

**Notes of the Berwick St James Parish AGM held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008 No. 25**

**Apologies for Absence**

George and Janie Campbell-Johnson and Gabriel Smith. 31 people attended the meeting.

**Minutes of the Last Meeting and Actions Arising**

Minutes were read, approved and signed. Proposed by Henry Colthurst and seconded by Mary Gatling. No actions arising.

**Election of Officers 2008 – 2009**

Diana Gifford-Mead proposed that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk should be re-elected on block and the Meeting agreed.

**Accounts for 2007/08**

Tina Woodford presented the accounts which were read, approved and signed. Proposed by Henry Colthurst, seconded by Barry Spolton.

**Neighbourhood Policing**

P.C. John Wyeth introduced himself and told us that he and Tracy Holloway were contactable at all times on the 0845 number on the leaflets he had brought to the meeting. There is only one contact point and, as this is usually based in Devizes, a clear description of where an event is happening is necessary. Wilton Police Station is now closed. Rod Crossley said that when he tried the contact number six months ago he found it difficult to get an answer. P.C. Wyeth mentioned that they can receive 20 or more mobile phone calls for the same incident but if there are any complaints please put them in writing, but he thought that any teething problems had been sorted out.

Berwick had a few cars broken into in March and P.C. Wyeth requested we keep cars locked and valuables out of sight. The dummy police car was left in the village for one week to act as a deterrent. Unfortunately, since then it has been vandalised and we have to wait for another to be allocated to the community.

Jean Hibbard asked if the police could walk through the village occasionally which P.C. Wyeth promised to do if there was time. He was thanked for his update and left.

**A303 Update  
Stonehenge Visitor Centre**

Ian West told us that he had been to a meeting chaired by Government Ministers Tim Harris and Margaret Hodge to explore future plans. This was mainly to assess the re-siting of the Visitor Centre to Fargo North, no land train required, which was to open by 2012 in time for the Olympics.

The Highways Agency had an angry reception at a meeting in Trowbridge. As always, the A303 and the bypass around Winterbourne Stoke are not being considered. Ian West is pressing on with the local wishes for a dual carriageway but has been told, privately, that it will never happen. The closing of the A344 is part of the plan but the Highways Agency realises that this cannot be done until any new roads are in place. Meanwhile in Winterbourne Stoke, crossing from one side of the village to the other is becoming ever more hazardous and a 15 year old was recently knocked down. There is not money available for an overhead walkway or a pedestrian crossing. Winterbourne Stoke has asked for a cost estimate to determine if they can raise the money themselves.

### **Unitary Council**

Despite local objections from councillors and Robert Key MP, over-ruled by Government, an interim Council is in place. Locally we have 9 County Councillors and 8 District Councillors, Ian West holding both positions. The original 250 Councillors will be reduced to 98. Elections will be held next May for the Unitary Council and Ian West will stand.

### **Plans for New Houses in Salisbury District**

It is reported that the Government proposes to build an additional 12400 houses in the Salisbury District by 2026.

Robert Key MP has prepared a petition against this plan and anybody wishing to sign should contact Richard Brasher.

### **Church and Reading Room Fete**

Chris Lange addressed the Meeting and said that Toby and Sarah Humphreys had offered their garden for the fete and Rod Crossley had offered the grain dryer barns if it rains. The Fete will be held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at 1.00pm. The earlier time is to allow for the bigger and better dog show. It is suggested that the money raised by the Fete be used to buy a marquee for the village to use and hire out, and that the remaining funds be shared between the church and reading room. Barry Spolton is researching marquees.

There will be a duck race on 14<sup>th</sup> June starting at the bridge by the Boot and going on to the Clock House. There will also be a craft demonstration. The Guides will have a stall.

### **Berwick St James Website**

Chris Lange and Nicki Street have developed a web site 'berwickstjames.org' which consists of news and history. It is very interesting and contributions are most welcome.

## **Speeding through Village**

Henry Colthurst addressed the Meeting and said that although the speeding does not personally affect him in Asserton, when he walks his dog it is noticeable that speeding occurs. There are many ways to deter speeding but it was agreed that road signs do not work and are ugly; bumps are unpopular so he asked if a widened pavement at each end of the village would work. Generally opinion was not in favour. After much discussion of other villages' methods, Stephen Bush suggested rumble strips and this was agreed by the meeting. Henry Colthurst to explore.

## **Any Other Business**

Langford Lane has large puddles – Charles Street will attend to it.

The wooden seat outside Mary McDermott's house needs attention. Will Simpson-Gee volunteered to attend to it.

Mary Gatling applied with Meeting's approval (Minutes No 24) to have the red telephone box listed and was told it would take six months. It is now seven months and should come through soon. Richard Brasher then told the Meeting that he had just received a letter from SDC stating that BT wish to remove telephone boxes which are under used. SDC want a decision from us as BT may cut off the phone and when listed the village may be responsible for the maintenance. The Meeting now wish to consider buying the telephone box instead of having it listed. Mary Gatling to investigate but may be too late.

Ian Fisher mentioned that our insurance premium will rise with a listed building. Mary McDermott said that sentiment costs money and she objected and a vote was called for. Majority in favour of buying with a strong contingent not objecting to it being removed.

Nicki Street mentioned the Harvest Festival on 27<sup>th</sup> September and asked for more help.

Charles Street would like us to hold a meeting for every planning application that may affect the visual aspects of the village. Richard Brasher and Tina Woodford reiterated that it had been agreed during Ian Fisher's chairmanship that a meeting would be held if necessary.