

Minutes of Berwick St James Village Meeting. Thursday 14th March 2019

In attendance: Neil MacDougall (Chairman)
Christian Lange (Deputy Chairman)
Bill Hiscocks (Treasurer)
Kate Wood (Village Secretary)

Guests: Alistair Sommerlad (Chairman of the Stonehenge & Avebury World Heritage Partnership)

Total in attendance: 33

Summary of issues discussed and decisions made

1. Welcome & Introduction – Chairman

The chairman opened the meeting at 7pm and extended a warm welcome to Alistair Sommerlad.

Apologies for Absence were received from Darren Henry, Olivia & Tim Marchant, James Hardy, Ian Gibb, Jane Lock-Smith and Helen Riding.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

A303 Community Forum

The following five proposals were submitted by the village to the A303 Community Forum as part of the benefits and legacies input from the local area.

- 1 Improvement to the drainage in the village (James hardy)
- 2 Long term programme of maintenance of The River Till (Julian Glyn-Owen)
- 3 Low key parking areas established around the perimeter of the WHS (Julian Glyn-Owen)
- 4 Any food & beverage business opportunities that may present themselves along footpaths and cycle tracks should be offered to local people in the 1st instance (Julian Glyn-Owen).
- 5 Eco-living walls on sides of tunnel portals and viaducts to blend in with the surrounds and reduce noise and vehicle exhaust pollution (Neil MacDougall).

Devizes Textiles Containers.

Bill Hiscocks

Bill Hiscocks informed the meeting that payment had still not been received from Devizes Textiles, although they say the cheque was sent out earlier in March. Bill will continue to chase payment on this.

Village Website.

Chairman

Neil had approached Hugo Fox regarding the dropdown box on the website as it was difficult to distinguish from other text and therefore not easy to read. Neil felt it would be improved by changing the colour which would make it clearer but informed the meeting that the charge of £120 from Hugo Fox to do this was deemed excessive and agreed by the floor.. The expense to have this modification done was therefore not proposed.

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed unanimously to be a true reflection of the meeting – proposed by Nicky Street, seconded by Janey Campbell-Johnson.

3. A303 Update /Webinar

Julian Glyn-Owen

Julian addressed the meeting to give an update and information regarding the progress of works on the A303 development. He had taken part in a webinar discussing the planned construction and reported that it seems everything is going to plan as far as the general infrastructure is concerned – tunnel, fly overs, bridges etc are all proving to be relatively straightforward. Highways England is also putting pressure on the contractors to be vigilant during construction and aware of the risk of litigation regarding the preservation of the immediate local areas and concerns of the residents in the surrounding communities, particularly as far as the possibility of such things as spoil getting into the River Till, or disruption caused by construction traffic etc is concerned.

4. Council updates /A303

Chairman

Border review: Darren Henry is still our Councillor, although he will have lost Great Wishford and The Langfords but gained The Woodfords.

There will be a neighbourhood tasking meeting at Amesbury Police Station on 20th March and either Neil or James Hardy will attend it, Neil asked that if anyone had any points they wished to be raised at the meeting, to let him know.

The Amesbury Board meeting will be held at the Guide Centre on Thursday 21st March.

A303 - the overall programme and activity timeline show progress is continuing as planned, no sign of delays as yet.

Giles Dickinson had reported seeing two suspicious characters who appeared to be inspecting the Pub porch on Thursday 14th March, possibly planning to steal the lead. They disappeared when approached but were driving a grey van with the registration number LC53 FHB, if anyone should see this van in the village please report it to James Hardy.

5. Village Storage – Shipping Container Update.

Chairman

Neil informed the meeting that there was still a good deal of research still required regarding the siting of the storage container for the village. Slides were shown of the various proposed sites but the preferred, and possibly least offensive, site was behind the hedge at the guide centre, located on the Guinness Estate . In spite of repeated requests, the Council have yet to come up with a definite amount set aside for the

village under Section 106, and there will be extra costs incurred for lining the container and erecting shelves inside. Hopefully more information will be available by the next meeting and a decision made.

6. Village Fundraising Activities.

Bill Hiscocks

Toby and Sarah Humphries have kindly offered to host a “Tea at The Races” event in their grounds on Saturday 20th July. It would be an informal gathering of local residents and would feature races to bet on, teas and various stalls; it was suggested there should be a beer and Pimms tent (although any arrangements for a charge for these is yet to be decided) and Bill suggested there may also be a bar-b-que after tea. There was general agreement for the event and Bill suggested that further details could be discussed at the next meeting.

7. Berwick Photographic Competition.

Chairman

Neil showed the meeting a wonderful photo of the River Till, taken by Mike Riding, which had been included in the most recent edition of the Wiltshire Life Magazine, also a lovely photo of a tree lined walk taken by Alice Gould. Neil therefore proposed that there should be a Berwick photographic competition depicting photos in and around the parish of Berwick St James and specifically capturing the atmosphere of one of the four seasons of the year. The subject of the photos could be views, people, objects or festivities etc but should depict the atmosphere of the season. Only 3 entries per person would be accepted, Barbara Last would judge and although there would not be any specific prizes awarded, the winning photos would be exhibited on the website.

8. Village Diary.

Nicky Street.

The Reading room door is being made and should be ready by May/June

The Art Appreciation evenings presented by Bryan Armstrong have been much enjoyed by the village, as was the talk given by Nigel Rodgers entitled “The Colosseum Laid Bare”.

Forthcoming events:

21st March - Art Appreciation – ‘Caravaggio’s Legacy’ by Bryan Armstrong

28th March - Chocolate Bingo in the Guide centre from 2.25pm – 4pm

9. Presentation – The World Heritage Site.

Alistair Sommerlad

Alistair holds the position of Chairman of the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Partnership which is a voluntary position as the Partnership is a non-funded organisation

There are apparently 31 World Heritage Sites (WHS) in the UK - Bath, The Tin Mines in the South West and The Jurassic Coast being just a few examples. Alistair explained that the title WHS refers not just to the stones alone but to the whole area in general.

Numerous slides were shown depicting the changes in the area due to the Wars, farming methods and erosion etc from sometime before World War 1 to the present day.

The presentation was greatly enjoyed by all at the meeting and drew much discussion

and various questions from those present.

Further information on the history of the site and the photographs shown can be accessed on the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site website and Alistair made information leaflets available for those present.

10 Any other business.

Chairman

Neil Informed everyone that the AGM would be held in May and that it would be his last meeting as Chairman as he had decided to step down after holding the position for the last 7 years.

Christian Lange thanked Neil, on behalf of the village, for his outstanding contribution and efforts over the last 7 years and invited any interested parties to contact either himself, Neil, Bill or Kate for further information on the role and its responsibilities. He added that although Neil would indeed be a hard act to follow, the amount of responsibilities that Neil had undertaken over the years could now be reduced by being shared among others who may be willing to step in to accept various tasks.

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8.20pm.

The next meeting (The AGM) will be held on Thursday 23rd May 2019 at 7pm.

Neil MacDougall

Chairman Berwick St James Parish Meetings.