

STOURPAINE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting, hosted by Stourpaine Parish Council, held on 9th May 2023 in the Village Hall at 7pm, followed by the Regular Stourpaine Parish Council Meeting.

PRESENT: Cllrs P Partridge (Chairman), G Cowie, M Farwell, J Jakes.

IN ATTENDANCE: J Fairman (Clerk), 21 members of the public.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Sherry Jespersen, Cllr David Meaden.

The following reports have been submitted:

1. Chairman of Stourpaine Parish Council:

I would first like to say a few thanks in acknowledgement of help given over the past year since I took over the reins from the very able Scott Norman following his resignation from Stourpaine Parish Council last year.

Our Parish Clerk has as usual been invaluable in her assistance to the council over the past year. Thank you, Jan Fairman.

My fellow councillors, Gill Cowie, Mark Farwell, David Meaden, Judith Jakes and Keith Yarwood, I offer my grateful thanks for contributing to the running of Parish Council matters.

It is with some sadness that we see the departing of Keith Yarwood as a Stourpaine Parish Councillor, however our loss is Blandford's gain and I wish Keith well in his new home.

Another resident moving to new pastures is our Lead Flood Warden, Derek Gardiner. He has tirelessly pursued answers to the threat of flooding in and around Stourpaine. There are many residents in Stourpaine that sleep sounder due to the campaigning efforts of Derek which have resulted in home flood defences and action plans in place. These have ensured that we as a village are best prepared against the threat of flooding. Can I thank Scott Norman who has taken on the responsibility of Lead Flood Warden. You just can't keep a good man down!

I would like to pass on a very big thank you to Sherry Jespersen who has been our Dorset Councillor this past year and has supported the Parish Council with regular reports and updates from County Hall. Most importantly she has been a regular attendee at Parish Council meetings and has offered excellent guidance and advice.

My first official duty when taking on the role of Chair to Stourpaine Parish Council was the annual review of Stourpaine Allotments. I was escorted around by Barry Graham the Chair of the Allotment Committee. The area is thriving with all, but a few plots occupied. The composting toilet is operational, the community orchard flourishing, vegetables and flowers in abundance and there are plans to encourage school groups to visit. A superb village asset. Well done Barry and his team!

With regards to Planning Matters I have to say a big thank you to my fellow councillor David Meaden who has taken the lead role within your Parish Council. We have regularly had requests for planning permission for individual new houses, house extensions, agricultural outbuilding development, tree management and even a new mobile telephone mast. All have been considered and passed on to DC with our observations. Still outstanding from previous years are the proposed developments of 14 and 7 dwellings along Bottom Road. Your Parish Council has never objected to an increase in housing, but we continue to hold the view that access along Bottom Road is too restrictive and unsuitable for the number of houses proposed. Both planning applications submitted are now with DC for consideration.

We have 2 very good play areas, The Grace Upward Play Area and The Kidzone Play Area on Drapers Field which at the last annual inspection by an independent company passed with flying colours. Regular inspections are made by the PC to ensure the high standard of all the play equipment and safety surfaces. We have engaged a local tradesman to make repairs as identified to ensure that any issues are resolved promptly. Within the next 4 weeks all safety surfaces will be re-laid to maintain the high standard of safety that you would expect.

The Speed Indicator Device (SID) is regularly maintained and moved between the 2 locations at either end of the village. We have employed a responsible person to ensure the SID is working and that motorists travelling through the village are made aware if/when the speed limit is exceeded.

The Remembrance Day Parade was held at the Tommy Monument at 11 o'clock on 11th November and was supported by a large number of local residents. My thanks to everyone who attended.

Your Parish Council will continue to work to represent your views and support the infrastructure of the village. There is a vacancy on the PC with the departure of Keith Yarwood to Blandford. We meet every 2nd Tuesday of the month for around 2 hours. Anyone interested in joining the team should in the first place contact our Parish Clerk or myself, Peter Partridge.

2. The Tennis Club

Stourpaine Tennis Club has had another successful year with plenty of matches, activities and fun for players of all ages and abilities. 2023 marked the 25th anniversary of the club being formed by villagers. Felicity Cox, Doreen Stripling and Isobel Gilpin were founder members who organised the fundraising, construction of two courts and set up the club to maintain and run the courts for the local community. No mean achievement! Celebrations were held at the AGM in November 2023, when the committee was voted in, chaired by Annabel Newham. We currently have about 90 members of whom 20 are juniors. There are members' sessions on Sunday and Wednesday mornings (10-12) and, in the summer, Thursday evenings at 6pm. Newcomers are invited to come for a free taster session (contact Felicity below) and a warm welcome is assured.

The club has two teams in the Shaftesbury League (mixed doubles) and last summer our B team came top of division 2 so has been promoted to division 1 – well done! We also enter a mixed doubles team in the Dorset League – winter and summer programmes, so there is plenty of opportunity for competitive play. The league captains are always keen to hear of new members interested in joining the teams.

Junior coaching occurs on Saturday mornings for children 4-18 years, through coach Simon Kevern. Adult coaching runs on Thursday mornings and spaces are available for both. Private coaching can also be booked. The club sponsors two children who otherwise might not be able to afford junior coaching and, in the recent past, has sponsored a Ukrainian refugee living in the village.

For coaching information contact Simon: 07872529936 or Email:

blandfordtennis@hotmail.co.uk

To encourage accessible tennis and ball skills for children with special needs, the club is supporting a joint initiative between the charity Bright Ideas for Tennis and coach Simon. Pupils from Yewstock school will be provided with free weekly sessions at the courts, supported by Simon, staff and club volunteers. A training session was run at the club in March and fund-raising events will follow.

Social and fundraising activities have always been part of the club's agenda and a successful skittles evening raised about £300. An American tournament and quiz are planned for later this year. The club is not-for-profit and our fund raising and very reasonable membership fees go towards maintenance and running costs plus a saving pot for major court resurfacing.

We are a friendly, community club who welcome new members. For more information see our website www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/StourpaineTennisClub or contact

Membership secretary Felicity Cox: Email: stourpainetennisclub@gmail.com t: 01258 454840

3. The Table Tennis Club

4. The Gardening Club

Membership of the club is open to residents of Stourpaine and the surrounding area. Last year we had more than eighty members. Our year runs from the AGM held in February and last year included 7 meetings held in the village hall at 7.30pm on the second Friday of the month. Speakers are arranged on a variety of gardening topics and these meetings also provide an excellent opportunity to socialise with refreshments being provided. In addition, we held our Annual Show last September and a Christmas Social with quiz in December.

When possible, we arrange outings to gardens or one of the RHS properties of whom we are members. To date this year, we have held 2 successful and well attended meetings with talks on trees in your garden and gardening trends. Five more talks are arranged for the coming months with our annual plant

sale on 18th May, evening BBQ on 12th July and Annual Show on the 17th August. In September it is hoped to have a trip to RHS Wisley with a Christmas social with a quiz, wine and nibbles in December. All meetings are open to non-members. For more information contact David Meaden on 01258 452083.

5. The Flood Team Report

As most of you will be aware we have as a village lost our very able Flood Warden, Derek Gardiner. We also lost John Bletcher who has yet to see a flood in Stourpaine, thanks to both.

Derek took on this role at my request after the flooding we suffered in Havelins over 10 years ago. He has diligently recorded water flows, ground water levels, flood warnings, flow times from Hamoon. He produced graphs on water levels of the Stour and Iwerne. He was in contact with the EA, Dorset Council and others. He has gone to higher grounds, not there, Shaftesbury. If he still has flooding, we really are in trouble. We offered Derek and Joanna our appreciation at the Big Breakfast. I have agreed to follow in Derek's footsteps, perhaps without the same level of detail.

I am fortunate that we still have Peter Partridge as a Flood Team Member and two new members, Blu, well known to all and new to the village Rick Pearse, owners of Derek's old house. Welcome both, a special welcome to Rick and his wife. We hope you will be happy in our village.

If you have the odd hour and are interested in flood protection, look on the web, there are lots of articles on flooding and what to do, as an individual and as a community. Regular updates for those in vulnerable areas, keep an eye on those not as mobile.

Derek tried to hold such meetings with a muted response. We shall try later this year to hold an event, perhaps with a guest speaker.

This last year has, as you are aware been very wet, groundwater levels reaching some of the highest on record. Last month we saw the Havelins with +30cm of water on parts of the road. We dusted down the 'Road Closed' signs and put them out. It amazed me the speed people travelled through the water, no knowledge of it's depth or if any manhole covers had blown. The alteration to the culverts on the A357 has made a great deal of difference to the flow of water on the Stour and floor plain. This has been of great assistance to Stourpaine. We cannot however be complacent, those living with the potential threat should check their flood defences at least once a year. We check the equipment we hold as a village for any flood emergency. By the generous offer by Annabel Elliot we keep the equipment in an outbuilding at Stourpaine House.

Remember if you are in a flood zone you can receive an early warning of a potential flood from the EA. Any help you require from the Flood Team please phone: 01258 454607. Scott Norman, Flood Warden.

6. Community Hub – A New Venture.

This takes place in the VH every Tuesday between 10.00am and 12 noon and coincides with the Post Office Outreach Service which is open from 9.30 to 12.30.

Originally called the Warm Hub, it was an idea put forward by Caroline Jones at the Hall's AGM in November 2022. There had been an extremely cold autumn aggravated by a steep rise in the cost of heating and it was hoped that this would provide a warm space where people could meet and chat over coffee or tea and biscuits. The suggestion was approved, and Caroline and Peter Jones started it in January 2023, buying equipment and initial supplies with a grant obtained by the hall. Volunteers came forward to help set up and run the sessions- a special mention should be made of Blu who was there every week and stayed on in the Hall's security until Jane in the Post Office (the kitchen) had left.

Unfortunately, Caroline and Peter had to drop out almost immediately due to serious family illness and we were grateful to Mari Lewis who volunteered to take over from them, attending every week, replenishing supplies and drawing up a rota of helpers. Things changed towards the end of the year.

Mari and her husband left for a long planned extended visit to New Zealand to see their family and with a complete change in the composition of the VH Committee at the 2023 AGM we lost other helpers such as Blu and Scott. Rather than see it collapse Catherine Gardner and I decided that we try to keep it going until Mari returned in February, Catherine funding bits of refreshment until the new VH Committee was established and suitable arrangements were made. We have recruited more helpers so that no one needs to do more than one session per calendar month. We would however be happy to hear from anyone else who might be interested in helping in the future. Mari returned in February but now has other commitments which meant that she could not resume control. We are pleased however that she has stayed as a regular monthly helper. U3A has table tennis on a Monday evenings and Peter Jones

leaves tables up for us to use on Tuesdays, and Joh Gardner comes down at noon to put the tables away and stays until the Post Office is closed. We are grateful for their assistance. So do come along and enjoy coffee, tea and biscuits and a chat, meet people you already know and get to know others that you didn't. Barbara Thomson.

7. Village Hall

The new Village Hall Committee was elected last Autumn and are still getting to grips with the large amount of work that needs to be done. There are repairs to the building that need to be completed and a survey will need to be carried out. We would like to extend our thanks to Julie Dunk who is still helping with bookings and various other matters. The previous committee had secured a grant from Sports England for pétanque, and the PC had pledged a grant of £1500.00 towards this. The work to make the Petanque course was due to start however Drapers Field was flooded resulting in a delay in the work, hopefully it will be done soon. After May BH. The VH bookings are healthy with booking for lots of summer parties. Teddy Rocks will be holding an event here and there is a vegan fair planned. We hope to be making more use of the pavilion and will be starting a program of repairs.

The Stourpaine Parish Council Chairman thanked all that had attended the meeting and those that had provided the Reports.

8. Dorset Councillor Report: No update.

There then followed a regular meeting of Stourpaine Parish Council:

1. The Election of the Chairman & Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Peter Partridge was elected as chairman and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. The Election of the Vice Chairman & Declaration of Acceptance of Office

-Cllr Jakes was proposed and elected as Vice-Chairman and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Andrea Woodland was co-opted onto the PC

3. Declarations of Interest: None received

4. To confirm the Councillors Responsibilities for 2024 - 25

a. Neighbourhood Watch – Cllr Partridge

b. Village Hall –TBC

c. Development Control/ Planning – Cllr Meaden

d. Rights of Way/Footpaths/ Trailway -Cllr Farwell

e. Play Areas – Cllr P Partridge

Cllr Partridge wished the TBC items above to be discussed at the next meeting.

6. To consider matters arising from the April Minutes: None.

7. Minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council held on the 9th April 2024 were approved and signed.

7.To consider development control matters.

-P/FUL/2022/06325: Land north of Bottom Road, Stourpaine Dorset, Erect 14 no dwellings (affordable homes), form vehicular access, parking and landscaping. SPC have received an NOTICE of APPEAL, for this application which has been made to the Secretary of State, who has contacted all those who have objected in the past to make any further representations by email, although existing objections will still apply. SPC standing on this matter remains as before that the access to the site via Bottom Road is not wide enough for the volume of traffic that new developments in this area. Other observations previously made by the PC covered the style and mix of the housing, whether the current sewerage and drainage systems can cope with additional houses.

8. Finance:

a. SPC agreed to make following payments:

-Clerk (at agreed rate), PAYE /£1,354.25 Insurance Premium.

All payments were unanimously approved.

b. -The Annual Governance Accountability Return was approved and signed by the Chairman and the RFO.

9. Other Matters

-Flood Warden Insurance support meeting on 30th May.

-Village safety Mats - £2,768.00 to take up matting in Kidzone and put down subbase relay and seed and maintain. SPC voted to accept the quote.

Date of next meeting: TBC

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.00 pm.

Date:

.....

Chairman, Stourpaine Parish Council.