

BUCKLAND ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2019

MINUTES of the Buckland Annual Parish Meeting (APM) held in the Reading Room, on the evening of Monday 25th March 2019 at 7.30pm.

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman, Nigel Husband (NH), welcomed everyone to the meeting, extended a special welcome to Rosie Jordan from Surrey Search and Rescue and advised refreshments would be served at the end of proceedings.

NH relayed apologies from Councillor (Cllr) Alan Pryor and introduced Cllrs Michael Bourke, Ianthe Cox, Alan Horden, Debbie Jones and Julian Steed and Sheena Boyce, Clerk, to the meeting. NH outlined the role of the parish council, providing an overview as to how the contributions of individual councillors and the Clerk come together and emphasised that the parish council is not a political body.

NH Chairman welcomed District Cllrs Simon Budd and John Muggeridge, County Cllr Helyn Clack and Dominic Sanders, Buckland Estate. NH encouraged everyone to engage with our Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) and Surrey County Council (SCC) representatives during the post meeting refreshments and explained that the agenda did not include addresses from the individuals to comply with "purdah" rules during the run up to forthcoming elections on 2nd May 2019.

NH expressed his appreciation to everyone who had responded to the parish council's open invitation to attend parish council meetings and participate in the open forum near the start of the meeting and repeated the invitation to continue to do so; especially to highlight an opportunity or proposal and/or raise an issue.

It was noted that there were 41 parishioners and 7 members of the public in attendance.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Martin and Stella Cantor, Iain and Meike Laurenson, Cllr Alan Pryor and Donna Pryor and Jane and Michael Stewart.

3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2018

These had been displayed on the Parish Council Notice Board, published on the village website, and circulated to Cllrs. The motion to adopt the Minutes as a true and correct record was proposed by Charles Jones, seconded by Martin Boyce and carried by the meeting. NH, as Chairman, signed and dated the minutes.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

NH advised he would provide a brief outline of the Parish Council's activities over the last year before taking a look forward to 2020. NH commented that his report had, for several years, included a reference to the impact severe financial constraints at MVDC and SCC continues to have on service levels and required the Parish Council to expand its role to help to fill some of the service gaps.

NH commented that whilst many people may consider the A25 a negative village feature that it does nevertheless provide a vital link. Sheena recently looked back through the minutes of the first Annual Parish Meeting she attended as Clerk in which she found "*The Chairman advised that a review of the surface of the A25 will be requested and the need for resurfacing in the near future be highlighted*". NH thanked everyone who, over the intervening years, had contributed to the effort to achieve this outcome and emphasised the need for every resident to continue to report problems they encounter on our local roads and pavements/footpaths to ensure their resolution is given appropriate priority by SCC Highways. NH directed anyone unsure how or to whom to report an issue to check the "report it" page on the village website.

NH highlighted winter edging work to the footpaths alongside the A25, work that had required a significant proportion of the annual Parish budget over recent years that the Parish Council continues to prioritise for the benefit and wellbeing of the whole community.

Contractors employed by the Parish Council cleared the footpaths alongside the southern edge of the A25 between the western boundary (close to Tranquil Dale) and Squires Garden Centre. SCC Highways staff extended the work to the driveway to Shagbrook, SCC contractors cleared around Buckland bends and a team of village volunteers uncovered the final stretch of footpath to the eastern boundary. On the north side of the A25, SCC contractors cleared between Tranquil Dale and Shepherd's Walk and between Lawrence Lane and Tapwood Lane. This leaves one stretch, on the north side of the A25 left to tackle – between Chesterfield Park and the parish boundary.

NH reported that the Parish Council had recently asked the B&B Society to consider donating funds to enable this final stretch to be cleared and Council awaits their reply.

As the weight of traffic using the A25 and the 40mph speed limit that applies restricts the extent to which it is possible to utilise volunteer effort, tackling the long term build-up of earth and vegetation on the footpaths has extended over three winters and future budgets will need to allow for ongoing maintenance to safeguard the amenity improvements we have worked hard to deliver.

NH expressed thanks to everyone who turned out to help at the pond clearance the focus of which was the removal of large quantities of weed that had grown at alarming rates during the hot summer. The commitment of the volunteers, who worked under the guidance of Simon Elson and the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers cleared enough of the less accessible areas of the pond to allow a mechanised clearance to be undertaken along the northern perimeter. NH explained that as it is not realistic to expect to totally eradicate the fast growing plants that, if left unchecked, will “choke the pond” that this task will need to be scheduled on a regular basis - for so long as the village wishes to retain the pond as a feature on the village green.

NH thanked volunteers who had participated in the recent spring village tidy; an effort that cleared an area of land on Buckland bends close to the eastern parish boundary, cleared brambles from the bus shelter opposite the village shop and saw cutting back of a section of footpath immediately to the east of Shepherd’s Walk and expressed appreciation to a cohort of young BERT volunteers who, under the guidance of Simon Budd, had cleared the banks of a brook alongside Rectory Lane.

NH asked everyone to spread the word about the benefit being delivered by volunteer events and asked for more people to step forward to offer help.

NH advised a software upgrade of the programs that support the village website had recently been implemented and encouraged everyone to make use of this great resource. NH encouraged anyone wishing to provide new or refreshed content – whether about an activity or event to send it to our volunteer webmaster.

NH took the opportunity to remind people to sign up to the village email group and to remember to update their contact details if they change their email address. NH advised that over 80% of households with internet access had already signed up and expressed his wish for this figure to be even higher.

NH briefly referred to Future Mole Valley, a topic that had featured strongly in the 2018 APM and stated that the MVDC website currently suggests a 6-week public consultation on the new draft Local Plan will be launched on 24th June 2019.

NH provided reassurance that Council continues to monitor airport and flight path related developments and remains a member of the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign; mindful that change could have a significant impact on the parish.

NH provided an update from SES Water on its proposal to install a new water main between Headley Reservoir and Lawrence Lane Pumping Station. The company had advised that since setting out its initial plans at the 2018 APM that Murphys (the appointed contractor) had proposed an alternative proposal that should have significantly less impact on the village. It is understood that provided landowner consents can be secured shortly that the works will be undertaken this summer.

NH thanked Sheena for the dedicated service she gives to the village as Clerk and for being the first to volunteer her time to participate in community initiatives.

NH, before asking the Clerk to present the Parish Council accounts, explained that the Parish Council share of the 2019/20 Council Tax would increase by 2.9%, in line with the increase MVDC is applying, and be equivalent to £1.26 per year for a Band D household. NH stated that the Parish Council budget currently reflects a financial contribution of £2949 from MVDC and advised that if this were to reduce that either a higher parish council tax would be needed to deliver the current level of service or services would need to be reduced.

5. BUCKLAND PARISH ACCOUNTS

Sheena Boyce (SKB) presented a summary of the forecast full year accounts compared against budget for the year ending 31st March 2019, copies of which had been made available to the Meeting (see appendix).

SKB explained that the higher expenditure on the village green and pond had reflect the mechanical clearance, a cost that was partially offset by less frequent grass cuts during the hot dry summer and highlighted one off expenditure incurred to comply with new Data Protection legislation that took effect May 2018 (GDPR). SKB highlighted the £4000 reserve established to fund a contested election in the event more than seven nomination papers are lodged for the seven seats that will up for election on 2nd May 2019.

With no questions asked SKB indicated she would be happy to respond to any queries during the refreshments break.

NH invited Ianthe Cox (IC) and Philip Haynes (PH) to speak.

6. BUCKLAND PAROCHIAL CHARITY ACCOUNTS

IC, Trustee and Clerk to the Charity referred parishioners to the 2018 Report and Accounts printed copies of which had been made available to attendees.

IC took the opportunity to encourage parishioners to make the Trustees aware of any significant need within the village and to emphasise that all such information is handled sensitively and with discretion.

PH, Trustee and Treasurer invited questions on the financials and indicated a willingness to respond to any queries during the refreshment break.

NH took the opportunity to extend thanks to each of the four nominative trustees (Ann Adams, Debbie Jones, IC and PH) whose current terms conclude when the Parish Council next meets and to IC who we understand has indicated to the Trustees her wish to retire as Clerk.

7. VILLAGES IN BLOOM

Cllr Steed (JS) announced that the Parish Council had, on behalf of its residents, responded to an invitation to enter Buckland in the village category of the South and South East England regional “In Bloom” competition.

JS advised that the “In Bloom” organisation is not just about gardens and grandiose floral displays and that the current competition criteria are more akin to those of the now discontinued ‘Best Kept Village’ competition in Surrey which Buckland had previously entered.

JS explained that

(i) Villages are assessed for their achievements in three core pillars: Horticultural Excellence, as one might expect, but also Environmental Responsibility and Community Participation.

(ii) at the time of writing, our entry is supported by many community groups: St Mary the Virgin, Buckland; Buckland Estate; Buckland Deli, our village shop; Occasions, our hairdressers; Buckland Nurseries; The Pheasant; The Red Lion; Brockham Green Horticultural Society (which covers all RH3); Pilgrims Cricket Club; Tiny Tots Toddler Group; and Buckland’s Brownies and Rainbows.

(iii) the judges are coming to Buckland on Thursday 11th July and will tour the village starting at 2pm

JS expressed his hope that everyone will want to be part of this community effort, qualifying this by saying “*It’s not that onerous – please tidy your front garden, mow your lawn and remove weeds a day or so before the judges come*”. JS explained that the requirement is that gardens should be “well cared for”, not necessarily a blaze of floral colour and that the judges will be on the look-out for litter.

JS advised he would issue information via parish updates to the email group, on the village website and on the parish noticeboards.

NH invited Dominic Sanders (DS), Buckland Estate to speak.

8. BUCKLAND ESTATE – UPDATE

DS advised that the Estate:

(i) is on track to appoint contractors before the end of April to commence construction of the café, activities centre and connections to utilities at Park Lake

(ii) hopes the activities centre will open later this year with the café expected to take a little longer. The team is working hard to complete all the steps required to allow the site to be fully open to the public by Spring 2020 with all the facilities outlined in the planning permission;

(iii) will continue to work with the Surrey Hills Adventure Company (SHAC) to deliver low impact activities at Park Lake;

(iv) had appointed Steven McKenna to the new role of operations manager, currently on a part time basis, in a role that will extend to full time later this year;

(v) had continued to monitor work Hanson is undertaking at Tapwood Quarry to stabilise the cliff faces as the water level rises.

(vi) had recently submitted additional information to MVDC that had been requested by the planning policy team working on the new local plan.

NH thanked DS for sharing this update with the village and invited Rosie Jordan (RJ) to speak.

9. GUEST SPEAKER – ROSIE JORDAN, SURREY SEARCH AND RESCUE

RJ introduced the work of Surrey Search and Rescue and explained how this Lowland rescue team fits into the landscape of rescue organisations which also include HM Coastguard, 999 Emergency Services and Mountain Rescue.

RJ explained that Surrey Search and Rescue is a team of highly trained men and women who are on call to assist Surrey Police 24 hours a day throughout the year to search for, find, treat and rescue high risk, vulnerable missing people.

RJ explained how the team make optimal use of technology (including drones) to support their searches and the extent to which the technical backup available to the team had developed since they were first established.

RJ referred to a very recent heathland fire on Chobham Common and explained how the team had been asked to provide support to Surrey Fire and Rescue, by using their drones to help identify and target potential hotspots.

NH thanked RJ for an enlightening talk and for responding to questions from the audience.

10. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

NH thanked everyone for making the effort to come along to participate and for the contributions made to this year's Annual Parish Meeting, with particular thanks extended to Dominic Sanders, Buckland Estate and Cllr Steed.

NH expressed the hope that the evening will sponsor further discussion and debate as to what we, as the village's residents wish Buckland to be and enthusiastically invited anyone who may have an issue they consider the parish council needs to be aware of to attend a meeting or make contact by telephone or email.

NH concluded by encouraging everyone to ensure Sunday 8th September 2019, the date of the next "pond clearance and village tidy" is marked on their calendars - 10am prompt on the Village Green!

The Chairman, having first invited attendees for any other items or queries, declared the meeting officially closed at 9.20pm and invited everyone to stay for light refreshments.

APPENDICES

1. Buckland Parish Council Financials
2. Buckland Village Charity Report
3. Buckland Village Charity 2018 Accounts
4. Annual Report submitted by SCC Cllr Helyn Clack

FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR TO 31ST MARCH 2019 - FORECAST AND SUBJECT TO AUDIT

EXPENDITURE (Vat excluded)

REVENUE EXPENDITURE

Parish Amenities

	Budget 2018/19 £	Actual 2018/19 £	Variance 2018/19 £	Actual 2017/18 £
Village Amenities (Green/Pond)	2755	2999	-244	2680
Village website	200	809	-609	180
Maintenance : Street furniture / Defibrillator	75	187	-112	15
Improvements : A25 Roadside Paths	1800	2304	-504	2360
Floodlighting to the Church	300	80	220	116
Subtotal	5,130	6,379	- 1,249	5,351

Council Running Costs

Clerk Salary	7259	7504	-245	7351
Regulatory Fees	607	402	205	500
GDPR / Data Protection	491	371	120	0
Training	400	271	129	245
Subscriptions	25	25	0	25
Insurance	325	345	-20	296
Annual Parish Meetings	80	90	-10	22
BPC Meetings - Room Hire	200	120	80	160
Travel expenses	250	244	6	168
Office costs	998	643	355	851
Subtotal	10,635	10,015	620	9,618
Contingency	385	0	385	-
Total Expenditure	16,150	16,394	-244	14,969

INCOME

REVENUE INCOME

	Budget 2018/19 £	Actual 2018/19 £	Variance 2018/19 £	Actual 2017/18 £
Precept	13286	13286	0	12723
MVDC Council Tax Support Grant	796	796	0	780
MVDC Concurrent Payment	2065	2066	1	2007
MVDC Contribution re Village Tidy	0	0	0	37
SCC Highways Localism	0	0	0	0
DCLG Transparency Fund Grant	0	0	0	317
Interest	0	20	20	5
Donations	0	237	237	1036
Total Income	16,147	16,405	258	16,905

Reserves (Cash at Bank)

	Allocated	Unallocated	Total
31-Mar-20	4000	8793	12793
31-Mar-19	4000	8313	12313
31-Mar-18	4000	8560	12560

Report of the Buckland Parochial Charity for year 2018

Trustees:

Chairman: Ann Adams
Treasurer: Philip Haynes
Clerk: Ianthe Cox
Trustee: Deborah Jones
Co-opted: Susan Fellows
Liz Vahey

The Charity

The Buckland Parochial Charity has been operating since 1889 when it brought together the entitlement to an annual grant from The Henry Smith Charity and several small local charitable endowments. The Henry Smith Charity was founded by Henry Smith, a Salter who was born in 1545 and died in 1628. Through his trade he became very wealthy and purchased several Estates. Having no family issue he created a number of charitable trusts for the relief of the poor and needy. The Charity consists of a mixture of properties and investments and, among other beneficiaries, makes grants to over 200 Parishes. The Henry Smith Charity Trust Deed is very specific regarding how the annual grant is distributed to recipients by each parish charity and this is reflected in our own Trust Deed:

'The object of the Charity shall be to relieve, either generally or individually persons resident in the area of the Parish of Buckland as constituted in the year 1889, who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress'

'Grants can be made either by money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities, calculated to reduce the need, hardship or distress of such persons'

The Trustees

Four Trustees are nominated by the Parish Council, and usually are resident in Buckland and serve for a four-year term unless appointed during such period. However, there is no requirement in the Trust Deed to say they have to live within the village.

In May 2019 three of the nominated Trustees are due for re-nomination or replacement. They are Ann Adams, Philip Haynes and Ianthe Cox. Also, Debbie Jones, having been appointed in March 2017 is due for re-nomination or replacement.

Additionally, there are two co-opted Trustees, who are nominated by the other Trustees and serve for a five-year term.

The Charity meets twice a year in May and November. All roles are appointed within the Charity and monetary or other distributions are agreed at these meetings. **It is important to stress that the content of these meetings is totally confidential to the Trustees and names of recipients are never divulged to any outside source.** It is the responsibility of the Trustees to 'keep their ears to the ground' to identify any need within the village. The name of the Clerk and contact number is always on the back of the Parish magazine. During 2018 there were distributions in May and December to village residents plus some specific assistance for special cases. The Trustees anticipate that the Charity will continue to flourish and identify and provide assistance as it becomes apparent.

Ianthe E.M. Cox
Clerk to Buckland Parochial Charity
March 2019

The Buckland Parochial Charity

Receipts & Payments Account for the 12 months ended 31 December 2018

2017	<u>Receipts</u>	2018	2016	<u>Payments</u>	2018
£		£	£		£
	<i>Opening Bank Balances</i>			<i>Buckland Residents</i>	
71	Current	1,000	1,650	Stores	1,525
1,528	Reserve	894	1,200	Gas/Electricity	1,125
	<i>Other income</i>			<i>Support</i>	
565	COIF dividends*	577	31	Gifts & Plants	44
1	Bank interest	1	-	Other support donation:	500
110	Donation	-			
	<i>Grant received</i>			<i>Closing Bank Balances</i>	
2,500	The Henry Smith Charity	2,500	1,000	Current	806
			894	Reserve	972
£ 4,775		£ 4,972	£ 4,775		£ 4,972

*COIF Charities Investment Fund - Income Units

The Charity holds an investment of 1,158.36 income units in COIF Charities Investment Fund, managed by CCLA. The value of these income units held at 31 December 2018 was £16,635. (2017 £17,018)

The Trustees have not needed to use their Reserves to enable them to meet special requests for support during the year, The Trustees believe their reserves are sufficient to meet all normal support payments until the next annual grant from the Henry Smith Charity is received.

Distributions from The Henry Smith Charity grant are made in accordance with their requirements.

The income from the investment in COIF Charities Investment Fund is applied for the benefit of beneficiaries or added to reserves as appropriate.

The above accounts have been reviewed by me and I confirm they are properly and fairly presented.

**P E Haynes FCA Trustee
& Treasurer**

**County Councillor Helyn Clack, Vice Chair of Surrey County Council,
Member for Dorking Rural Division**

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Firstly, may I take this opportunity of thanking your Parish Council for all the work they do to support residents, work with other local authorities like Surrey County Council and the many hours your councillors and Clerk spend in making a difference in our community.

It has been a very busy year at County Hall. We began with the retirement of the Chief Executive and the recruitment of Joanna Killian as our new CEO. Joanna brings with her a wealth of knowledge of improving local government councils. She was CEO of Essex County Council and has turned their services around to be very well regarded.

For the past few years Surrey County Council has been judged inadequate in delivering children services and our priority is to improve services to our most vulnerable children and families in the County. Our budget envelope continues to be challenging, and the County is having to make some difficult decisions regarding prioritising funding on non-statutory services and to consider changes to those services we are legally charged with delivering to be more effective and efficient.

Residents in Surrey are concerned about these changes and as your county councillor it is important to make your voice heard at council.

The County Council continues to transform its services to maintain the budget envelope it has whilst keeping to the allowed increases in Council Tax.

The County Council Leader for 8 years David Hodge CBE, stood down from the Council at the end of last year and we welcomed C.Cllr Tim Oliver to take on this important role with the support of his Cabinet and colleagues. Tim has recently announced that County Hall will move to Surrey with old county hall being earmarked for redevelopment in Kingston. We will be looking for a new democratic home somewhere in the County although many of our staff and officers are already working from several Surrey offices.

I have been a member of the County Council's Cabinet for many years in various roles. I decided to take the opportunity that arose in December to apply for the role of Vice Chair of the County Council and I was successful. Traditionally this role is for two years and if I am lucky, I may then be able to apply for Chair of the County Council. It is a very important role acting as a conduit for other organisations to be recognised at County Hall. I am very grateful for the support and welcome I am receiving across the county working with partners like the districts and boroughs councils, the Voluntary and Faith Sector, the Police and Health.

Locally, we have had lots of consultations regarding County services such as waste sites, children services, bus passes and library usage. We are also being consulted on the District Plans for enlarging villages and Gatwick Airport Master Plan and the Green Paper on Aviation.

We have had earthquakes in the South of my division, and applications to drill and expand oil production. I have been talking to our local MP about how his experience of devastating earthquakes in New Zealand can help us to explore the evidence to see whether these local tremors are related to the drilling..

The County's additional £20 million investment into road repairs after the 'beast from the east' this time last year produced a plethora of potholes across the county is coming to the end of the financial year and a great deal of repairs have been done, although, there is always more to do. Flooding in various villages has led to some collaborative work between the agencies although funding for major schemes seems to be missing. The new pot of CIL (community infrastructure levy) which will be paid out as a tax to the District and Parishes on new development in our communities does not add anything to the County funding pot. The question therefore arises who will be responsible for community infrastructure in the future?

These and other issues can often be thought provoking and I regularly receive correspondence on all kinds of matters. I visited many residents over the last year and worked with my district and parish colleagues across my division. As usual I am very grateful for their help and cooperation in helping our residents in our communities.

I still hold the EU brief at Surrey County Council, I am President of PURPLE (Peri-Urban Planning in the EU). This lobbying network campaign to make sure that areas like Surrey on the edge of Urban conurbations are not forgotten in the EU world of infrastructure planning. I also Chair the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership European Structural and Investment Funds Board (ESIF). This organisation will migrate to the 'UK Shared Prosperity Fund' after BREXIT is agreed (one way or the other), we are currently trying to work out how to make sure we get our fair share of this fund which will be decided by the UK Government in future.

Over the last six months I have also chaired the review committee of the Gatwick Noise Management Board which seeks to find a way forward for reducing noise over our homes. The review committee is reviewing governance and code of conduct for members of the committee.

A very busy year again, but one that as usual I have found enjoyable. Parish Councils and District Councils are up for election this year and I would like to thank those that have decided to stand down and wish all the very best of luck to those who succeed them.

Last year I spend my annual allocation across all the villages in my division. The next scheme will open on the 1st of April 2019 and I urge communities to apply for funding where needed.

Helyn Clack

Mrs Helyn Clack
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