

SUTTON BY DOVER PARISH COUNCIL

<http://suttonbydoverparishcouncil.org.uk/>

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes

Meeting held in Studdal Church Hall on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at 7.30 pm.

1. Present and Apologies

Present: B Merriman (Chair)
R Buxton
A Calthorpe
H Densham
KCC Member Steve Manion
4 Members of the public
A Nigol (Clerk)

Apologies: DDC Member Nick Kenton
John Foche Chaity representative Ronnie Harrop
Cornilo Churches representative Ann Ford

2. Note the minutes of the APM meeting held on 31st May 2022

Noted for accuracy. All agreed.

3. Declarations of interest

None.

4. Matters arising from previous APM minutes

None.

5. Chairmans report

Attached.

6. Reports from representatives of local organisations:

Report from Community Centre:

The Community Centre continues to provide activities and entertainment for as many people as possible as well as fundraising for the ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the hall. Our regular bingo and quizzes are well attended and raise vital funds for the hall and we're always looking for new things to help bring people together, this years plans include a talk on bees and beekeeping, a beetle drive, a village safari, a pumpkin carving afternoon, a road safety talk, Christmas craft fair and a visit from the National Trust. Since last year we've held a very well attended Jubilee party and I thank the Parish Council, Cornilo Churches and our local councillor Steve Mannion for their help and financial assistance in making the day such a success and so enjoyable for all. It really helped to highlight how well working in

partnership with the church, and parish and district councils meant we could do so much more - we were able to reach every household with a hand delivered invitation. It's fair to say we were overwhelmed by the response and to have nearly 150 people sitting down for tea in the hall was lovely. We followed this with an 80's themed party to celebrate the hall's 40th birthday in October and it was great to see so many people in their fancy dress having a good time. Last year also saw the return of the Community Christmas dinner with the emphasis on reaching out to those who are alone or at risk of isolation and again, working in partnership with The John Foche charity we were able to provide an afternoon of food and friendship. New Year's Eve went with a bang as always and I'm reliably informed that a marvellous time was had by all. The tabletop sale in March had a good turnout, and encouraged some new people into the hall for something different and we hope this will become an annual event. In May we celebrated the Coronation of King Charles III and with another opportunity to get everyone together we once again provided afternoon tea and entertainment for the whole community with an excellent time being had by all. My thanks to all those involved who provided time, money, skills and help organising and running the day. We still have other groups using the hall on a regular basis - as well as tai chi and karate, we have recently welcomed midlife Movers to the hall on a Tuesday which is currently proving very popular, a new gardening club which had its first meeting last week and the refillable van visiting our car park once a month. Let's keep our (green) fingers crossed and wish all these groups success in the future. We have been lucky enough to welcome some new committee members as well as keeping our old ones and I'd like to remind everyone we're always on the lookout for people to join us. All in all, it's been a very successful year for the hall and we look forward to it continuing well into the future.

Report was presented by Cllr Calthorpe

Report from Sutton Church and Hall:

We now use the church and Church Hall as part of the Parish of Cornilo Churches. As you will be aware, our funding comes from the pockets of the people who sit in the pews. Our beautiful, old church is costly to maintain, and the upkeep of the Graveyard is also a drain on limited resources. However, we do continue to support the community in many ways.

We offer regular traditional church services at St. Peter and St. Paul, plus extra services for landmark occasions: Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday, Advent, and Christmas.

We also organise services in the Church Hall for those who may not be able to travel to the church from Studdal and Ashley. There are a few Eucharist services, though the majority are more informal worship, plus the wonderfully joyful Messy Church for families of all ages and sizes (individual adults are very welcome) on 1st Sunday of each month. We also continue with regular social events, mainly our coffee mornings at present, which is well attended and appreciated. I am responsible for pastoral care at the church and am always willing to visit the sick and housebound, my number/email address is on display on many of the posters in the noticeboards. Tony is also available to offer lifts to social events, appointments and now, with the loss of our bus service, for shopping trips.

Report was sent by Ann Ford ALM (authorised lay minister)

7. Questions/Comments from local residents

None.

8. DDC and KCC reports

Steve Manion representative of KCC reported the following:

It's been a very difficult year for KCC with the raising prices and cost. First time ever KCC recorded a deficit. There are different schemes and help available from KCC to support the residents: pre-school meals in half terms, energy vouchers financial hardship programme. KCC is also focusing on social care and working more closely with the NHS to develop more integrated care system. Kent has the largest number of Ukrainian refugees across the country.

Steve Manion also reported the following from DDC: It's a very challenging financial year ahead. Local plan 2040 is taking place. Dover District Council is building 500 more new social houses. 1,600 unaccompanied children crossing the Channel have now been spread across the country to take off the pressure from Kent County Council.

9. Insurance renewal

Parish Council insurance is running out on 11th of June 2023. Previously Parish Council used the Gallagher's insurance brokers, who presented Parish with three different quotes and if the Parish was willing to set it for three years there was a slight reduction offered. This is no longer available and Gallagher's are now only operating as a single market provider. There's been a 25% increase on premium over the three years. The Council agreed to renew the insurance for one year only with the current insurance provider. To go in June agenda for approval by the Council. Clerk to contact Gallagher's and inform them about the renewal decision. Clerk to research and start to look for new quotes in March 2024.

10. Any other business.

The Chair advised all present of the current Parish Councillor vacancies. There are currently two vacancies available and anyone interested should contact the Parish Clerk for more information.

Cllr Merriman thanked Cllr Calthorpe for providing the refreshments that would follow the meeting.

11. Next Monthly Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 6th June 2023 at 7.30pm in Studdal Church Hall, Downs Road

Meeting finished at: 20:15

Cllr Merriman thanked everyone for coming along to the meeting and invited them to help themselves to the refreshments.

CHAIRMANS REPORT 2023

COVERING THE PERIOD APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023

Good evening, everyone and welcome to the Sutton by Dover Annual Parish meeting. This is the Chairman's Report covering the period April 22-March 23.

The Parish Year began with the Annual Parish Litter Pick in April. It was a disappointing turnout but those who volunteers managed to cover nearly every road in the Parish. By early afternoon there was a trailer full of rubbish on its way to the Refuse and Recycling Depot. Thanks go to everyone who took part.

In May the Parish Council agreed to upgrade the website to NetWise V2 theme to comply with accessibility regulations which included the latest safety and security features.

There have been a number of changes on the Parish Council during the year. Sue Smith Parish Clerk retired in July and we welcomed Ahti Nigol as our new Parish Clerk. Councillor Graham Smith resigned in September after serving for many years on the PC. Graham was particularly knowledgeable in the area of planning and his knowledge and expertise will be much missed. Councillor Linda Steger also resigned during the year. On the positive side we were pleased to welcome Robert Buxton as a new Councillor at the end of 2022.

Despite these changes the Parish Council have continued to work hard to address the business of the Parish and to reflect on its needs. In December and January, the Council discussed the budget for the forthcoming year. Due to rising costs, it was necessary to increase the amount of money we requested from DDC to run the Parish and this resulted in a small increase on Parishioners Annual Council Tax

There continued to be a number of planning applications dealt with the by the PC during the year and most of these were for extensions and additions to existing properties. The planning application which caused the most concern and strength of feeling by the majority of the Parish and those of surrounding Parishes was for a grass airfield and ancillary buildings at Manor Farm, Little Mongeham. Thanks to the hard work for a local protest group Chocksgoaway the initial application was refused by DDC. An Appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the DDC's decision and the appeal will be determined on the basis of Hearing which will be held on 20 June 2023 at the offices of DDC.

Works have commenced on the approved development site of the former Nursery in Downs Road, but as yet there has been no sign of works commencing on the other approved development site adjacent to the Homestead in Homestead Lane. There have been a number of concerns regarding possible planning breaching all of which were reported to the Enforcement Officer at DDC for investigation.

Trees on the Millenium Bank and Jacks Bush were cut back to facilitate easier mowing of these areas. Thanks to Councillors Akhurst and Willett for their hard work in this area. Also

bollards have been installed on the millennium bank opposite the two new houses that replaced Canton.

New allotments have been provided in the orchard in the area where the plum and pear trees were failing. The PC are pursuing a grant from the Amity Allotment Fund to provide a permanent water supply and storage to the allotments in the orchard area and also hedge and tree maintenance works.

We still have a thriving apple orchard made up of ancient varieties of trees. There was no Apple Day held in 2022. Hard pruning had taken place in Jan/Feb that year and due to the very dry weather conditions, the trees had not produced a great deal of fruit. Hopefully this year there will be a bumper crop and we can again celebrate the harvest in the Orchard.

Potholes have continued to be a huge problem in the Parish. The Parish Clerk reports these to KCC when he is informed of problems but Parishioners are able to report such problems themselves direct to KCC via their website which is easy to use. The other ongoing issue is with our drains, which continually get blocked by mud and debris and soakaways that overflow resulting in flooding. The particularly areas of concern at present are in Little Mongeham by the entrance to Manor Farmyard and at the bottom of Strakers Hill opposite the Community Centre. Councillor Densham kept our roads salted during the very icy weather this winter for which we are most grateful.

The playing fields are mowed regularly and some necessary works had to be done in the spring to clear dangerous falling trees. Councillor Willett kindly painted the youth shelter and addressed issues raised by the annual ROSPA safety report.

A couple of years ago it was decided to apply to KCC to formally adopt the piece of land known as Three Horseshoes Green as a 'Village Green' and the paperwork was completed and submitted to KCC. We were told it would take probably 2/3 years to formalise the application. Unfortunately, we learned towards the end of 2022 that the paperwork had been lost or returned to us (but not received by us) for additional information. It would seem we need to start the whole process over again, and this matter will be discussed at the June PC meeting.

Sadly, after a long battle eventually the Parish lost its only regular bus service at the beginning of 2023. This has had a major effect on older members of our Parish who don't have their own transport.

The PC continue to respond and investigate issues raised by Parishioners. Unfortunately, dog fouling continues to be a problem both in the playing fields and along footpaths. There seems to be some misguided view of some dog owners that they do not need to 'pick up' after their dogs if they are on paths through fields rather than on made up roads.

The 2022/23 accounts are currently being reviewed by the internal auditor and the audited accounts together with the Annual Report will be presented at the June PC meeting for approval.

To conclude on behalf of the Parish Council I would like to thank the following people:

Councillor Steve Manion, DDC and KCC. Steve is always at our meetings, shows a great interest in the Parish and has helped with advice and funding for which we are grateful.

Councillor Nick Kenton DDC. We are grateful to Nick for keeping us informed as to matters affecting our Parish.

Claire Inglin for acting as our internal auditor.

Finally, I would very much like to thank my fellow Councillors for their support to me and their continued commitment to this community. Thank You