

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
6.30PM for 7.00pm

Bramber Parish Council

For the medieval parish of Bramber



WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH 2019

VENUE – St Mary's House

Present: Cllrs Roger Potter (Chairman), Sarah Green (Vice-Chairman), Jim Goddard, Mike Tilley, Mike Croker and Diana Goodall.

Apologies: Cllr Barling (WSCC), Cllr Nick Stubbs, Cllr Trevor Bignell, Cllr Dave Kitson,

In Attendance: Cllr David Coldwell (HDC), Mr Nick Mills (owner of Bramber Brooks & Community Orchard), Mr Roger Linton and Mr Peter Thorogood (owners of St Mary's House), Mr Andrew Walker (Environment Agency)

Members of the public: 26

Clerk: Rebecca Luckin

MINUTES

1. Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting – 11th April 2018

a) Cllr Goddard **proposed** that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record.
Seconded by Cllr Tilley. **Agreed** and duly signed by the Chairman.

2. Chairman's welcome and Annual Report

a) The Chairman, Cllr Roger Potter, read his report (attached as an appendix to these minutes **appendix one**)

3. Neighbourhood Wardens' Annual Report

a) The Clerk read the Wardens' Annual Report (attached as an appendix to these minutes **appendix two**).

4. West Sussex County Council and Horsham District Council Reports

a) Cllr David Coldwell (HDC) reported that there had been changes in the bin collection service and that bins were now collected bi-weekly service; subsequently, recycling has increased to over 54% which exceeds the target set by central government. WSCC is trialling food waste collections from September 2019, which will further promote recycling. 2019 is the Horsham District Year of Culture with 419 events scheduled so far, including A Midsummer Night's Dream at Knepp Castle. Regarding the Youth Service, Horsham Matters had decided to withdraw their service, partly due to the removal of a stream of funding however, the service will continue with a new provider. Central Government has asked Districts to recalculate how many houses will be built, which may result in an increase in traffic.

5. Parish Council elections May 2019

a) The Clerk encouraged members of the public to consider becoming a Parish Councillor, since it represented an excellent opportunity for those wishing to support their community and get involved in local projects, often working in partnership with HDC, WSCC and other community organisations. Councillors

focus on many issues, including finance, planning, public rights of way, highways, residents' services, local heritage, support for local business and environmental concerns. Bramber Parish Council also clusters with neighbouring Parish Councils to provide Youth Services and Neighbourhood Wardens. Bramber Parish Council is also drafting a Neighbourhood Plan and welcome community engagement.

The Parish Council election process is managed entirely by HDC. Anyone interested should contact HDC on 01403 215581 / elections@horsham.gov.uk. Nominations must be had delivered to HDC between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday between 26 March and 3 April. Elections will take place on Thursday 2nd May, with our first meeting due on Wednesday 15th May.

6. BRAMBER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – update on progress and information on how members of the public can get involved.

a) Neighbourhood Plan Focus Group leaders provided a presentation on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan (attached to these minutes as an **appendix three**).

Cllr Potter thanked all those who had volunteered and taken part in the process.

7. BRAMBER BROOKS & COMMUNITY ORCHARD – update on progress

a) Mr Nick Mills outlined activities that had taken place over the year: the Bramber Brooks Management Committee had been set up as a sub-committee of the Parish Council, a grant application had been successful and provided funds for tree planting, bridge building, formation of paths, fencing and gates. The nature reserve had been opened with over 200 local residents attending organised tours of the nature reserve. Four benches had been placed and a barn owl box installed. This month, a further seven trees had been planted and a clearing created for a local forest schools to use. Upper Beeding School pupils and staff had visited Bramber Brooks. The Committee has requested that the area be designated as a Nature Reserve and are currently waiting for HDC to delegate the power for Bramber Parish Council to allow them to sign an agreement with the landowner. Harvest mice will be released. Mr Mills has been liaising with the Environment Agency regarding projects that will help to mitigate the loss of wildlife habitat following flood prevention works at Shoreham. A Facebook page has been set up, with 150 members of the public watching it.

a) Mr Andrew Walker (Environment Agency) outlined works that would take place at Bramber Brooks to offset loss of habitat (due to flood prevention works at Shoreham) and provide a network of ponds in Bramber Brooks. An assessment has been undertaken and vegetation trimmed back in the area of the ponds. Three trial pits had been dug to understand the underlying strata and the behaviour of the ground water. An archaeology watching brief has been undertaken. A conceptual sketch was displayed to show site of three proposed ponds, which will encourage a variety of ecology, vegetation and wildlife. Waste material will be used to formalise and raise an existing footpath and improve accessibility throughout the year. Construction of the ponds will start at the end of the nesting season and should take eight weeks. For H&S reasons the nature reserve will be closed during the period of works. Heavy plant access will be gained via King's Barn, not via The Street. The area will take approximately a year to recover from the works and colonise with flora and fauna.

Q – Will there be grazing for animals?

A – Fields to the east may be suitable for Dexter cattle. A Countryside Stewardship grant has been awarded towards the cost of fencing.

Councillors thanked Mr Walker for attending the meeting.

8. ST MARY'S HOUSE – going forward

a) Mr Peter Thorogood outlined future proposals for the management of St Mary's house. Roger Linton's ancestors are buried in the local churchyard and together Peter and Roger have worked to bring the house back into good order and save it for the community, beginning with restoration and repairs. All profits have been reinvested in the house to support the house, and thereby bring extra footfall to local businesses and the community. Local residents have volunteered as guides to the house. Restoration costs have been

significant, resulting in a bank loan, which has now been repaid. The house was listed in the 1950's. Following the purchase of St Mary's House, other neighbouring properties were purchased, along with the land that now forms the gardens of the house. The house has been filled with family heirlooms, with a focus on educating visitors to the property. With the future in mind, Peter and Roger have transferred the St Mary's House and Garden Trust to a Charitable Trust, which will be managed by a board of trustees. Peter and Roger will move out of the main house.

They have been pleased to see that Bramber Brooks has been designated as a Nature Reserve and that St Mary's House and the Castle will be protected. **Applause.**

Cllr Potter thanked Mr Peter Thorogood and Mr Roger Linton for their gift to the community of Bramber.

9. Questions from the floor.

Q – Clays Field regarding 'gifting' of part of Clays Field.

A – The Parish Council could become the owners of the land.

Q – You need to be mindful that it could be considered as an inducement.

A – The Parish Council have sought the advice of HDC and would take legal advice if necessary.

Q – I think there may be a restriction on the size of any green space, perhaps a third of the area?

A – There is guidance in the National Plan that green space designation should not be used to prevent local development.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm

Signed:

Date:

Chairman

Appendix One - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: 20th March 2019

I would like to start by thanking the members of the Parish Council for their contributions and support during the past year. Sarah Green, Jim Goddard, Di Goodall, Dave Kitson, Mike Croker, Mick Tilley, Trevor Bignall and Nick Stubbs.

Clerks Update

I am happy to report that Rebecca Luckin has taken up the position of Parish Clerk to Bramber after she filled the vacancy at very short notice on a temporary basis following the resignation of the previous Clerk. Rebecca is now nine months into the role and has shown enthusiasm, subject knowledge and commitment during this period and I and the rest of the Council are delighted at the way she has quickly fitted into the team.

Thanks also to Lynne Broome, our Tree Warden, for her expertise and help in assessing planning applications for tree works.

Thank you to our County Councillor David Barling (WSCC) for keeping us up to date on County matters, to David Coldwell and Ben Staines, (Horsham District Council) for their continued support over the last 12 months. Thank you

also to our 2 Neighbourhood Wardens for their continued commitment to helping make our Parish such a pleasant place to live.

Volunteers

Outside of the Council special thanks are also due to the many volunteers who continue to provide invaluable service to the upkeep of the Churchyard, the Hanging Baskets, the Christmas Tree and Carols, the Contingency Committee, - John & Moirag McCarthy, Dave & Aud Bowskill, Roger & Lesley Glanville, Dennis & Wendy Steele, Ron Ballam, Andy Hodge, Sauwanee Deardon, Graham & Teressa Ingram, Martin LP and Vernon Leigh.

Council Members

We have maintained a full complement of 9 Councillors this year. The entire Council is up for re-election this year and it is not too late to apply if you so wish. Contact Horsham District Council to show your interest and they will send you the application detail. Applications must be delivered to them, by hand, between 26th March and 3rd April.

Footpaths

Our footpaths and bridleways continue to be widely used by both residents and visitors to the area and I am pleased to say that the incidences of cycling on the footpaths seemed to have decreased this year.

No Cycling signs have been installed and a new pathways sign has been installed at the Botolphs end of the Walks for All.

We are on the brink of being granted a licence by WSCC to install rustic benches along the Walks for All footpath and are hopeful we may be able to complete the work this Summer.

Vehicle Activated Speed Device (VAS)

The two signs purchased and installed in 2017 have continued to be used on a shared basis with Upper Beeding Parish. The VAS on Clays Hill has been in situ now for over 2 years and although there has been a slight decrease in the numbers of drivers breaking the 30mph speed limit it has not been significant. We are currently talking to West Sussex Highways to seek advice on what other measures could be taken to tackle the issue.

Village Hall

We have continued to represent Bramber on the B&B Village Hall Committee. The Village Hall Committee have continued to keep the facility running effectively and there have been no major issues during the year.

Wifi is now installed and has been used regularly by the Council in their regular Parish and Neighbourhood Plan meetings. The signal is not a strong one and we are hopeful that something can be done to improve the strength.

Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee

We have continued to represent Bramber on this joint Parishes committee helping to ensure the efficient running of the Botolphs Cemetery. The finances of the committee remain sound and we continue to try and locate a suitable piece of land for extending the cemetery.

Housing and Planning

We have dealt with 17 Planning Applications this year.

Steyping/Bramber/Upper Beeding Area Youth Service

Another successful year in the provision of Youth Services to the parishes of Bramber, Steyping and Upper Beeding with numbers of young people attending events and clubs generally up on the previous year. However, last month Horsham Matters, the service providers, informed us that due to financial problems they would not be providing the service beyond the end of March 2019. This news came out of the blue as there had been no prior indication that such a decision was on the cards. Because of the very short notice given the Joint Parishes Youth Committee had to react very quickly to ensure continuity of the service.

I am very pleased to report that an appropriate service provider, Sussex Clubs for Young People Ltd, has been identified by the joint parishes committee and has been contracted to provide the service to the end of the next financial year. Special thanks go to John Fulbrook, Clerk at Steyping, and Nick Muggridge, Steyping Parish Councillor, for their efforts in bringing this about.

Neighbourhood Wardens

Annual report to be provided by Wardens

Environment

A new eel-friendly sluice gate has been installed by the Environment Agency at the Upper Beeding Bridge which allows eels to gain access to the streams within Bramber.

During the hot dry spell of last Summer Cllr Potter had been contacted by members of the public concerned at the length of dry grass near the mobile home park and the associated fire risk. A 20m fire break was mown adjacent the park to mitigate the risk at a cost of approximately £70.

Drainage clearing works have been carried out underneath the Bramber Car Park to mitigate the risk of further drainage problems affecting the neighbouring house. No further incidences of drainage problems have been reported.

During the cold weather snap the pavements were salted throughout the Parish on 2 occasions and were kept clear of ice

HORSHAM YEAR OF CULTURE

Horsham Year of Culture 2019. Councillor Green and myself are part of the committee helping organise a Bramber event, A Norman's Tale, which will explain the events in Bramber and their impact around the time of the Norman invasion, some key historical aspects of St Mary's, a tile making event, and a falconry display at St. Peter's Church. A local theatre company will be producing the associated tableaux. The event will be taking place Saturday 27th May, tickets are free and can be booked via www.ticketsource.co.uk, and there are some flyers on the tables here to explain a bit more

Bramber Brooks

Update from Andy Walker – Environment Agency

Appendix two - Wardens' Annual Report 18/19

Anti-Social Behaviour, ASB Driving & Parking

Over the past year Anti-Social Behaviour has remained fairly low in Bramber however we have had cause on numerous occasions to intervene with groups of young people consuming alcohol. This had been mainly confined to Clays Hill, Bramber Castle and The Street. We've always managed to ensure groups perpetrating ASB have left the area and confiscated alcohol from underage drinkers. (details of specific incidents in monthly reports)

Anti-Social Parking continues to be a concern for many residents across the Three Parishes. We continue to issue parking advice slips where necessary and are now able to joint work with parking services to tackle any major parking issues within the community.

We received many reports regarding cyclists using the river footpath and also reports of cyclists becoming aggressive towards residents when challenged. We have carried out extensive patrols ensuring many cyclists are educated about the use of the footpath and ensured they dismounted and pushed their bikes instead. There was also a spate of graffiti along the footpath which included the no cycling signs being blacked out and there were also Nazi symbols sprayed on them. We removed this graffiti within 24 hours from when it was reported.

We have received numerous reports of speeding in Clays Hill, in response to this we programmed in some Hi-Visual static observations next to the speed indication device and results have shown that the average speed dropped considerably when we were present. All be it a good result, it does highlight that drivers aren't always taking notice of the device so perhaps a Community Speedwatch scheme may be a good option. In the mean time we will continue with observations of the area and report any dangerous driving or excessive speeding into the police system at 'Operation Crackdown'.

Similar to the above, numerous reports were received regarding a group of Mopeds regularly driving dangerously through The Street in Bramber. Again, we programmed patrols as a response to catch these individuals, after a number of attempts we caught a rider on an unlicensed vehicle riding without a helmet in Upper Beeding (who we already believed to be one of the riders) and gave information to the Police so they could look to issue a section 59 warning. Although we don't know the outcome with the Police, the problem has now died down, so it is reasonable to assume the section 59 was issued.

Cold callers

No significant increase and no major causes for concern when checking credentials. (Although we must continue to remain vigilant) We have had cause to check many cold callers' details throughout the year and have not required further Police involvement in Bramber.

Fly-tipping

Continues to be consistent across the Three Parishes in regular locations but in small quantities. Hotspots include Bramber Castle (Bramber roundabout) Truleigh Hill car park and

Steyning Bostal. We continue with routine patrols to deter this behaviour and report tips for clearing as and when we come across them.

Dog fouling – Issues with dogs

Reported dog fouling across the three parishes has generally been low. The main issues we have had in Bramber relate to the river footpath, which we have patrolled regularly thought the year. We also programmed in numerous patrols at Bramber brooks as dogs are not permitted. In the coming year we will have a standard dog warning letter from Horsham District Council to issue when appropriate or necessary, this is currently being drawn up at HDC. This will help us begin to tackle issues and reports in relation to dangerous dogs more effectively.

Elderly and vulnerable

Throughout the year we have forged stronger links with joint partnership agencies such as the PAT (Prevention Assessment Team – Adult Social Care) and carried out numerous welfare visits to residents across the Three Parishes. We have continued with regular weekly/bi-weekly visits to vulnerable residents, often keeping family members updated as regards to their welfare.

Further to this we have also become a port of call for the Community Link care line system in the event they are not able to contact a resident and there is a serious concern over their safety.

We recently asked the Parish council if we could put a piece in the Parish Newsletter to appeal to residents to refer to us, if they have any concerns over potentially vulnerable neighbours. We are aware that there are always people that may not be on the radar of social services or other agencies and we are looking to help support those people more. We have now had a referral off the back of this appeal and hope to receive more in the coming year.

Appendix three – NDP Presentation – see file RL/Bramber PC/APM/2019