

## Yattendon Parish Council

### **MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Held on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 at 7:30pm** in Yattendon Village Hall.

Councillors present: Gordon Robertson (Chair), Anne Harris (Vice-chair), Wendy Mole, Chris Turner and Dean Foster.

In attendance: Sarah Marshman (Clerk), David Slack (Managing Director, Yattendon Estates), Simon Lewis (West Berkshire Brewery), Simon Gibens (Keep Fit), Roger Sansom (Village Hall), Rob Morley (Frilsham and Yattendon Parochial Charities), Sandra Wilkinson (Tennis Club).  
28 members of the public.

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

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#### **1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr. Philip Bickford Smith and District Councillor Virginia von Celsing.

#### **2 Introduction by the Council Chairman**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the councillors and clerk for all the arrangements made. The parish council had chosen a group of speakers for this year and welcomes suggestion for next year.

#### **3 Presentations from/by:**

##### **Roger Sansom – Village Hall**

Roger highlighted that the Village Hall can be forgotten but it is a very good resource for the village. The village hall is owned by the Yattendon and Frilsham Sports and Social Trust. To keep the hall in good order, it is very important to raise funds towards this. The hall is available for hire and suggestions for its use are parties, wedding receptions, christenings and wakes, classes.... And the Trust is open to other suggestions. The bi-monthly Brewhouse Music is held at the hall, as are weekly exercise classes run by....

##### **Simon Gibbens – Over 50 exercise class**

Simon runs a weekly circuits class to promote good physical and mental health. Simon highlighted the importance of remaining as active as possible as people grow older. The hall is set up in a gym style with eight different exercises. Each exercise has a simpler and harder variation. The social and mental aspect of the class is of great importance, providing an outlet for people to get out and chat in a fun environment. The class takes place every Friday from 10-11am and costs £5 on a pay as you go basis.

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Chairman

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Date

### **Simon Lewis – West Berkshire Brewery**

West Berkshire Brewery is currently looking to expand with the development of a new brewery and investing in new staff, and the aim to purchase a pub. They are trying to sell more beer whilst maintaining their local trade and are therefore likely to outgrow their current premises in the next year. They are therefore working with the estate with the aim to move to the site of the old dairy. This would allow them to install a packaging line so that instead of bottling off site at high cost it can now be brought in house, with an increase in local jobs. They plan to ensure they keep a shop on the new site.

### **Sandra Wilkinson – The Tennis Club**

There are currently over 100 members in the tennis club from Yattendon, Frilsham and the surrounding villages and new members are always welcome. Members can take part in the Newbury League and the Berkshire League and coaching is available. There is currently a movement to build on the Davis Cup legacy the LTA are providing funding for coaching children with a six week course starting in July. There is also a social side to the club with all members being members of the social club and a few events being run every year. Sandra highlighted the need to continually save money for resurfacing the court.

Sandra is also a Broadsheet editor and appealed for a Yattendon representative on the editing team.

### **Rob Morley – Frilsham and Yattendon Parochial Charities**

The Poor Relief Act of 1601 formalised relief for the poor as the responsibility of the parish. But the emphasis was very much on supporting the “deserving” poor and Elizabethan Poor Law operated at a time when the population was small enough for everyone to know everyone else, so people's circumstances would be known and what were called the “the idle poor” would be unable to claim on the parishes' poor rate. Many early charities in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century were established for the relief of the poor, and Pocock's Charity was an early example of one of these, operating alongside the formal arrangements for the relief of the poor at a time when absolute poverty and even starvation were not unknown.

Most of the early charities were not well managed and few survived into the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Pocock's Charity and its origins were described in the general review of charities carried out in the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign:

*“James Pocock, by will, dated 26th September 1610, gave to the mayor and corporation the sum of £25, on condition that they should be bound to buy land, the rents thereof to be employed to buy and provide eight shirts and eight smocks, of 2s. a-piece each, or above, and bestow five of the shirts and five of the said smocks to 10 of the poorest people of the Town of Reading, of the best behaviour, upon the second Sabbath-day in December, or as near as might be; and the remainder, one year, to six of the poorest people of the parish of Frilsham, Berks, where he was born, and the other year to six of the poorest people of the parish of Yattendon (sic), on the same day in December, and so alternately for ever, always making choice of such poor as were of the best behaviour, the said mayor using the help of the churchwardens of those parishes therein. And he directed that the mayor should have sixpence, and the churchwardens fourpence, for their trouble.”*

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Chairman

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Date

Pocock's bequest was added together with one of £160 given by Thomas Deane for the poor of Reading and the money was used to buy two properties in London Street, a tenement in Bath Court and a public house in Silver Street in Reading. Thus we commonly refer to the Charity as the Deane & Pocock Charity although it has now become a part of the Reading Almshouse Charity. It seems initially that Yattendon and Frilsham did not receive their proper share of the rents from the Reading charity trustees until it was resolved by the Charity Commissioners in 1893 with arrears. After that, separate payments were made to each of the two parishes. In 1894, Churchwardens' civil powers were removed when Parish Councils were set up under the Local Government Act and in Frilsham the funds were administered by the Rector and Sir William Cameron Gull who were originally appointed by the Parish Council in place of the Churchwardens. But in 1898 the parish renounced its right to have a Parish Council and after that the Trustees were appointed by the Parish Meeting. In 1928 the Charity Commissioners approved a scheme to merge the bequest for Frilsham with two smaller charities to form the Frilsham Parochial Charities.

The Charity Commission scheme laid down how the trustees were to be appointed and how the funds could be used, but the trustees were not normally allowed to give gifts of money. This proved to be problematic during the Second World War, because recipients needed to produce ration coupons, so the trustees started to give between 2 and 5 cwt of coal, and then after 1965, Christmas parcels made up by Yattendon Stores.

In accordance with provisions in the Charities Act 1993, the objects of the charity were updated in 2001 and in Frilsham we have made cash donations since then.

In Yattendon it seems that the Parish Council would have taken over the administration of the funds from the Churchwardens in 1894 when the Churchwardens civil powers were removed, and have administered them ever since.

It seems that around 1983, the properties owned by the Deane & Pocock charity were sold for redevelopment and subsequently the charity started to receive a better income from the resulting investments.

The Parish Council in Yattendon have been now been told that it is not a proper purpose of the Parish Council to distribute charitable funds. So they have approached the charity in Frilsham to ask us to take over this role. We have had to change our charitable objects to do this, which needed the consent of the Charity Commission, but this has now been done and we have changed our name to the Frilsham & Yattendon Parochial Charities.

We now have two trustees who are appointed by Yattendon Parish Council (Gordon Robertson and Anne Harris) and two by Frilsham Parish Council (Dorcas Ward and Phil Gent). The Secretary & Treasurer is Shirley Lyon who most of you know, and I continue to be Chairman.

We have a rather different definition these days about who might be deserving, and traditionally, we have always supported our elderly residents at Christmas time each year, but we are always happy to hear of anyone who would benefit from the charity and we can sometimes help in other ways, so please let one of us know if you think we could help you or someone you know who lives in either of our parishes. The two parishes have operated somewhat different criteria, but the overriding objective of the charity is to support those in

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Chairman

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Date

need, and obviously we don't want to have different criteria for our two villages. So it's not appropriate that we give you a donation at Christmas unless it will actually be of benefit. We don't carry out any formal means test, but I am sure there will be some who will tell us that they would rather that we give to those who actually need our support and to whom a little extra at Christmas time is very helpful to them. This is something the Trustees will discuss when we meet for the first time.

**David Slack – Managing Director, Yattendon Estates.**

During the past year the new Village Stores were opened by Lord Iliffe after a major refurbishment project undertaken by the Estate. The Stores and Post Office now offer a much enhanced range of products and services and increased opening hours to suit the needs of the community. As well as all the usual services the Post Office can also be used to withdraw cash and can act as a bureau de change for obtaining foreign currency.

To help alleviate the perceived parking issues in the village a new free car park has been created at the end of the small lane that runs between Butchers Shop Cottage and the village Forge and provides space for around a dozen cars.

The Pantry also opened during the year and has proved very popular with the village and with visitors and is a great credit to Top Nosh who operate it.

The new Christmas Market held at the Christmas Tree Yard during the two main busy weekend in December proved very popular and showcased the 'Best of Yattendon' local businesses and the Estate is looking to increase and improve the offering this coming Christmas.

The Estate has re-employed the original contractors to look after the roadside verges and general village environment working with our own in-house team and the improvements are there for all to see.

The provision of Superfast Broadband remains a concern and the Estate are working closely with Superfast Berkshire to ensure the quickest and best possible coverage for both the residential and commercial community. Gigaclear were awarded the local contract and are programmed to carry out the installation work during the late summer/early autumn of 2016.

Initial thinning work on the coniferous woodland plantation at Burnt Hill revealed an unwelcome invasion of the Spruce Bark Beetle. This insect makes very quick work of killing trees and has to be eradicated as quickly as possible to stop the problem becoming more wide spread. The Forestry Commission have visited the site and advised that most of the remaining trees should be removed and are happy that the Estate is doing everything required of them as responsible land owners. The clear fell area will be replanted, but it will take some time to fully recover.

**Dick Greenaway – West Berkshire Countryside Society**

Dick highlighted that the official rights of way map is available for free. He will be releasing a new book shortly called 'What's in a West Berkshire Wood', bringing a mock up for people to view. There will be a launch party at the village hall.

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Chairman

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Date

Dick also talked about the use of the Woodland Classroom which is of great benefit for the school. He highlighted that although in this area some of the bluebells get trodden on by the children, it is surely worth it to bring up the next generation of children to appreciate the woodland.

- 4 Parish Council Reports:**      - Reports from the Chairman and Parish Councillors  
   - Financial Report from the Clerk to the Council

**Gordon Robertson – Chair of Yattendon Parish Council**

During the previous year, the parish council has carried out a lot of speed monitoring precipitated by concerns of the speeds of vehicles passing the school. These results are reported to the police and we believe it has had a slowing effect.

The parish council has also made a donation in this year towards the defibrillator.

**Sarah Marshman – Clerk to Yattendon Parish Council**

We started this year with a balance of £3104. The precept was set at £6,725 to cover the expected expenditure on the budget and we received a small grant of £58 from West Berkshire Council. In addition to the necessary running costs for the Parish Council, expenditures include £2500 which is paid annually to Yattendon Parochial Church Council to help with the upkeep of the churchyard. The parish council also made a donation of £200 towards the cost of the defibrillator that has been installed on the outside of the Village Hall.

In addition to the parish council accounts, we have held an account containing funds provided from the Deane and Pocock charity. At Christmas, the parish council distributed £25 worth of vouchers and a tin of chocolates each to 24 residents of the village. As we have now been advised that these funds should no longer be handled by the parish council so we are in the process of transferring the remaining funds, a total of £893 to the Frilsham and Yattendon Parochial Charities who will distribute the funds from now on.

**5 Questions from members of the public**

The low turnout for the familiarisation evening for using the defibrillator was highlighted. A paramedic who lives in the village offered to do an additional session as there was a lot of interest.

Meeting closed 9:05pm.

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