, and welcomed him to the village. The main issue that was raised was the state of disrepair of the church, and in particular the roof. It had been assessed that approximately £50,000 would be needed to carry out all of the repairs, and in consequence the work had been divided into five sections. The worst of

these was carried out in September 2006 and now contributions were being sought in order to carry out the next phase. The Council is desperate for money and appeals were being made for contributions. In order to increase participation of villagers in services and fund raising, the Rev Russell would be conducting a service in the Village Hall on a monthly basis as from September 2007. No major changes had been made to church services, except for the discontinuation of the 8.00am Communion Service.

8. WOMEN'S INSTITUTE REPORT

Anne Duffy gave the following report:

"Hunston WI continues as a very happy group, enjoying our monthly meetings on the second Wednesday evening of each month, and many other social and West Sussex Federation meetings and activities.

We were sorry that three members felt unable to renew their membership this year but we have new subscribers to take their place and we now have 33 members and one dual member (that is a member who is full paid up with another WI and is also with us).

There are regular reports of our activities in the Parish News and the Observer, and a poster is usually displayed before each meeting giving details both at the Village Hall and on the notice board at the St Leodegar's bus stop. New members are always welcome."

9. BOWLS CLUB REPORT

Bob Hodnett gave a brief history of the Hunston Short Mat Bowls Club and said that its membership had remained quite stable at 25 to 30 members. He spoke about the regular Tuesday practice nights and matches played against other local clubs in the area during the winter months. The last year had been another successful year, with the club winning at least half of its friendly matches and there has been good attendance on Tuesday evenings. On the social side, a group of club members had visited the Isle of Wight for a bowling holiday, and last week the club held its annual dinner at the Anchor in Sidlesham. He stressed that the club is always looking for new members and invited anyone who was interested to join the members on a Tuesday night and have a go!

10. REPORTS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

There were no other organizations present.

11. REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

In the absence of Tricia Tull, the Chairman asked Stephen Baker to read out the following on her behalf:

"I am delighted to have been elected as District Councillor for the Ward of Sidlesham of which Hunston is now part. Previously I have represented Sidlesham, where I have lived with my family for almost 30 years. We have brought up our children here and been part of the community in an area we all love and wish to protect and see prosper.

I am particularly pleased after this election because the people of Hunston have given me their vote as well as my own village of Sidlesham and I shall endeavour to represent everyone, not just those who voted for me!

I don't believe that party politics are paramount at local level and all Councillors have common goals – especially the support needed to save our local hospital from being downgraded.

The common link between the two villages in the ward is, of course, the B2145 and we are all aware of the pressures on that road and the volume of traffic. Managing this is a County Council responsibility but I look forward to liaising with the County Councillor on this and other issues where the two authorities have interests in common."

12. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Alan Chaplin spoke about his role as County Councillor for Chichester South. He said that there was not much to report about the highways at present. He talked about the water mains renewal currently taking place and also the building development at the side of the Spotted Cow. He had been surprised to see this under way as it had been previously refused. He considers that there are still issues about access to the site and the necessary excavation to connect services to the development.

The main point raised by Alan Chaplin was his role on the County Council Health Select Committee, and its ongoing discussion at both local and national level about the future of St Richard's Hospital.

Finally, he said that there were common themes of concern in all the villages on the Peninsula and consideration should be given to making joint representations concerning the upgrade of the A27, and the impact of further development on the roads.

13. GENERAL SESSION

During the general session, one of the most important issues raised was the width of the footpath leading to the playground and playing fields. It was agreed that this needed to be looked at. The Chairman told the assembly about the forthcoming installation of a flashing speed limit sign at the south end of the village on the northbound side, in order to remind motorists of the 30mph limit through the village. All villagers who have concerns about the volume and speed of vehicles, particularly heavy lorries, were invited to send e-mails to Colonel Tex Pemberton at the County Council asking for action to be taken.

Other issues raised were the importance of the two shops in the village and the need for residents to make as much use of them as possible.

The final issue raised, by Dianne Bonthron, was the changes being made to the Electricity Sub-Station on the outskirts of the village. Trees and hedges had been removed and a very ugly fence has now been installed, apparently without any form of planning permission, and certainly without any consultation with the Parish Council.

A resident then thanked Dianne and Andy for their presentation about the Canal.

14. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and, there being no further business, declared the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date