

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE BENTLEY 2008 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 21 APRIL 2008 AT 7.30 PM

Present

Mr R Goodwin - Parish Council Chairman

27 members of the public and the Clerk to the Parish Council. In attendance were County Councillor David Yorke-Edwards and District Councillors J Hinton and M Miller – Apologies received from Mr R Perkin, Mr B Poulding and Mr D Ingham

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and pointed out that the Accounts and Minute Book were on display for inspection by parishioners.

1. To Approve Minutes of the 2007 Annual Parish Meeting - 26 April 2007

The Minutes of the 2007 Annual Meeting were approved and signed as a true record.

Proposed: Mr J Blackmore Seconded: Mrs K Wheals All in favour

2. Matters Arising - There were no matters arising.

3. Parish Council – Chairman’s Report - Mr Goodwin gave his report as Parish Council Chairman and briefly ran through the events of the previous year ie the flooding issue in Case Lane which had hopefully been solved, the traffic through the village which was an ongoing thing and the Bentley website where information relating to the village could be obtained. The new notice board was ready for erection at the Village Hall and is to be placed by the footpath to the left of the entrance (the paper bank will be moved so the banks are both together). He went on to say that the Council receive regular Police reports and Bentley has a very low crime rate. He wanted to bring the meeting’s attention to the Single Unitary Council of Suffolk and stated that two Bentley Parish Councillors had attended a meeting on this and asked Mr C Cripps to give a brief update.

Mr Cripps reported that he and Mr R Perkin had attended the meeting which has been very informative and interesting. He stated that Ipswich’s proposal to become a Unitary Council was turned down and this has resulted in the Boundary Committee looking into this along with Norfolk, Suffolk and Devon. We need to be aware that Ipswich will put in a new proposal and it is possible that in order that their new proposal be considered could incorporate in their present area small parish councils close to their boundaries ie Wenham, Belstead, Brantham, Copdock Nacton and Bentley. It was made clear that if Parish Councils were concerned and worried they would have to put in their objections very quickly as it is being rushed through. It is something we should have on the agenda of the next Parish Council meeting with an open session so Parishioners can make a decision and go on from there

Action: Agenda item at Annual Parish Council Meeting – 1 May 2008
--

The Chairman continued his report touching on the fly tipping. He invited Liz Whitman to speak regarding an organ recital arranged by the Friends of St Mary’s.

Mrs Whitman stated that 52 families in the village have joined the Friends of St Mary’ and subscriptions, donations and reclaiming Gift Aid has generated over £2,000 in the last 12 months - she thanked everyone who had supported this and stated that they would still like more members. She stated she had tickets for the organ recital with cheese and wine which was being held on Saturday 26 April 2008

The Chairman concluded his report by thanking everyone who had supported him through the year.

NB: The minutes with attached reports may be viewed by prior arrangement with the Clerk

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

4. Village Organisation Reports

- 4.1 Table Tennis – In the absence of Mr Jim Farrow Mr John Blackmore read out his report which listed the performances of the Cobras and Pythons. Over the past year there had been a good response from local residents joining the club. The club is always looking for new members and has a website - *A full report is included in the minute book*
- 4.2 Carpet Bowls - Mrs Rayment reported that carpet bowls had a reasonably successful year winning both their charity matches. They have 30 members (6 new members) and meet on Tuesday evening at 7.30 and Wednesday afternoon at 2.30-4.30. They are a friendly club pleased to welcome anyone who would like to play a game. - *A full report is included in the minute book*
- 4.3 Footpath Society - Mr Smith reported on another successful year. Membership was 57 the programme of walks each year started early March through to New Years Day with an average of 14 people. There were also five summer mid week evening walks. Subscriptions had been increased from £1 to £2 per member following a continued small year end deficits. Some minor clearance work had been undertaken and from time to time and SCC contractor mow certain paths in early summer. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.4 Horticultural Society - Mr Blackmore reported that the Society is now in its 31st year and is still proving to be extremely popular. Membership has never dropped below 65 and this year its just shy of 80 and meet on the third Friday of each month with a break in June, July and August and have a speaker each month with the AGM in November. Subscriptions are £5 per year and the next meeting is on Friday 16 May when the subject will be Chrysanthemums. - *A full report is included in the minute book*
- 4.5 Aerobics – In the absence of Mrs Mower the report was read by Mrs Blackmore. The past year has seen the classes go from strength to strength with numbers averaging 20. The class runs to the school term and several opt to pay for the term in advance and therefore benefit from a 50p reduction per session. Tracey has recently passed her latest training and is now a qualified Personal Trainer and importantly for this class an Advanced Instructor. - *A full report is included in the minute book*
- 4.6 Neighbourhood Watch - Mrs Anderton tendered Mr Ingham’s apologies and stated that the cluster meetings for co-ordinators had been very infrequent although the first meeting for many months is due to take place tomorrow evening at East Bergholt High School. There is also a Public Street Meeting on 31 May to discuss issues that may be of concern. We are warned to be on guard against the theft of metals such as lead and copper, heating oil and also to avoid leaving windows open. - *A full report is included in the minute book*
- 4.7 Outdoor Bowls –Veronica Howe reported on the bowls in Mrs Calvert’s absence. There had been another enjoyable year despite the weather and the Club finished mid table in the Samford Division 2 and second in the Ipswich & District Division with promotion to Division 1 for the 2008 season. Members had worked on the green at the end of the season which has hopefully improved it and will be open on Friday 25 April at 6.30 pm – *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.8 Parochial Church Council also including 4.25 Tea and Chat - Ms Sandra Mehen gave a report on the activities of the PCC and stated that there were a variety of services and everyone is welcome. The PCC continues to value the close links with the local Primary School who also use the Church for special services. There had been some successful social and fund raising events last year but there is still the challenge of raising money to repair the church roof. Half the sum needed two years ago had been raised but costs have risen to probably about £90,000 with architect’s fees. . The tea and chat afternoon is on the first Thursday of each month and is an informal get together in the Village Hall. Everyone is welcome and free tea or coffee and biscuits are served. Mrs Mehen thanked everyone for the support received during the last year - *A full report is included in the minute book.*

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

- 4.9 Playgroup - Mrs Rayment reported that Bentley Playgroup have 7 children all from the village, Wednesday morning is Toddler Group and the numbers for this session are on the increase - several grandparents bring their grandchildren. There is a jumble sale on Saturday morning - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.10 Recorder Players - Mr Usher stated that he was reporting for his wife who was the musical director - the group meet once a month for 9 months and play for their own pleasure. There are about 20 advanced players who are to give a musical performance on 21 June at noon and everyone in the village is invited there is no charge. There will be a retiring collection and proceeds will go to the Horticultural Society's chosen charity – the Church.
- 4.11 Tree Warden - Mr Hawes stated that since the last Annual Parish meeting the Tree Warden had been involved in a wide range of tree and hedge related matters including, planning applications, tree planting, advising on mitigation management, tree preservation orders and mapping hedgerows. He went on to report on the planting of trees at the New Village Hall and will be visiting the trees planted along the verges over the past few years to loosen tree ties to prevent strangulation of the stems. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.12 Tuesday Club - Margaret Blackmore gave the report from the Tuesday Club and listed the varied programme. The average membership is 30 with ages ranging from 60 to over 90. She went on to thank the Parish Council for the grant received last year which had enabled them to enhance the outings programme which the members greatly appreciated. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.13 Village Correspondent – Michael Anderton reported that there was no Village Correspondent as he was now involved in the Bentley Bugle and the Parish Website. He urged the Parish Council to consider appointing a new Correspondent.
- 4.14 Bugle - Liz Whitman reported on the formation of the new Bentley Bugle with herself, Michael Anderton and Adrian Mills getting a grant for £200 from the Parish Council, a grant from David Yorke-Edward's Locality Budget and donations from residents. There are sufficient funds to produce it to the end of this year and are hoping to make it self sufficient by way of advertising. All material for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to Adrian Mills.
- 4.15 Village Hall Committee - Mark Usher thanked all the groups and individuals who have raised money to get the hall in place. He went on to say they are waiting for the final bill - the money is in the bank to cover it and will be paid when the snagging items are sorted out – the hall will then be completely paid for so they don't need any more contributions so it is time to contribute towards other village developments such as the church. The AGM was very well supported and very lively and the hall is being very well used with increased activity in the village.
- 4.16 Women's Institute – Jill Swain read the report on behalf of Mrs Ford and reported another enjoyable year. The membership for 2008 is 20 and new members are always welcome. There had been 12 meetings in the village hall on second Wednesday in the month and speakers had been varied. She listed the various topics and outings and stated that Mrs Margaret Cribb had two photos printed in the WI 2008 calendar. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.17 Whist Club – Mrs Howe reported the Whist Drives are continuing to be very successful with an average of 44 people attending on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall. Donations of £225 had been given to St Elizabeth's Hospice and Bentley Village Hall. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.18 Primary School - Mrs Rayment stated that building work began on the school during the summer holidays and was completed during the Easter break. There is a new large classroom

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

and the mobile has been removed. There are 52 children in full time education with two full time teachers, three part time and six teaching assistants with two office staff. Mr Osborn the caretaker for 12 years retired at Christmas and Mrs Jill Mills joined as the Community Governor. There is an OFSTED inspection on Wednesday. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*

- 4.19 Parent Teachers Association – No report available.
- 4.20 The Link Lunch Club -Mr Ron Holt stated that the group resumed serving lunches in September in the new village hall where a varied monthly menu is provided which people appear to enjoy. Up until November 2007 any surplus monies were given to Village Hall funds but from Christmas onwards donations have been made to various charities - £130 to Suffolk Cancer Care Group, £107 to RNLI, £150 to Cystic Fibrosis Trust and £55 to Suffolk Wildlife Trust. They generally serve up to 50 meals per session with 12 volunteers. The feeling is that a useful service is still being provided giving the opportunity for people to meet and enjoy time together over a meal. Lunches will resume again in September. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.21 Astronomy – Mr Standley stated that this was a comparatively new venture - members had spoken on line and thought it would be nice to meet face to face (Sir Patrick Moore is a member). They organise talks and demonstrations in the Committee Room at the Village Hall – there is no light pollution in the sky above Bentley – at their second meeting members brought along cameras and telescopes. The group has been a great success and anyone interested in astronomy and astro imaging would be welcome.
- 4.22 Scrabble Club – Mr Owen stated that the meetings are held on the second and fourth Thursday of the month at 2.30 pm in the Village Hall Committee Room and are currently averaging ten players per session. No meetings are held in the summer months and the first meeting of the 2008/09 season will be held on Thursday 11 September and anyone interested in playing Scrabble is welcome to attend - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.23 Alcoholics Anonymous – No report available
- 4.24 Embroidery – Mrs Wheals reported that this was a private hire group of six textile artists who use the hall once a month. A mixed media bunch of SLAPPERS (Stitchers, Lace makers and Patch workers practise embroidery regularly in Suffolk). - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.25 Tea & Chat – covered under 4.8
- 4.26 Computer Club - Mr Blackmore reported that the Club was formed in February to promote basic computer skills and assist members with various technical problems. The group of 12 meet weekly in the Village Hall using four computers (donated) as well as three laptops – *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.27 Art – In the absence of Esme Temple the Clerk read out a brief résumé of the Painting for Beginners Class which is held on Monday nights (7.30 – 9.30). It has got off to a good start with around 6 members per session. These sessions have included themes such as using acrylics, achieving distance and depth, layering colours, using colour theory to guide effective mixing, line and tone, watercolours, masking techniques, repetition in art and still life - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
- 4.28 Bentley Comrades - Michael Anderton reported on this newly formed group meeting in the Committee Room on the first Wednesday of the month with the aim of gathering socially for a chat, a film show, refreshments and activities connected with the armed services. He invited anyone with an interest in Her Majesty's Armed Forces to attend. There is no formal membership or structure and the 10 or so people that turn up provide representatives from all

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

three services – Royal Navy, Army and the Royal Air Force. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*

5. **Parish Plan** - John Blackmore stated that the Plan had been funded by DEFRA and grant organised by Suffolk Acre. The document provided a snapshot of village opinion. It is a living document intended to guide the Parish Council for future decisions affecting the village. This is now the most difficult phase – for the Council to progress these items with the full support of residents. He went on to say some items had already been carried out and other priorities had been identified. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*

Break for refreshments

6. **County Councillor's Report** - County Councillor David Yorke-Edwards stated he had completed three most enjoyable years as a serving County Councillor for the Samford Division – covering 12 parishes from Capel St Mary in the East to Polstead in the West. He went on to list the various committees he served on and spoke about the increase of 3.75 % in the Council Tax which was slightly better than expected due to the increase in the grant settlement from the government for this year and makes that increase the lowest in the East of England. He spoke on the Audit Commission (SCC 4* rating), the Schools Organisation Review, Unitary Status and his Locality Budget (donations to the playgroup and Bentley Bugle newsletter). He ended his report by thanking everyone for their support and looked forward to serving for at least one more year. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*
7. **District Councillors' Reports** - District Councillor Michael Miller began his report with a few words about the role of a District Councillor - ie to support residents individually and support the Parish Council, especially on planning matters. He also spoke about Council Tax which has been held to the rate of inflation over the past 5 years but was less pleased that this has been achieved by use of reserves rather than efficiency gains. He went on to report on the various committees he served on and ended his report by urging Bentley Parish Council to make sure it has considered the impact of a large Unitary on local matters such as planning. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*

District Councillor John Hinton reported on the committees he served on then went on to talk about waste and re-cycling – garden waste is increasing with the Brown Bins now topping the 7,100 mark with nearly 3,000 tonnes of green waste diverted away from landfill sites – there is still a problem with fly tipping and littering in general and he urged everyone to play a part in helping to reduce it. The recent high value of scrap metal has reduced the number of abandoned cars. He ended his report by talking about Council Tax being kept down to the rate of inflation and the fact that Central Government continues to pass down responsibilities to Local Authorities with out compensatory funding.. - *A full report is included in the minute book.*

The Chairman thanked Pam Rayment for the refreshments.

8. **Questions and Answer Session** - Several questions were asked about the Council tax – why is unpaid Council Tax being written off? It costs more to try and get it – ie court costs are incurred and usually the people concerned haven't the means to pay it back. John Blackmore asked if the Council Tax is due at the beginning of the month or the end – he was told that strictly speaking you should pay 100% of the Council Tax at the beginning of the year – if it is paid monthly it should be at the beginning of the month. A discussion followed on highway maintenance, road sweeping issues, overhanging hedges and charges for brown bins. The session ended with a question being asked about Resistant Studies – this apparently is the new name for woodwork/metal work.
9. **Date of Next Meeting**

The Annual Parish Council Meeting 1 May 2008 in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 9.43 pm

CHAIRMAN:

DATE: