

PARISH OF BISHOPSTOKE

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly 2005 Held at the Methodist Church, Bishopstoke on Thursday 26 May 2005, commencing at 7.30pm

Present: In the Chair – Cllr Anne Winstanley, Chair of Bishopstoke Parish Council;
Cllrs Hansell, Roling, Pemberton and Pope
Ms M Partner, Local Area co-ordinator
PC Moody, Hampshire Constabulary
three members of the public
the guest speaker, Ms L Mathias, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

In attendance: Mr P J Storey OBE, Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council
Mr P Bulbeck, Responsible Finance Officer to Bishopstoke Parish Council

1. Welcome by the Chair

Cllr Anne Winstanley extended a warm welcome to all present at the tenth Bishopstoke Parish Annual Assembly.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Davies-Dear, Mignot, Moore, Shephard, Snook and Toher.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 20 May 2004

Copies of these were distributed to those present at to the Assembly. Proposed Cllr Roling, Seconded Cllr Pope, **RESOLVED** unanimously that these be accepted as a true record of the 2004 Assembly.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 20 May 2004

Item 7 – Presentation by Young Persons of the Parish. The Clerk updated those present on the improvements completed or in planning for Glebe Meadow including the solar powered lighting which would soon be installed, the goal posts and nets, and repainting the skate board surface which would be undertaken by volunteers.

Item 8 – verge parking. In response to a question from Mr Turtle, Cllr Winstanley confirmed that Traffic Regulation Orders to prohibit parking on certain lengths of verge were being processed which would enable fixed penalty tickets to be issued to those car owners contravening the no parking regulations under a scheme introduced with the transfer of responsibility for policing this problem to the Borough Council.

5. Presentation of the Audited and Published Return for the year ended 31 March 2004

Mr Bulbeck, the RFO, explained the procedure whereby the contents of the Annual Return were somewhat historical but confirmed this was the norm. The Chair then invited questions of which there were none.

Proposed Cllr Hansell, Seconded Cllr Pope, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2004 be accepted.

6. Chair's Address and Annual Report

Cllr Winstanley reported that in the last twelve months Bishopstoke had had its third set of Parish Council elections, this time warded into Bishopstoke East and Bishopstoke West following changes to Borough Council wards. She explained that when the Parish Council elections take place in 2008 the further changes in County Council divisions would divide Bishopstoke West into Bishopstoke North-West and Bishopstoke Central.

Cllr Winstanley continued by taking the opportunity to welcome our new Parish Councillors from the elections – Rita Sharp, Derek Prince, Ian Pemberton and Mary Shephard. Farewell and thanks for their services were made to those who had stepped down at the election – Val Hamilton, Chris Short, Pam Rutty and Des Clarke. And later in the year, farewell was said to John Budd whose changing work commitments had made it impossible for him to attend Council meetings.

Commenting on the Government's Quality Parish Initiative, Cllr Winstanley expressed her pleasure that the level of interest in the local elections last June had meant that the Parish Council met one of the requirements for achieving Quality Parish status and the Clerk was busy working towards his formal accreditation which was another. A further requirement was for the publication of a Newsletter at least quarterly and with our half yearly newsletters and half yearly events leaflet, both containing information about the Parish Council and community events and groups in Bishopstoke, it was believed we were well on the way to meeting yet another requirement.

During the year, the Parish Council had continued its regular support of village groups and organisations, making grants to the Memorial Hall, local Guides and churches, the Bishopstoke Carnival and Eastleigh Bereavement Service among others. With the recent completion of the Wyvern College community recreation facilities, the Parish Council was very pleased to be able to donate £20,000 towards the total cost of the project in support of their Lottery bid. In addition, an important aspect of Council work continued to be representing the best interests of local residents in a variety of external matters. Examples of these included regular consultation on planning applications, strategies being put in place by the South East Regional Assembly and the County Council Health Review Committee's deliberations on the future of The Mount Hospital. On a more practical side, Councillors have cleared rubbish from the Bishopstoke Channel and have undertaken litter sweeps as part of the Annual Village Spring Clean and Cllr Winstanley was pleased to report that Councillors have now volunteered to do this on a more regular basis.

Councillor Winstanley concluded by reporting on our successful bid under the Hampshire Villages Initiative Scheme for joint funding to improve the Beach on Riverside and the lights in St Mary's Churchyard where work was due to start in early Summer and following Parish Council support for youth work by participating in the BIFOHH Youth Project over several

past years we could all look forward to being involved in the funding and management of the new Brookfield Youth Centre on which building was due to start in the Autumn.

Councillor Winstanley then welcomed the guest speaker, Ms Leah Mathias, project officer for the Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail, with whom the Parish Council and Bishopstoke Historical Society had now linked in furtherance of our plans to renovate the Shears Mill turbines.

7. Presentation on the Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project

Ms Mathias outlined the Project's intention to secure the conservation of the Itchen Navigation and its importance as a heritage feature and wildlife habitat. The Navigation had been man-made in the 17th century as an important trading link between Winchester and the sea although usage ceased in 1869 with the arrival of the railways and the Navigation had since fallen into a state of serious disrepair and abandonment. However, this abandonment has resulted in a strengthened conservation interest and a partnership had now been created between Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Winchester City Council, Southampton City Council and English Nature to preserve the Navigation before it was lost totally.

The core aim of the project was to conserve the heritage of 10.5 miles of the Navigation from Winchester to Southampton, passing through Winchester College, Shawford, Otterbourne, Bishopstoke, outskirts of Eastleigh, where the water level had dried up, past the airport, Mansbridge and Riverside Park. When in use, the Navigation had brought industrialisation to a mainly agricultural economy and had provided an effective alternative to expensive transport by road. Although its downfall had been the arrival of the railways, its sluice system had remained important for winter flooding and summer drainage of the water meadows. Being a chalk stream, it had long provided much needed nutrients to adjacent grazing fields and in earlier times had allowed a second hay crop to be produced.

Ms Mathias emphasised that today the project offered a wildlife asset, an historical asset, a recreational asset, an educational asset and a landscape asset. The Navigation was designated a Special Area of Conservation, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Wildlife was returning, salmon and trout breeding grounds continued to exist, rare historical features such as turf sided locks, of which only two other examples were known to exist in the country, and the Shears Mill turbines, which were believed to be the only pair of linked turbines left in existence, made the project one of major importance. With a successful bid for Lottery funding and much local community involvement a major asset could be provided for all to learn from and enjoy.

Ms Mathias concluded by welcoming the inclusion of the Shears Mill turbine restoration project as this would provide a major focal point on the planned heritage trail as well as being of importance to Bishopstoke residents and she looked forward to working closely with those involved over the next few years.

A general discussion ensued before the Chair thanked Ms Mathias for a very interesting and informative presentation.

8. Public Questions

There being no further questions, Cllr Winstanley declared the Assembly formally closed at 8.25pm and invited all present to enjoy the remaining light refreshments provided.