

# FOVANT PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 31 MARCH 2009 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

**Present:** Councillor N Knowles (Chairman), 5 Parish Councillors and 20 members of the public.

**In attendance:** Mrs E Young (Clerk to the Council)

**Apologies:** District Councillor Mrs J Green and PC Andy Fell (Tisbury Community Police)

**Chairman's Opening Remarks:** Cllr Knowles welcomed those present and reminded them that the Parish Meeting was held to hear what the Parish Council and other organisations in the village had been doing during the year. It was also an opportunity for the public to guide the Council as to their future objectives.

**Guest Speaker.** Cllr Knowles welcomed Sgt Nick Blencowe of the Camera Safety Partnership (Wiltshire Highways) to the meeting. Sgt Blencowe explained he had been in the Partnership since 2002 when speed enforcement had been undertaken by vans and motor cycles. It was now agreed speed indicator detectors were proving a good safety measure. They supported the Tisbury Community Safety Partnership SIDs procurement initiative which the parish had provided suggested locations and which the Camera Safety Unit would assess for suitability. Once sites had been selected the devices would be fixed to static poles and be sited for approximately two weeks at a time as temporary signs tend to have more impact on motorists. He noted that the parish had already identified sites to the TCSP. At the present time SIDs would be erected by the Camera Partnership and it was hoped to train the parish stewards to erect these signs in the future. In answer to questions, Sgt Blencowe commented that the Wiltshire Police Community Speed Watch Project was operated entirely separately from the Camera Safety Unit. The Speed Watch Project would be resourced by volunteers supervised by the police as the project develops. The Chairman thanked Sgt Blencowe for coming to the meeting and observed that the speed indicator devices appeared to be a good educational tool for drivers to learn to drive appropriately where these signs are in place.

**Minutes of the last Annual Meeting:** held on Tuesday 11 March 2008 the minutes had been circulated. They were accepted nem con by the meeting.

**Reports from the Community.** All reports are filed with the Minutes. The following are highlights:

**District Councillor Mrs Green's** report was tabled and read by the Clerk.

- She thanked everyone for the support and encouragement she had been given over the past 14 years. With the demise of Salisbury District Council from 1 April she would no longer be their District Councillor.
- Over the years, the loss of the school was now happily filled by the Rainbow Centre which provided a worthy service for working mums; the proposed new Village Hall had not taken off, but the fund raising for the upgrades to the existing Hall including the costs of the extension were sufficient for works to now begin.
- She had fully supported the Youth Club, Cricket Club, the Badges and the repair of the church footpath.
- The controversial introduction of wheelie bin collections had begun in October 2008 but she now expected it would only be a matter of time before these became fortnightly collections despite adverse public opinion.
- The Council Offices development at Bourne Hill was progressing to a reduced scheme but at greater cost.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> Park and Ride at Petersfinger was being developed and should be finished by Spring 2010.
- She had been Chair of the Western Area Committee for some two years which she believed was the closest thing to democracy we had had under Salisbury District Council. She hoped the democratic input would continue in the newly formed Wiltshire Council Community Area Boards and Planning Hubs.
- For many years she had been on the Tenants Panel – which is an excellent forum for tenants to be heard and should continue. Although Housing will be under the control of the new Unitary Council, the offices and Officers remain within Salisbury to contact if there is any enquiry or problem that needs to be addressed on any subject. In the meantime tenants would be represented at the SWWAB when formed.

**Fovant Parish Council:** Cllr Knowles reported the Parish Council's activities, obligations and responsibilities would remain unchanged with the demise of Salisbury District Council under the new Wiltshire Council unitary authority. Effective 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, the Parish Council's main point of contact for Development Planning issues would be direct with the Salisbury Planning Hub and any requirement for 'call in' of controversial planning applications (and any other issues) would be made direct to the local County Councillor (Mr Tony Deane) during the interim period until the Unitary Authority elections were held in June 2009. After that date Planning Application 'call in' would be directed to the Wiltshire Council Councillor for the Chalke Valley area into which Fovant had been arbitrarily placed by the Boundary Commission. For all other matters Fovant could make representations at the newly formed South West Wiltshire Area Board (SWWAB) meetings. Two unsatisfactory points were the number of Unitary Councillors covering the area seems insufficient and the Unitary Authority had not so far brought with it some of the beneficial cost savings that had been promised.

Commenting on the Parish Council business for the past year FY 08/09 Cllr Knowles reported:

- The precept had been reduced for the FY 09/10 by 5.5.% (from £6900 in 08/09 to £6490) [the FY 08/09 precept had been a one-off uplift to cover the cost of installing the flashing bend warning sign on the A30.]
- The children's playground was undergoing an upgrade following RoSPA's annual inspection report. This would be funded in the main from the usual R2 grants from local development
- Council had approved the preparation of guidance notes for householders looking after their own section of the Fovant Brook. They were to help with the prevention of spreading of invasive plants and to keep the Brook clear of pernicious weeds. It was hoped to issue it shortly in A5 format free of charge to local householders living adjacent to the Brook.
- Fovant Parish Council had been working with the Fovant Road Safety Group, the Tisbury Community Safety Partnership and Tisbury Area Partnership to support introduction of SIDs and other safety issues.
- A survey had taken place in October-November with the Wiltshire Highways Engineer to de-clutter the signage on the A30 approaches to Fovant and to introduce awareness signs for the village shop, Post Office and public telephone access. Also works to improve the exiting and entering into Fovant High Street from the A30. The Parish Council has supported the Highways proposal to change the entry and exit points onto the A30 - but Wiltshire Highways are holding back on the signage changes until the new Wiltshire Council publishes its final recommendations on the County-wide 30 mph zone review (possibly in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2009), as it is still uncertain whether Fovant will get a 30 mph limit at the A30 bend.

**Fovant Badges Society:** Col Pinder reported

- Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex had agreed to become the new Patron of the Fovant Badges Society.
- There had been an urgent need in June 2008 to re-chalk two of the largest badges; 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion City of London Regiment and the Australian Commonwealth Military Forces due to the torrential rain in 2007. The Society plans in 2009 to re-chalk four further badges; the Wiltshire Regiment, the London Rifle Brigade, the Post Office Rifles and the Devonshire Regiment.
- Annual Maintenance continues to rise; it was £15,000 in 2004 compared with some £33,000 for 2009.
- A grant of some £11,000 had been received in 2008 from the *Daily Mail* towards the 6 CLR badge and the Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs had increased their grant to £12,750 spread over three years.
- Membership remains about 300 and future fundraising will be aimed at sponsorship of specific badges.
- The Society's collection box on the A30 lay-by which was destroyed by vandals in July 2008 has been replaced with a much stronger box. The cost was covered by a donation from Heritage Automotive Limited (Salisbury).
- The poor condition of Byway 13 (the Oxdrove) leading to Chiselbury Ring from Site 3 of the Fovant Down Chicken Farm caused access problems for the contractors Dean & Dyball when undertaking badge maintenance. The byway has now been repaired and resurfaced by Wiltshire Highways to good effect.
- The 2009 Drumhead Service will be held on Sunday 5 July at East Farm. The Guest Speaker will be Air Marshal Ian MacFadden, who was until recently National President of the Royal British Legion.

**Fovant Relief in Need:** in Mrs Coombes absence due to illness, the Clerk read her report: The Trustees, the Revd John Eade, Mrs A Cooke, Mrs J Coombes, Dr G Morse and Mrs J Snowden had met twice during the past year in July and January. A donation of £250 had been received from the Fovant Fete Committee. Monies were made available to help two Fovant families. The Trustees received with regret the resignation of Dr G Morse but were pleased to welcome Dr Andy Hall who had volunteered and was accepted as a Trustee in his place.

**Village Hall:** Mrs B Caverhill reported during the year the Committee had devoted their attention to raising funds for the multi-purpose room extension. These activities have included a lunch and talk on WW2 experiences; a Venetian evening; two Quiz and Curry evenings; a mystery evening run by the Studio Theatre; a Dickens evening presented by Chester Productions; Food from around the world with Call my Bluff; a Pudding Evening with Musical Entertainment by Arcadia; a Christmas Bazaar, cream teas; coffee mornings; jumble sale and buy a brick day which had raised over £1,000. Fovant Amateur Dramatics Group had organised two entertainments and given £960 to the building fund. Lettings for the Hall go well with two Yoga classes and three Keep Fit classes. A most successful year generating sufficient funds to allow start-up of the building work. The Chairman and Village Hall Committee thanked everyone who had helped to support the Village Hall.

**Fovant History Group:** Mrs Liz Harden commented that as a research group their purpose was to gather information, record it and make it available to the public. Talks had been given on WWI military camps by the secretary to the Dinton History Society, the Tisbury History Society and Shaftesbury Women's Institute (WI). She had also conducted a number of Australian visitors around the camp sites. Information had also been collated about Treasures in the Church which augmented her research on the nine scratch dials and twelve votive crosses incised on the south wall of the church. Exhibition numbers were up on last year. Some of the collection of WWI memorabilia will shortly be put on display in the Pembroke Arms pub. Book sales continue slowly. Cataloguing takes up an enormous amount of time – fifty database files have been created or amended during the last twelve

months. Over 44,000 pages have been viewed by visits to our website over the past year. And people using the search facility for genealogy on the website have been numerous. She gave as an example, research by an Australian lady descended from the Goodfellow family had now developed into a major project and the results will be part of the Exhibition on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October in the Village Hall.

**Rights of Way:** Cllr Mrs Harris gave a very full report. The wet summer had made several footpaths very overgrown. FP2 was made impassable with maize drilled right up to the path, but once the sewerage works were reached, it was its usual lovely walk. FP3 was again difficult but the part between Kissing-gates 3 and 4 was cut right back and should be better. Byway 8 had also overgrown, not helped by walkers walking on the field, but now the field has been ploughed and “*Not a footpath*” notices put along the fence, it was hoped that walkers would use the path and keep growth down. Nick Cowan, the Wiltshire RoW Warden was consulted about FP6 (near the Village Hall) regarding the installation of a handrail/rope on the steepest part of the path – he had advised against this as it introduced high maintenance and liability issues. Again, steps and ropes on FP16 below Chiselbury Ring were not viable due to erosion by the weather and cattle. A new stile was erected last year at Church Lane end of FP3, and Fovant Parish Council have applied for a Parish Improvement Grant towards the cost of two more Kissing-gates at the top and bottom of the grassy incline on FP3 opposite Leatler Close. Hole Lane was cleared by the “Hole Lane Gang” of volunteers in January 2009. Byway18 was closed by Wiltshire Council westwards past Fovant Hut in February because of the poor state of the track due to 4x4 traffic and motorbike use. The Parish Council extend their thanks to everyone who takes the trouble to report trouble spots and to those volunteers who help to keep the paths and bridleways walkable by strimming, chain sawing and digging drainage gullies, etc.

**Dinton Primary School:** Mr Tim Marshall (Governor and Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors) reported that the School could look over the last year with some degree of satisfaction. Children had made the sort of progress the school were aiming to achieve and which was the cornerstone of the School Development Plan. The school was again formally recognised for its great sense of community during a visit from Robert Key MP to officially open the new adventure play equipment. In other developments the breakfast club had a successful start and the lunches, now cooked on site by their own cook Mrs Biddle, have been well received. On the staffing side, they were sorry to see the departure of a long serving teacher Mrs Rees and Mrs Lee, our Administrator. Mrs De'Ath has taken over the early years class full time and Mr Yeoman has replaced Mrs Lee in Finance & Administration. They were looking forward to the highest ever intake to Reception in September. Additional funds arising from the growing numbers has enabled employment of an additional part time teacher. With the commitment and dedication of Governors and staff as well as the confidence of the parents, the school's future is looking very bright indeed.

**Fovant Road Safety Focus Group:** Mrs Lynn Nunn reported this group had met first in July 2008 to discuss road and pedestrian safety issues in Fovant. The Group works closely with and is supported by the Parish Council. Work has been done in identifying sites in the parish for the Speed Indicator Devices and the information has been passed to the Tisbury Community Safety Partnership (TCSP) who are leading this project for the Nadder Valley community. The Group was looking at safety proposals for other areas such as the Rainbow Centre parking and the Group will also collate any reports on accidents or near misses or HGVs passing through the village and this information will be passed to the Parish Clerk or other responsible Agency. They hope to have a stall at the next Village Fete to promote their activities concerning village safety. A regular bulletin is issued in Three Towers and details are now published on the Fovant Parish Council Web-site.

**Neighbourhood Watch** Cllr Bell spoke of a quiet year. There are co-ordinators in the village working with the Police and their neighbourhood policy teams – although at this time there are two vacancies and volunteers are welcome for A30 (West) and Sutton Rd. He also reported that Sutton Mandeville had now started up their own Neighbourhood Watch scheme. The police community were aware of scam operators who targeted the elderly and other vulnerable people by offering to do jobs for them at extortionate cost. There had been three incidents to date where large amounts of money had been demanded for poor quality work. Cllr Bell asked everyone to be on the look-out for unmarked vans and other vehicles and strangers knocking on doors and purporting to be ‘house, roofing, driveway, fencing, digital aerial, etc’ specialists - and to be prepared to challenge them or support any elderly neighbour who could be vulnerable to scamming. Although some doorstep traders can be legitimate, our advice is not to deal with any doorstep traders. If needing urgent help call the local Community Police or dial 999.

**Public Open Forum.** The Chairman invited those present at the meeting to put forward any questions or proposals on any matter to the Parish Council for consideration. There were none.

**Chairman's Closing Remarks.** In the absence of any questions from the floor, the Chairman Cllr Knowles closed the meeting by thanking everyone who had given up their time to come; he also thanked those “hidden helpers” in the village who take on the seasonal flower planting; to the voluntary litter picker upper who actually spends a lot of her time cleaning up the village. He thanked also those organisers of the Village Fete Committee and indeed to the Village Hall Committee for their very hard work and fundraising for the benefit of the parish.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.