

**MINUTES OF THE BOTHENHAMPTON & WALDITCH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, BOTHENHAMPTON ON MONDAY 7TH APRIL 2003.**

Present: Mrs Regan (Chairperson), Professor Eastham, Mr Matthews, Mr Harrison, Mrs Sawyer. In attendance: Mr Coatsworth, D. Barnes (Clerk)

**1. APOLOGIES.**

Mrs England, Rear Admiral Pritchard.

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 March 2003 having been circulated to all members were accepted as a true record of the meeting and duly signed.

**3. MATTERS ARISING.**

Item 9 – West Dorset Spring Clean: Mr Matthews has asked WDDC for bags but to date none has been received.

Item 10 – Weymouth to Bridport Rail Link: Relevant information is in the possession of Mrs England, therefore, due to her absence, this matter will be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

Item 24[A] – Appointment of new Clerk. Mrs Regan welcomed the new Clerk, who confirmed that he had signed his employment contract.

**4. REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR, REAR ADMIRAL PRITCHARD.**

As Admiral Pritchard did not attend the meeting, no report was made.

**5. REPORT BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR, MR COATSWORTH.**

The County Council is reviewing the existing 'County Divisions', which date back some 20 years, in order to achieve more equality in representation. Numbers of Councillors and electors for each Councillor are due to change. The County Officers have suggested there should be 45 Councillors with approximately 7,500 electors per Councillor. WDDC will gain a new Ward, which will include Bothenhampton, (which will be moved from the Bridport South Ward) and Loders, (which incorporates Walditch). This new Ward has 7,257 electors which equates to those of Bridport North, (approximately 7,100). A WDDC committee will consider the proposals, then a County Council committee, then consultation will commence. Mr Coatsworth pointed out that the new Bridport Ward will need a name; Mrs Regan suggested that the Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Councillors should put forward suitable alternatives which she would submit to Mr Coatsworth.

**6. DEMOCRATIC HALF HOUR.**

At 7.15pm the meeting was adjourned to enable members of the public to air their views on matters of local interest. At 7.33pm the meeting re-convened to complete the Council's agenda, there being no further matters raised.

**7. DORSET HERITAGE STRATEGY.**

The Clerk made reference to correspondence received from Dorset County Council regarding its above initiative. He explained that the Strategy is due to be launched within the

next few weeks. Its objective is to protect local heritage for future generations through a categorised five year plan. Receipt of the summary document was noted and the clerk will distribute it to all councillors for their perusal.

## **8. RENEWAL OF CPRE MEMBERSHIP.**

Renewal was proposed by Mr Matthews, seconded by Mrs Regan and agreed by all of the other Councillors.

## **9. PLANNING.**

[A] Applications received from WDDC/DCC.

WDDC -

1/W/2003/0353 Middlehill Farm, Bothenhampton – replacing existing derelict barn with steel framed barn. No Comment to return.

1/W/2003/0449 12 Slades Green, Bothenhampton – replacing existing flat roofs with pitched roofs and carry out alterations. No Comment to return.

DCC – none.

[B] Decisions by WDDC/DCC.

WDDC -

1/W/2003/0418 Cherrywood Farm, Walditch – erection of steel framed agricultural storage bay. Permission granted.

1/W/2003/0043 Land adjacent to Thatched Cottage, Quarry Lane, Bothenhampton – erection of two storey dwelling with detached garage; construct new vehicular & pedestrian access. Permission refused. DCC – none.

General.

Mrs Sawyer asked whether any correspondence had been received from either WDDC or the Highways Authority regarding the alleged misuse of Bonscombe Lane by lorries. The Clerk advised that he had not found any and he was instructed to contact these authorities to ensure that they investigate this issue.

## **10. FINANCE**

[A] Statement of Accounts as at 31 March 2003.

The Clerk advised that he had not been forwarded a bank statement up to this date by the previous Clerk. He will obtain a copy and report the current situation at the next meeting.

[B] Accounts for payment.

The following accounts were approved for payment:

SWEB street lighting - £303.03

CPRE membership renewal - £25.00

Clerk's salary - £242.33

Prof Eastham proposed that these accounts should be paid; this was seconded by Mrs Regan and approved by all of the other Councillors.

General – Mrs Sawyer requested that greater detail should be made available with regard to finances, for example a comparison of year-to-date expenditure against budget. The Clerk was instructed, by the next meeting, to suggest ways in which presentation of financial information could be improved.

## **11. REQUESTS FOR GRANTS**

WATAG, in the minutes of its 20th March meeting, “gently requested” donations from associated organisations. It was agreed that making a donation would only be considered upon receipt of an official request.

Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance Trust. Mrs Regan proposed and Mr Matthews seconded that we should donate the same sum to this charity as was donated last year; the Clerk will send a cheque once he has found the transaction in the records.

## **12. VITAL VILLAGES.**

Mr Harrison reported that a newsletter was distributed in the local Team News to keep parishioners informed of progress. Over 35% of households returned a completed questionnaire, amounting to 361 forms in all. It is on the comments made on these forms that the Parish Plan will be based and progressed. It is the committee’s intention to hold a meeting in both villages to assess the statistical information and discuss comments made. Hopefully, these meetings will take place later this month. Mr Harrison confirmed that help is needed to formulate both the Village Appraisals and the Parish Plan. Volunteers should contact either Alex Cummins on 423143 or David Young on 459792. Mrs Regan hoped for greater attendances at Vital Villages committee meetings.

## **13. FOOTPATHS & ROADS.**

Footpaths W521 & W522 between Old Church Road and Hyde Hill: Mr Harrison reported that this path has been diverted around badger sets. Flaps have been inserted into the fencing to allow the badgers free access to roam.

Burton Road: Mr Matthews advised that this is in a poor state of repair and could cause damage to vehicles and pedestrians. It was agreed that, at the next meeting, Admiral Pritchard may be asked more about this issue.

Mrs Sawyer mentioned that the location of a litter bin on Walditch Road should be adjacent to a bench near to The Hyde. The Clerk was instructed to establish whether WDDC would empty the bin.

Mrs Regan instructed the Clerk to establish with WDDC when grit boxes would be situated at the bottom of Hollow Way and Lake Lane.

## **14. STREET LIGHTING.**

Mr Matthews was pleased to confirm that the problematic lighting column in Bothenhampton is now in full working order.

## **15. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.**

Mr Harrison reported that Bridport Police continues to advise householders to keep their garden sheds locked when not in use and always to check their windows are closed when they are out on summer days. The Police urged householders to dial 999 if they are suspicious that anyone is loitering with intent to steal or make bogus calls to houses, posing as representatives of public utilities.

## **16. CONSERVATION & OPEN SPACES.**

Mr Matthews had nothing to report.

## **17. PLAY AREAS.**

'Cemetery Field' – Prof Eastham reported that a draft licence for use of the area by the Council has been prepared by our solicitors. Though they also act for Bridport Town Council, which is granting the licence, he has been assured that there is no danger of a conflict of interest arising. The legal fees for preparing the licence are expected to be approximately £300 + VAT. The solicitor has drawn the Council's attention to the poor state of the fences enclosing the site and suggested that Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council improves these, as probably they would be considered unsafe by the Health & Safety Executive. However, the hedges are not seriously overgrown. Mr Matthews continues to be concerned about the cost of maintaining/providing fencing around this site and suggested that the barbed wire be removed before the Council takes over responsibility for the area. Especially, he is mindful of the insurance implications should any accident occur on the site due to unsuitable fencing being retained. Mr Harrison raised the matter of the noise of children playing possibly disturbing people attending the adjacent cemetery and balls accidentally landing in there. It was agreed that this risk is minimal and should be faced at any appropriate time in the future. The Gundry Lane access was considered to be the best one to use, though this remains the property of Bridport Town Council. Prof Eastham pointed out that a litter bin would be needed for the site and he hoped that someone would take on the responsibility for keeping the site clear of litter. At the appropriate time, our insurers should be informed that this additional land is held by the Parish and their advice should be sought on how to deal with any public liability claim made against it. Prof Eastham suggested sending them a copy of the licence conditions. It was agreed that a notice should be erected on site, similar to that used for the John Holt

Play area, which incorporates an injury disclaimer. Prof Eastham advised that Bridport Town Council is not in favour of permanent play equipment being erected on the site, only goalposts. All of the Councillors agreed that, given Bridport Town Council's having to give only one year's notice to expire the licence, the cost of erecting such equipment would not be justified anyway. Prof Eastham pointed out that he will seek the removal of the clause within the lease which requires daily emptying of the litter bin(s). He reported that, once the Parish and Town Councils have agreed the lease, the Diocese of Salisbury takes the final decision on its inception. Mrs Regan asked Prof Eastham to continue to deal with the matter of the 'cemetery field' until his resignation from the Council to which he agreed. 'Walditch Village Play Area' – Mr Matthews reported that he is still waiting for Western Power Distribution to dig the ditch into which the electricity cables will be placed and that until this is done, seeding cannot take place as required. He read out a letter written to Mr Gundry regarding access to the site, for which there are two alternatives. The contents of the letter were noted and a copy given to the Clerk for the records. The approximate total cost of fencing could be £4000 + VAT. This figure excludes grassing. Mr Matthews has not yet received a reply to his letter. It was agreed by all of the Councillors that, prior to the erection of any play equipment, the area should be put to use to ascertain which part of it is the most popular. Mrs Sawyer will assist Mr Matthews in applying for grants towards funding the area. Mr Matthews stressed the importance of urgency in the matter, in order to maintain the parishioners' current high level of interest in and enthusiasm for the project.

John Holt Play Area – Mrs Regan reported that users of Minard House are parking vehicles in the entrance to this area and, despite her requests for these vehicles to be removed, nothing has happened. She proposed that a notice should be erected at the entrance, attached to the main sign, stating that only vehicles belonging to those using the play area may be parked in its entrance. Additionally, should this not improve the situation, further action should be taken against those ignoring this requirement. Mr Matthews seconded this. General – Mrs Regan instructed the Clerk to contact Burton Bradstock Parish Council to ask where it obtained its "Stoop and Scoop" signs from, which intend to prevent dogs fouling play areas.

## **18. BRIDPORT REGENERATION AREA PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS.**

Nothing to report.

## **19. DAPTC.**

Nothing to report.

## **20. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.**

[A] From DCC: Library and Arts Service – Bothenhampton is still excluded from the mobile library's route. The Clerk will query this with DCC and the matter will appear for discussion on a future agenda.

[B] From WDDC: Election (1st May) – Statement as to Persons Nominated & option to vote by post. The Clerk will post these on the parish noticeboards as appropriate.  
Invitation to the Housing Conference 2003 on 13th May in Dorchester – Nobody present will be attending this event.

Notice that a new property adjacent to Briarwood House in Bothenhampton shall be known as Woodbrook Cottage, Old Church Road.

West Dorset Housing Needs Study 2002: Summary Report. Mrs England should be provided with a copy of this document.

Complaints Against Councillors Information Leaflet – detailing how the Standards Board deals with such complaints. The leaflet will be kept on file.

Council Information – a letter advising that WDDC have written a 'Publication Scheme' to conform to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, in which the different classes of information available to the public are categorised. A copy may be obtained upon request.

Bothenhampton flooding. This letter will be copied to all Councillors and the matter will be included on the next meeting's agenda.

[C] Others: Bridport Charter Group – minutes of its meeting held on March 6th 2003 in which its successful application for a £36,500 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and its plans for a Medieval Weekend comprised the main matters discussed.

Rita Hornsby – A letter asking for support in declaring the area 'GM Free'. Mrs Regan proposed that the Council offers its support, this was seconded by Mr Matthews and agreed by all of the other Councillors. CPRE – TCG Newsletter – the receipt of this was noted.

Open Spaces Society – "Open Space" newsletter – the receipt of this was noted.

DAPTC – a letter advising the new Clerk of the organisation's role.

WATAG – minutes of its meeting of 20th March 2003. Receipt of this was noted.

The date of the Annual Parish Meeting was provisionally set for Wednesday, May 28th, providing Bothenhampton Village Hall is available – the Clerk will confirm this. The Annual Parish Council Meeting will take place immediately prior to the next monthly meeting on Monday, May 12th at 7.00pm. As she will be absent, Mrs Regan proposed that Mr Matthews chair this meeting; this was seconded by Mrs Sawyer.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

## **MATTERS RAISED IN THE DEMOCRATIC HALF HOUR:**

Bridleway at Long Lane/Mens Club blocked by vehicles.

'Cemetery Field' play area has unsafe fencing; a nominated Parish councillor should liaise with Residents Association on this project.

Valley View amenity area – a separate committee should be set up to manage the improvements to this site, to include a Parish Councillor – this matter will be discussed at the next monthly Parish meeting.