

KINGS WALDEN PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting was held in the Village Hall, Breachwood Green 7.30 on 29th April 2015

Present: Cllr Angela Herrmann (Chairman, Kings Walden Parish Council), Cllr Amanda King (Chairman KWPC Sports Management Committee), Mrs J Monaco (Breachwood Green Village Hall Committee), PC Chris Suckling, Richard Kelly (NHDC), 14 electors and the Clerk: Tom Brindley

1. Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from: County and District Cllr David Barnard, District Cllr Faye Frost, Mr Tim Hughes (Breachwood Green Cricket Club), Lis Greet (Breachwood Green Society) and Mrs B Williamson.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting May 2014:

The minutes were adopted as a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising:

None

4. Police Report

PC Chris Suckling addressed the meeting and gave a report compiled by PCSO Heather Burrows. PC Suckling explained the current neighbourhood policing hierarchy. Inspector Duncan Sallis heads up the team. Sergeant Stephen Oliphant leads the Hitchin Rural section with by PCs Chris Suckling, Matt Jenkins and Keith Harding and PCSOs Heather Burrows and Micelle Trussell.

Crime in the area remained low. In answer to a question on burglary, PC Suckling explained that most crime was committed by persons from outside the area on a one off basis, which made it very difficult to detect. However, when a suspect was detained it often led to resolving several crimes. One difficulty was retuning property to its rightful owner as if property was not marked and had not be reported stolen the police could not prove the goods were stolen. The public was urged to mark property with UV pens and to record serial numbers. More use was being made of forensic evidence especially from smart phones and cameras.

The chairman thanked POC Suckling who left the meeting.

5. North Herts District Council Local Plan

Mr Richard Kelly addressed the meeting on the progress on the local plan. Mr Kelly thanked the Parish Council for its comprehensive response to the local plan consultation. He noted that the Parish Council had spotted an anomaly in describing sustainable communities. Mr Keely gave an update on the need to meet unmet need form Luton and said that the Central Bedfordshire plan had been found unsound because although it had allowed 5,50 houses for Luton this was not deemed enough to satisfactorily address the National Planning Policy Framework "duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities". This was why NHDC had felt it necessary to include an allowance for Luton in the plan.

In response to a question, Mr Kelly explained that the Local Plan process included discussions with the county on school provision. He said that NHDC was aware of a proposal for a school between Batford and Wheathampstead but as the site was not in North Herts district it was outside the scope of the NHDC local plan.

Mr Kelly was asked why the district council had not included Mill Way in its proposal for a Breachwood Green village envelope. He explained that Mill Way was on a plateau making it very visible from the west and that NHDC had previously used this as a reason to reject a proposed Luton expansion.

The chairman thanked Mr Kelly, who left the meeting.

6. Chairman's report

The chairman gave a report on the activities of the parish council (attached). She explained that while the parish council was rightly proud of the new tennis court, which would be painted once the risk of frost had passed, she was also aware that the floodlighting was inadequate and that the new council would look to address this.

The chairman reminded groups that the council new grants policy would now come into force where all grants should be applied for. To support this the council had increased its grants budget.

The chairman thanked the four retiring councillors and stressed that the council now had four vacancies and would look to co-opt.

7. Financial Report

The clerk, in his capacity as Responsible Financial Officer gave a report on the Parish Council finances (attached).

8. Sports management Committee

Cllr Amanda King gave a report on the Sports Management Committee

9. Youth Club

Cllr Amanda King read a report on the activities of the Youth Club. (attached).

10. Village Hall Committee

Jenny Monaco, secretary of the village hall committee gave a report on the Village Hall activities (attached). The kitchen and toilets had been refurbished with grants from the district and parish councils. The hall was in need of a cleaner (paid, 2hrs per week). A grant was being sought for improved car park lighting.

11. Breachwood green Society

The chairman read a report submitted by Mrs Lis Greet on the activities of the Breachwood Green Society (attached).

12. Open Forum

The chairman invited questions from the floor.

Cllr Nic Cooper explained that while he was standing down from the parish council he would remain active in the community and was planning a working party to repair benches, undertake bulb planting and generally improve the parish environment.

It was reported that the works to provide on kerb parking at The Heath had damaged some daffodils.

It was reported that the gulleys in Oxford Road were blocked causing flooding when it rained heavily.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.40.

After the meeting the Parish Council offered attendees a refreshments.

Adopted: Signature: _____ Date: ____ 2016

CHAIR'S REPORT - ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 28 APRIL 2015

We've had another very busy year and again a lot has been achieved.

You will have seen that the tennis court and the remainder of the sprint track was built in late September. The court was left playable but not quite completed. To finish it off it will be painted green, which will then blend in with the rest of the sports facility, and the sprint track surfaced with carpet and the dividing white line added as soon as the danger of frost has passed – so this should all happen very soon.

You will also have seen that we now have 2 jazzy memorial benches at the side of the MUGA. One to remember Jeremy Bretherton, without whose support, vision and drive this facility would not have happened and who sadly died before it was all completed, and the other, donated by Edwina Holden, in memory of her husband, Michael, who did so much for the parish. Our many thanks to both Jeremy for this and all the work that he put in for the PC and to Edwina.

When the court was finished Cathy Turner and Andrew Laurie-Pile organized an inaugural mini tennis tournament which went very well. It was pretty soon noticed that the floodlights, which were thought would light the court enough to make it playable for friendlies but never intended for the likes of Andy Murray, were not really adequate for this purpose either – so it looks like another funding project to extend these!

Sport England require us to send back to them from time to time feedback on the MUGA usage and it is really pleasing that we are able to report to them that footfall for the first year was 5632 just over 1000 short of our target of 7300 which is good and encouraging – so I don't think they will be asking for their money back. Our challenge for the future is to keep the bookings that we have, for example a Luton Borough Football 5-aside and a couple of private 5-aside, and to work to increase them. At the moment on average 42 people use the facility through booking it per week. To this end the PC is intending to make some alterations to the Youth Hut, which will enable the loos, at the road end of the hut, to be accessed separately from a new door at that end, whilst retaining the autonomy and security of the Youth Club the other end. Use of the hut was first requested by the Breachwood Tigers who have nowhere to change, when using the rec and therefore obviously no toilet facilities and so it was decided that these alterations would make very good use of the hut and enable us to advertise the MUGA with loo/changing facilities – a much more attractive proposition! We have applied for funding to complete this project to Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation – Near Neighbours Fund to whom we have most successfully applied twice already and who have been generous in their grants – so fingers crossed.

Tennis coaching for children has been arranged for Wednesday late afternoons and for teens and adults on a Sunday morning. These will start at the beginning of May - to this end a flyer has gone out to the school and will be posted in pubs and shops and delivered around the village. If anyone here is interested – please contact either Cathy Turner or Amanda King?

The final piece of news on the Sports facility front is that 2 disabled accesses , one from the front and the other from the car park past the pre-school, are going to be constructed. The PC awarded this contract to JC Agriculture who will also finish off the landscaping around the far end of the tennis court and on the outfield of the cricket pitch. JC Agriculture have assured me that they will start on this at the beginning of next week, 4th May. This piece of the jigsaw has been generously funded by Cllr David Barnard through his Locality Budget

And now for the Parish Path – Nic Cooper pursued first the grants and then the way signs and, having got them all, went out with Joe Beavis and Roma Crosby actually nailed them to all the relevant posts around the 7 and half miles. He arranged the printing of leaflets with the map of the path, which also advertised the 3 pubs en route, and distributed them around and about and this map is now to be found on the parish website – www.kwpc.gov.uk.

The final icing on this cake is that Tom Goldsmith, of Herts County Council Rights of Way team, has given us 3 oak benches to place at strategic intervals along the route, those with the best views, where walkers can rest their weary legs! **We are currently waiting to hear from the KW Estate that they have no objections to this – again fingers crossed!**

The PC was asked to comment on NHDC's Local Plan, which plans for possible housing needs up to 2031. The Plan has been thoroughly researched, however the PC felt that it needed to emphasise some points :

(1) the importance of encouraging a rural economy by, for example, making use of redundant farm buildings and supporting the local bus service, which as you know is under threat but Amanda Thompson, who runs the shop in KW has been amazingly proactive, galvanizing support from all corners of this parish and beyond and getting these opinions submitted to the NHDC relevant website. If they withdraw this service many people, notably the old and the young, will be severely disadvantaged. This is the point that Amanda is trying to get across. Having a good bus service of course also brings walkers into our beautiful bit of countryside and into the pubs and the shops!

(2) The importance of the delivery of fast broadband was also acknowledged by the PC as enabling businesses to be run from home, very much part of modern life. Thankfully, at last, this does now appear to be happening.

(3) One of the main proposals of the Local Plan is once again the threat of development to the east of Luton. The PC has expressed its opinion that this is unsuitable and undesirable and that land to the west of Luton is a much more sustainable proposition.

(4) If you are interested in seeing all the proposals of this Local Plan it is available on the North Herts website.

The Community Development Association, which is a not for profit community organization, set up to identify where there are affordable housing needs in Hertfordshire, was asked by NHDC to run a survey of residents in KW to identify what was needed here. The result was that 12 affordable, either one or 2 bedroom units, were required to provide housing for the elderly and young people. They identified certain sites around the parish and so far we have not heard which of these have been adopted. In the event, with the nominated Housing Association, they will only build 6 as they have to be sure that they will be taken up.

Their full report is on the KWPC website should you wish to see the details.

The PC has proposed on the Local Plan that the curtilage of Breachwood Green is extended to include Mill Way etc, and that Ley Green has a designated curtilage – doing this would allow sustainable, affordable development on sites identified within these settlement boundaries.

A resident of the Heath drew the PC's attention to the fact that there was a severe lack of parking places on the Heath. The County Council, through Cllr David Barnard, brought in the Highways Dept to advise on how best to resolve this issue and the PC after some discussion decided to support their recommendations. This has been a contentious issue with residents of the Heath, some very pro it and others very against. On balance the PC decided to support this but also recognized that in future it should adopt a better local consultation policy and indeed has resolved to do just that.

The work of creating more parking spaces on The Heath has now been completed.

The PC has adopted a Grants Policy . This refers to the way local organisations can apply to the council for small grants and sets out the criteria.

All details of this are also now available on our website.

Lastly but by no means least, the PC would especially like to thank Joe Beavis, Nic Cooper and Les Galliers for all the years of service that they have given. They have stood down, as have we all, and have not sought nomination to the new PC. Hopefully they will continue to do many of the fixing of things that they have been doing quietly for years. They will be sorely missed. Thanks too to Robert Mather, who whilst not standing again as a councillor has offered his support in any way he can.

The PC is short now of councilors, 2 in the Breachwood ward and 2 in the rest of KW and will be looking to co-opt. So please if you know of anyone who might be interested, or even if you have ever yourself given it a glancing thought, please think again and let anyone of us or Tom Brindley, the Parish Clerk, know. There is lots that can be done!

Thank you

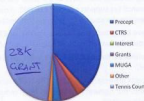
INCOME

The first two charts show the income. In a normal year, the council's income is derived from the precept, grants and fees. This is the "Revenue Income". In 2014/15 we also received a capital grant to construct the tennis court. This is shown in the "All Income" second pie.

Revenue Income



All Income



Revenue Expenditure



All Expenditure



SPEND

The income was spent on capital projects and recurring spend. The left-hand chart shows recurring spend. The right-hand chart shows spend including capital projects (the new tennis court).

Admin costs are around £4,000 (8% of total, 14% revenue), staff costs are £11,000 (21% total spend, 39% revenue, split between the clerk and the youth workers). £7,000 (13% total, 26% of revenue) was spent on parks and open spaces and £3,400 (6% total, 12% revenue) on grants. The biggest item was the new tennis court at £25,300 (47% of total).

Accounts in numbers

At the start of the year, once the council was certain there was enough funding to install the new tennis court, the **Revised Budget** (blue) was agreed. The **Full Year** shows receipts and payments and the white column shows the difference between budget and actual.

RESERVES

The council received more in grants than plan which allowed for additional work on the village hall and improved lighting and access to the MUGA and tennis court. The work has not been completed and so these sums are held as **Assigned** (earmarked reserves). £826.22 of cheques has not been cleared. Subtracting the unpaid cheques and the ear marked reserves from the bank balance shows a free reserve, of **£3,697**. The auditors recommend a free reserve of between three and six month precept. On this calculation the KWPC reserve should be between £7,000 and £14,000 and so is rather low.

Receipts	Full Year	Budget	YE Surplus	%	% Rev
Precept	22156.01	22156.01	0.00	38%	74%
CTRS	1843.99	1843.99	0.00	3%	6%
Interest	0.12	1.00	0.12	0%	0%
Grants	3370.00	2,200.00	1,170.00	6%	11%
MUGA	1641.50	1,500.00	141.50	3%	5%
Other	899.00	1,000.00	-101.00	2%	3%
Tennis Court	27896.00	27,896.00	0.00	48%	
Total receipts	57,806.62	56,596.00	1,210.62	100%	100%
VAT refund	6821.89				
Cash received	64,628.51				
Payments	Full Year	Rev. Budget	YE Surplus	%	% Rev
	Actual				
Parks	7,044.17	6465.00	-579.17	13%	26%
MUGA	1,004.52	4000.00	2,995.48	2%	4%
Staff	6,030.30	7000.00	969.70	11%	22%
Admin	3,986.10	3500.00	-486.10	8%	14%
Highways	427.65	500.00	72.35	1%	2%
Graveyard	550.00	550.00	0.00	1%	2%
Village Hall	2,800.00	2800.00	0.00	5%	10%
Youth Hut	961.29	890.00	-71.29	2%	3%
GPC	47.01	150.00	102.99	0%	0%
Youth Workers	4,710.00	4841.00	131.00	9%	17%
Tennis Court	25,280.00	27820.00	2,540.00	48%	
Total Payments	52,841.04	58,516.00	5,674.96	100%	
VAT	6,254.29				
Surplus/Deficit	4,965.58	-1,920.00	6885.58		

KINGS WALDEN PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES 2014/15

BUDGET 2015/2016

Looking forward, the charts below show the budget for 2015/16. The council has set a combined income for precept and council tax support grant of **£28,000**. (Council Tax Support Grant is an amount given by central government to compensate the council for revenue lost because of the spare room subsidy.)

We have budgeted to be awarded grants of £1,500. However, since the budget was set, a new project is mooted and this would be funded by an additional grant of £7,500. As this is not confirmed, it is not shown.

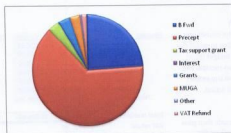
The council agreed that for future years, all grants must be applied for, and £4,000 has been allocated to the grants budget.

Staff costs are essentially static. The staff costs show just the clerk with the youth workers being shown in the Youth Club line. The highways budget has been reduced to reflect actual expenditure. A reserve for future MUGA repairs has been created.

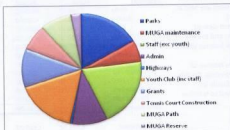
1.26/wk 1.04/wk

Income				Expenditure			
	2015/16	2014/15	Change		2015/16	2014/15	Change
B Fwd	10,130	4,99d	103%	Parks	5,905	6,465	-9%
Precept	27,085	22,156	22%	MUGA maintenance	2,200	4,000	-45%
Tax support grant	1,415	1,844	-23%	Staff (exc youth)	7,070	7,000	1%
Interest	0	0		Admin	3,328	3,500	-5%
Grants	1,500	3,370	-55%	Highways	250	500	-50%
MUGA	1,250	1,642	-24%	Youth Club (inc staff)	5,840	5,731	2%
Other	220	899	-76%	Grants	4,000	3,500	14%
VAT Refund	633	6,254		Tennis Court Construction	2,600	27,820	-91%
Total	42,233	41,158		MUGA Path	3,000		
				MUGA Reserve	1,000		
				Total	35,193	58,516	-40%

Income



Expenditure



Hitchin Rural Police Report for 2014-2015

From:- Hitchin Rural Policing Team

The Hitchin Rural Safer Neighbourhood team now comprises of three Police Officers and two Police community Offices.

The Sgt is Sgt Stephen Oliphant who is also in charge of Hitchin urban.

Pc Chris Suckling 1690 covers Chesfield, Wymondley, Graveley, Hitchwood, Kimpton and Great Ashby.

Pc Keith Harding 1738 covers Knebworth and Codicote

Pc Matt Jenkins 272 covers Offa, Hoo and Holwell

PCSO Heather Burrows 6510 covers Offa, Hoo, Kimpton and Holwell.

PCSO Michelle Trussell 6592 covers Chesfield, Hitchwood, Knebworth, Codicote and Great Ashby.

Michelle takes over from PCSO Elaine Cuozzo who left the constabulary last month. PCSO Trussell has been a PCSO for 10 years working within North Herts at Letchworth, Baldock and Royston.

Kings Walden Parish 2013/14 = 43 recorded crimes 2014/15 = 37 recorded crimes 3 Burglary Dwelling 5 Burglary Non Dwelling 10 Theft 9 Damage 1 Violent Crime 9 Other recorded crime

Operation Aquo

Operation Aquo focuses on and targets travelling /cross boarder criminals by using the mobile ANPR camera to identify and challenge suspect vehicles or people who are in our villages. Suspect vehicles are stopped, checked and the details of the persons within are clarified. This Operation helps us catch uninsured drivers and persons wanted by the police as well as disrupting any potential offenders coming into the area..

Operation Aroma recovers stash of tools and pets

Pets, a stash of stolen property and even a caravan were recovered following the execution of Operation Aroma - a warrant carried out by officers from North Herts at a Bedfordshire traveller site at the end of October 2014. The raid took place as a result of joint investigations by the Local Crime Unit, Operation Scorpion and the Safer Neighbourhood Team into a series of rural burglaries that had been happening in the region. The teams recovered power tools, plant equipment worth thousands of pounds, a cocker Spaniel, a Labrador and her seven puppies and even a ferret. In addition weapons including a pair of spiked knuckle dusters, brass knuckle dusters, a slingshot and a tin of BB pellets were discovered. The stolen animals were returned to their owners and the other recovered items are now being examined by forensic teams. They will be returned to their rightful owners where possible. Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley said: "I was thrilled with this result. We were aware of the spate of burglaries on-going in the area and had also received reports of stolen animals and dogs - so it was a real issue for us. "As a result we utilised a large number of resources and worked closely with Bedfordshire Police to help tackle the problem quickly. The result of the warrant is a really good example of joint force working with excellent results." Thank you for your continued support.

Other news / Events

The quad bikes remain in use by the Rural Neighbourhood Team at Hitchin Police Station. Both bikes have been deployed recently in coordination with Operation Aquo. The quad bikes have also been used on numerous occasions to search for Hare Coursers, poachers and vehicles being used anti-socially on tracks and farmers land.

We are also still focused on keeping the public informed and a number of safer neighbourhood days have been completed. These involve the PCSO's going door to door signing up new members onto the online neighbourhood watch and giving crime prevention advice. These days will continue throughout all of the villages.

Regards

Hitchin Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team

The Breachwood Green Society

Annual Report 2014/2015

The Committee has met at 6/8 week intervals throughout the year.

An energetic working party restored order to the Village Hall shrubbery in June 2014. Joe Beavis disposed of all the rubbish with the aid of his personally adapted trailer.

The quarterly meetings of LLACC at Putteridge Bury have all been attended by a Society representative, usually Lis Greet or Joe Beavis.

Recently it has become obvious that LLOL with the help of LBC are determined to undermine or sidestep the conditions of the Noise Action Plan and Quota system to allow noisier planes and extra flights. This is being vigorously fought by LADACAN and ourselves.

The Highway Cleaning Rota has been updated and is due to be again renewed in mid-May 2015. Everyone is very grateful to the litter-pickers and more volunteers would be welcome.

The Breachwood Times has been published quarterly and has reverted to black and white for financial reasons since the advertising revenue has fallen. An editorial committee meets twice to consider content before publication.

The History Group has continued in a less formal arrangement. There is some concern that the village archives are not all locally stored and available.

As a consultee of NHDC & HCC the Society has responded to the NHDC Draft Local Plan by voicing strong objections to the potential release of Herts Green Belt land around Tea Green & Cockernhoe to meet the housing needs of an expanding Luton. Objection was also made to the inclusion of the allotments at The Heath as a reserve housing site, on the grounds that they are a well-used local amenity and vehicular access/egress would be hazardous.

Having stipulated a deadline for grant applications, which we met, the Parish Clerk lost our application. This was discovered when we queried why we had not been notified of a decision. Subsequently we were advised by e mail that our application for £300 had been rejected.

The committee decided that despite having no income, we could afford to go ahead with some of our planned projects for the village. Tricia & Joe Beavis organised the purchase and planting of an Autumn foliage tree *Liquidambar styraciflua* – *Worplesdon* in the Recreation Ground on 12th December 2014. A small plaque to identify it is in the pipeline.

Planning permission is being sought to place a trough for low-growing shrubs on the Oxford Road triangle. The trough would bear a smaller replica of the village sign.

Lis Greet April 2015

Youth Clubs Report 2015

Children attend the youth clubs not only from the village but from neighboring villages and Luton to join their school friends.

Myself and Ross try to provide as varied programme as possible to meet the interest and needs of the children attending.

We hope to arrange a BBQ and rounders' evening including the parents.

The children range from 7-11 on Thursdays, and then Tuesdays range from 12-18.

The MUGA has been invaluable, encouraging and allows the children to lead a healthy lifestyle.

We provide an important outlet for the young adults that attend Tuesday youth club as they are able to express their opinions in a nonjudgmental environment.

Furthermore, local attendees of the Tuesday youth club have gone on to complete their voluntary side of the Duke of Edinburgh award through the youth club.

Babs Galliers
27 April 2015