



STAPLEHURST EMERGENCY HELP TEAM

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on
Thursday 23 March 2017
at The Free Church, Staplehurst

Present:

Andrew Watson (Chairman)	Laureen Rodwell	Erika Lock
Rob Wiles (KRT)	Chris Ralph	Paul Linaker
Andrew Wardley (Marden KFR)	Bill Piper	Patrick Blunt (Kent Raynet)
Rory Silkin (SPC)	Mira Martin (Community Warden)	Sue Bassett
		Jason Bardell

Apologies:

Joan Buller (SPC)	Eric Hotson	Pam Payne
Sam Lain-Rose (SPC)	Margaret Friswell	Shirley Norfolk
Louise Brice (Cllr)	Diane Buch	Tony Norfolk
Peter Spearink (SPC)	Barbara Keel	Peter Jeffery
		Catherine Abbott.

Chairman's Report:

Andrew welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Andrew presented his report at length, which covered the minutes of the previous AGM as well as matters arising.

He started by thanking a number of people for their support during the year, and the team in general.

In particular he thanked Sue Bassett, now retired from the Parish Office, for her work.

Donna Maxa who has now moved away, Bob Ham & the Free Church, and Peter Spearink.

During the year, Andrew had been alerted twice, neither of which occasion needed further action. On 5th April, a truckload of immigrants had been collected from Frittenden Road by the Immigration Agency before he arrived. A lost teddy bear on Surrenden Field was cited as the sort of action that should not concern us!

He mentioned the following **events and developments**:

He had attended a session for Flood Wardens at Yalding on 18th July.

Several Staplehurst volunteers had participated in the Kent Resilience Team's Operation Surge exercise on the south coast. The scenario involved high tides causing havoc.

Our own exercise took place on 8th October. The scenario involved an overturned petrol tanker which necessitated the evacuation of a number of houses.

Andrew spoke at KRT's Seminar at Canterbury County Cricket Ground on 14th December, outlining Staplehurst's experiences and aspirations. Staplehurst continues to be cited as having a well developed Plan. One questioner had suggested that KRT was failing to use a lot of available talent. It was explained that it is KRT that has the required specialist skills, not team volunteers.

Recently Andrew conducted a recruiting stunt - Volunteers for a Cuppa Leakie-Cookie

Soup - at The Parade on a Saturday Morning. This brought significant interest - 30 potential volunteers. Andrew is confident that they can be relied upon to turn out in case of a real emergency. It was agreed that Andrew should telephone them to remind them of the SEHT.

The Cricket Club (membership over 400) has agreed to be contacted if necessary.

The big on-going event of the year has been the development of the Vulnerable Residents' Register - which was given a page in the Parish Magazine, and brief talks have been made to key village groups, including the Interest Group, the McCabe Lunch Club, the Weald Club for the Disabled and the WI. The simple process is that residents who would welcome a call or a knock on the door should give their details to their organization who would forward them to Mira or himself. So far 27 houses have been noted. It is Andrew's further role to ascertain whether residents have a corded telephone and whether there are issues like mobility of which we should be aware.

Action: It was agreed that it should be made clear that we do not provide A&E services.

Andrew then expressed his thoughts and concerns for the future.

We must guard against building an organizational structure based on a single individual and there must be stand-ins for all essential roles. All the information required to activate the team, the appendices in particular must be instantly available. (See below.)

From both the Resilience Team's and our own experience, we know that interest from local volunteers is declining. It's no use saying that we "need a disaster", but we need to be ready when (not if) an emergency situation arises.

There are two problems: The actual preparation is not exciting and younger volunteers have plenty else to do. Andrew believes that the solution is to ask residents to be available to help at a shelter when the need arises - making it clear that they will never be bothered with frivolous calls or have to attend meetings.

The key is to have the contact points easily accessible to our regular volunteers and team members. (See below.)

Andrews hopes that there will in future be active teams in neighbouring parishes with whom we can work. It would be beneficial if we were familiar with plans in Headcorn and Marden.

Andrew's key objective is to keep the core SEHT crew interested and involved. He feels that we are in good shape, but invited comments if members feel that we are heading in the wrong direction.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.

Other matters arising from the Minutes or Chairman's Report:

3.6: The current draft of the **telephone tree** was discussed. It was agreed:

- (i) that further adjustment is needed to ensure that those near the top of the tree are well briefed
- (ii) that all people on the tree are kept aware of their inclusion
- (iii) that there is a practical rehearsal of the tree every three months to ensure everyone on the tree knows how to respond in the event of a "real emergency" or prior to an exercise.
- (iv) that other key contacts must understand their role within the structure.

3.8: From now, the **Parish Office** will act as our archive, records storage and contact point. However we need immediate access to data and contacts in case of an emergency, and the holder of this information must have backup in case of his/her absence from the parish. It was agreed that we should have a **Data Secretary** to ensure that membership and database information is accessible.

Elections:

Chairman: Andrew was re-elected.

Deputy Chairman: Laureen Rodwell ((Nom: Erika Lock/Chris Ralph)

Minutes: Bill Piper

Data Secretary: Jason Bardell (Nom: Bill Piper/Andrew Watson)

Data and Documents:

A discussion followed about how and where documents should be located and accessed. Bill said that there should be a review of where all the material is.

It was agreed that Jason, Andrew and Rory should form a group to review the situation.

(Action)

Marden:

We welcomed Andrew Wardley, watch manager at Marden Fire station. It was generally acknowledged that Marden and Headcorn have not yet developed emergency teams. Andrew hoped that there would be collaboration between Staplehurst and Marden in the future. In particular he could provide a speaker at an SEHT meeting, and he could provide a fire engine and volunteer crew as part of a future exercise.

Paul Linaker asked whether there had been any liaison regarding where the air ambulance could safely land. Andrew replied that in any situation landing spaces are generally evident to the helicopter pilot. There are plenty of sites available and these can also be signalled from the ground by emergency teams.

Kent Resilience Team:

Rob Wiles stressed the importance of partners' knowing about SEHT, identifying that Staplehurst has a plan. A secure government website, Resilience Direct, identifies SEHT in case of local emergency, so it is essential that the plan is kept updated and forwarded to KRT. [Rob added by email that KRT will work on assisting Marden Parish Council with the development of their Community Emergency Plan and providing joint Welfare (Rest) Centre training for SEHT and Marden.]

Training:

Laureen asked Rob Wiles if he would arrange for a bespoke training session for the group, particularly around setting up a Community Rest Centre. Rob agreed to organise this.

Dates:

It was agreed that meeting dates should be shown on the parish website. (Action.)

Date of the Next Meeting:

The date of the next meeting will be 29th June 2017.