

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING 2010

- 1. MINUTES** of the Buckland Annual Parish Meeting held in the Reading Room, on the evening of Monday 19th April 2010 at 8pm.

- 2. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

The Chairman (Nigel Husband), introduced himself, welcomed everyone to the Meeting and outlined the Agenda.

The Chairman introduced the other Parish Councillors, Mrs. Jean Copeland, Mrs. Doreen Dart, James Day, Dr. Anthony Eisinger, Alan Horden, the outgoing Clerk Iain Laurensen, the newly appointed Clerk Sheena Boyce and our invited speaker John Walshe, D.L. There were some 30 parishioners in attendance.

- 3. SURREY POLICE REPORT**

The Chairman then welcomed to the meeting PC Dominic Loraine and PCSO Aimee Lucas, who work as part of the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team. PC Dom Loraine advised that he, Aimee, or PCSO Ivor Williams routinely attends Buckland Parish Council Meetings to provide a contact point for Buckland residents.

PC Loraine advised there had been 5 crimes reported in Buckland over the past 6 months; one theft of number plates from a parked vehicle, the theft of a purse, a threatening email from an ex-employee, a fraudulent offence and a domestic related harassment.

PC Loraine encouraged residents to contact the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team should they have any concerns to bring to his team's attention and asked residents if they wished to raise any particular concerns; a short discussion followed during which the following concerns were highlighted: fly tipping in Lawrence Lane and an increase in the number of 4x4 convoys using the BOAT from the top of Pebble Hill to Lawrence Lane. Clarification was also sought on the rules governing the parking of commercial vehicles within the vicinity of the village shop and reading room.

The Chairman thanked the police for their attendance and help.

- 4. APOLOGIES for ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Longstaff and David Tompkinson (clerk to the Trustees of Buckland Parochial Charity).

- 5. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2009.**

These had been displayed on the notice board and circulated to Councillors earlier in the year. The motion to adopt the minutes as a true and correct record was proposed by Councillor Dr. Eisinger, seconded by Councillor Horden and carried by the meeting.

6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman explained that this would be the last occasion that Iain Laurenson would be presenting the Parish Accounts to the meeting as the gradual handover of Clerk's responsibilities to Sheena Boyce would soon be complete. The Chairman, on behalf of the Parish Council, thanked Iain for his tireless hard work, and presented a modest memento of his time as a small thank you.

Review of the Year

The Chairman moved on to give his report. He reported that whilst the traffic calming measures introduced last year appear to have continued to make a big difference to the speed of traffic, he continues to believe it can be further improved and stated that the Parish Council will continue to lobby the County Council for further thoughts on how to enhance the safety of those crossing the main road. He advised that a review of the surface of the A25 will be requested and the need for resurfacing in the near future be highlighted.

He reported that last year saw a number of village events take place, some familiar and some new with:

- the sixth Betchworth and Buckland Society BBQ blessed (again) with fine weather
- a successful Teas on the Green event to raise funds for the Christmas tree lights attracting much passing trade on a lovely late summer afternoon
- the pond clearance day, supported by some 20 volunteers. We extend our thanks to Simon Elson once again for providing the expertise and volunteers from the Reigate Conservation Volunteers
- a wonderful Carols on the Green under the lights of the Chestnut Tree with Mulled wine, Chestnuts, and snow.

He advised that last year's special project, which had been prompted by heavy vehicle damage to the edge of the green was completed last summer, extending the cobbled verge, installed a few years ago adjacent to the War memorial.

He referred to last year's annual meeting when he touched upon the state of the bus shelter which, having been cleared from choking foliage had revealed substantive damage and a need for repairs. He advised that the Parish Council are looking at this as a project for the coming year and will need to raise money to fund the repairs

He advised that he is looking forward to the resurrection of the Traditional May Day Fayre on May Bank Holiday Monday, which promises to re-establish itself as a major event in our village calendar.

He then personally thanked all the Parish Councillors and the incoming and outgoing Clerks for their time and efforts.

Rights of Way

The Chairman read the report on rights of way, prepared by Jim Docking:

Jim Docking and his team of wardens, Joan Gregory, Richard Wheen, Phil Wickson and Chris Worsley, who have continued to patrol the Buckland rights of way and have kept the Mole Valley Countryside Access Officer informed of any matters of concern.

Most of our representations have been about fallen or missing signposts, damaged stiles, fallen trees and overgrown hedges. Recently the County Council has been quite active in responding to our concerns, and several finger posts have been renewed.

The area around Dowde's Farm has been given particular attention. We now have a new sign on Lawrence Lane pointing towards Dowde's Farm, replacing the old one that had lain embedded in a thick hedge for three years. Unfortunately the new sign has not been realigned to point to the railway crossing, as we had repeatedly requested, and a step is missing from the tall stile just north of Dowde's Farm.

Although not requested by us, new surfacing of the bridleway from Dungates Lane to Wonham Lane has been laid to make the route less muddy, but the first part of the Buckland stretch has not received this treatment.

Again not requested by us, Surrey CC has recently taken an interest in Path no. 483 which ostensibly starts by The Grange on Rectory Lane and runs in a northwards direction parallel with Rectory Lane. For years, the path has had no signpost and has been obstructed by fencing, buildings and vegetation and thus rendered unusable. In February, however, the Council surveyed the path and considered re-opening it, but decided to do this only at its most northerly end providing access on a strip of common land below White Cottage.

Trees

The Chairman read the report prepared by the Gaynor Day, Buckland's Tree Warden:

The village has been offered two sapling trees from the Guides as part of the Girlguiding UK Centenary celebrations. The seedlings are currently too small to plant out and are being grown on, in pots, under the care of the Reitchels. When big enough, probably in a few years time, we can think of where to plant them (maybe not suitable for the Green).

The *Prunus subhirtella* planted nearly 9 years ago continues to thrive and grow but both the hawthorns planted at the same time have not been so lucky. One was vandalised and the other died. There has been some discussion as to replacing them but it is difficult to know where to site them as replacing them in the exact same position may bestow on them the same fate as the others. One possible site was not favourable by the people living next to the barn as it was close to their entrance.

7. BUCKLAND PARISH ACCOUNTS

Iain Laurensen started by expressing thanks to the community for the response he has received to proposals initiated by the Parish Council and thanked the Councillors for the photographic gift.

Iain then gave a summary of the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2010. He advised that while routine expenditure had come in at or below estimate, the Council's prior year decision to put granite sets on the Green, combined with the unbudgeted costs of repairing the church floodlighting and smartening up the noticeboard outside the village shop had led to a further depletion of reserves.

The precept, which was temporarily increased by £500 last year to help fund the granite sets has this year been set at £4,350 (£4,500 last year). He commented that the reserves are now probably too low and that the Audit Commission is likely to recommend they be increased over the next few years.

8. BUCKLAND PAROCHIAL CHARITY ACCOUNTS

Ann Adams, a trustee of the Buckland Parochial Charity, read the report for the year ending 30 September 2009, submitted by David Tompkinson, clerk to the trustees.

The Charity had a total income for the year of £3,323, the majority of which (£2,915) constituted a gift from the Henry Smith Charity and £3,514 was used to help parishioners in need. Two distributions were made, one at Christmas and the other late Spring. Twelve residents received gifts of food and contributions towards their gas or electricity bills.

The Charity Trustees, Rev. Carol Coslett, Rev. Pattie Vigers, Ann Adams, Doreen Dart and Philip Haynes would welcome information regarding parishioners, who anyone believes are in a condition of need, hardship, or distress and might benefit from the charity.

9. REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

The Chairman read out reports submitted by some of the organizations and groups in Buckland:

Update from Mike Hogger, Chairman of the Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society:

I write as promised following the Buckland & Betchworth's day at the Leith Hill Musical Festival yesterday and am delighted to advise that the choir surpassed its success of last year, winning four of the seven classes and being awarded the Medal for the highest aggregate mark overall in our Division. This year's aggregate was some thirteen points higher than what we were awarded in 2009 and represents a remarkable achievement in the framework of the Festival and a very fitting tribute to Teresa Carlile, our conductor for the past ten years, who is now moving on to different musical challenges. It is also great tribute to all the hard work and dedication of our members over what were very difficult winter months.

After successful recruitment campaigns in the last three years, the choir is going from strength to strength. We can now look forward with much confidence to the future as we appoint a new conductor in May. After a short break over the summer, September will mark the start of a new era under the baton of an energetic young conductor.

Exciting times are ahead for us and we eagerly look forward to welcoming new voices to join us on our journey to even greater achievements. There are no formidable auditions, and no experience is needed: all we look for is enthusiasm and a tuneful voice!

For more information on becoming a member of Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society, contact Mike Hogger on 01306 628110 or Helen Mardell on 01306 880061

Update from Jim Docking for the Buckland One World Group:

The Buckland One World Group, which began in 1979, has two main purposes: (1) to discuss problems facing poor people in developing countries, and (2) to raise money for worthwhile projects in those countries. Our core charity is Money for Madagascar. This highly efficient organisation supports some of the poorest people in the world through a series of projects that give emergency support for natural disasters such as cyclones and widespread flooding, give hope to very poor people by showing them how to lift themselves out of poverty and become self-sufficient, and provide educational work with disadvantaged people such as street children, school dropouts and prisoners. Every year our committee organises talks and entertainment to inform people and to raise funds for both Money for Madagascar and other small charities that are concerned with the poorest people.

Update from Richard When for the Buckland Bridge Club

The Buckland Bridge Club continues to thrive. Consisting largely of recent converts to the game, or of those who used to play but have not done so for years, they meet every Thursday afternoon to play duplicate bridge in the Reading Room.

"The club has its own website - see the magazine for details - which among other things contains the results of recent weeks' play. Many thanks indeed to Geoff Woodcock of Hilbre, Old Road for his work on the website."

Update from Madeline Rietchel: Girlguiding UK

Madeline Rietchel reports that the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides are all thriving and would like to take this opportunity to emphasise the need for more people to come forward to help. There are currently waiting lists for all three sections with little chance for all those on the waiting list to have an opportunity to join in unless new units are established.

10. GUEST SPEAKER

Following the break for refreshments the Chairman introduced our guest speaker, John Walshe D.L. John, who has been a judge of the Surrey Village of the Year competition for a number of years, explained how the competition has evolved from a Best Kept Village competition. In the past judges focused upon presentation and awarded prizes to “beautifully kept” villages whereas now the competition is all about the people, what goes on in the village and how it’s done? John encouraged us to take a fresh look at what life in Buckland has to offer and, through discussion; we now have a number of thoughts and initiatives to follow through.

The Chairman thanked Mr Walshe for an inspiring talk and thanked everyone for contributing to such an uplifting discussion.

11. AOB

Mary Davidson expressed thanks appreciation for improvements which have been made to Buckland’s pavements running alongside the A25. County Councillor Helyn Clack explained that the improvements have been undertaken by a team of people completing Community Service under supervision from the Surrey County Council Highways team. There was widespread support for Mary’s comments and CC Helyn Clack welcomed her offer to forward a written expression of thanks to be passed on the relevant people within the Highways Team.

A number of residents expressed concern that notwithstanding the efforts of the Highways team to tackle the deterioration in the road surface along the A25 that significant problems still remain. CC Helyn Clack assured residents that the Highways team are working hard to rectify any outstanding problems and she noted down the feedback and, in particular the concerns about the road surface in the vicinity of the nurseries toward the east end of the village.

The Chairman, having thanked everyone again for attending, closed the meeting at 9.50pm.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk
Hill View, Old Road, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey. RH3 7DU
email: bucklandpc@sheenaboyce.co.uk