

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF COOMBE BISSETT AND HOMINGTON HELD
IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 12th MAY 2015 AT 6.30 pm (unconfirmed).**

Present: Councillors: D Rattue, D Hobson, C Chelu, P Crosthwaite, S Gledhill, A Bird and G Bundy. Mrs D James (Clerk). Unitary Councillor Julian Johnson. Mr Robin Maycock.

Apologies for absence: Mrs P Pratt, Dr J Easton and Mr B Woolnough.

D Rattue welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of the last meeting: S Gledhill proposed, C Chelu seconded and it was carried unanimously that the circulated minutes be confirmed and signed.

There were no matters arising from those minutes.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT Cllr. D Rattue:

As is the practice of your Council at the Annual Meeting we shall each report on our areas of responsibility.

During the year we had 6 Council meetings and 2 Special Public meetings. Your representatives dealt with 27 planning applications including the controversial Bake Farm Solar Park application. The Southern Area Planning Committee rejected the application in the first instance but when it was re submitted on a smaller scale it was passed by 6 votes to 4. From the Public Meetings held in Coombe Bissett the majority of residents opposed the scheme and this was supported by your Council who recommended its rejection but the Area Planning Committee were not of the same opinion.

Planning approval was also given for Wiltshire Council to build four dwellings on the old chalk pit site at Blandford Road; these will be the first council houses to be built in the Parish for a number of years.

During the past year improvements have been made to footpath seven at Homington, this was made possible by a grant from the Southern Area Board together with finance from the Parish Council.

Over the past twelve months a tremendous amount of work has been carried out by the CHAVs (Coombe Bissett and Homington Active Volunteers) ranging from tree cutting, footpath repairs and the planting of flowers, which has enhanced the appearance of the villages. This work has been carried out by unpaid labour from the community, which has helped the Council to keep the precept at its present level and keep its finances in healthy state.

The last year has seen one change of membership on the Council with Gerald Bundy filling the vacancy caused by the resignation of Richard Cox. We are extremely fortunate to have such a hard working and dedicated group of Councillors and this together with an excellent Parish Clerk in Debbie James has made my role as Chairman an easy one to undertake.

POLICE REPORT Cllr. D. Rattue:

The past twelve months has seen the closure of the Salisbury Police Station in Wilton Road and the Custody Unit moving to Melksham. Detainees are then transported to this location to be interviewed and charged/released. A new Custody Unit is under review for Salisbury subject to the necessary finance becoming available. The precept for Police Services in Wiltshire will rise by 1.9% for the year 2015/2016. Wiltshire Police will form a strategic money saving partnership with Avon and Somerset Police. It is hoped that by developing a common approach to policing across the combined area this will enable significant savings being made over the next five years. Locally statistics indicate a reduction in crime for the Southern Wiltshire Area as indicated below.

CRIME

SOUTHERN WILTSHIRE	12 MONTHS TO FEB 2014	12 MONTHS TO FEB 2015	VOLUME CHANGE	% CHANGE
VICTIM BASED CRIME	577	453	-124	-21.5%
DOMESTIC BURGLARY	27	15	-12	-44.4%
NON DOMESTIC BURGLARY	73	78	+5	+6.8%
VEHICLE CRIME	75	66	-9	-12%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE ARSON	106	66	-40	-37.7%
VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSON	92	103	+11	+ 11%
ASB INCIDENTS	323	276	-47	-14.6%

The community meets with P.C Matt Holland and the Neighbourhood Policing Team on a regular basis, which together with the Neighbourhood News keeps every one updated on the various activities the Police are involved in across the Southern Area.

Speed watch continues to be active in Coombe Bissett and Homington and we are extremely grateful to all those who give their time to ensure driving speeds in our villages are kept within the statutory limit.

COOMBE BISSETT C E PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

The school continues to make small extensions to the building to accommodate new facilities. There is much information about school activities available bi-monthly in the Express and on the school website, where details of Ofsted inspections can be accessed. The class numbers are now as follows:

Oak class (Reception & Y1) = 19 pupils (7 boys, 12 girls)

Elm class (Y1 & Y2) = 27 pupils (12 boys, 15 girls)

Fir class (Y3 & Y4) = 29 pupils (17 boys, 12 girls)

Ash class (Y5 & Y6) = 27 pupils (15 boys, 12 girls)

Of the 102 children on roll, 27 live within the catchment area, which still results in a large number of vehicles coming into Coombe Bissett twice a day.

VILLAGE HALL REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

Loans raised for the new village hall extension are now paid off. There is an increase in website enquiries for weddings. A defibrillator has been installed in the porch. Small amounts of damage and losses from the kitchen equipment require ongoing attention. Regular users are requested to report any damage or losses that they notice.

HIGHWAYS AND STREET SCENE REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

Much of the work that was requested of Wiltshire Council in the photo-report of 2013 showing all the work that was required to repair the roads in the two villages has now been completed. However surface irregularities on the A354 have yet to be remedied. One presumes that, as traffic management has to be paid for, this is expensive. De-lamination less than 20mm will not be remedied at present. The Parish now has a series of Community Days throughout the year when a team of operatives will carry out requested jobs. They have completed the removal detritus and overgrowth of grass on pavements in Coombe Bissett and keep drain grids clear on a regular basis. However drain grids need cleaning more often at times and the CHAVs have been requested to deal with drains near

to where they live if possible. Despite attempts by a determined resident, BT will not re-locate the large broadband cabinets on the packhorse bridge path. It was not possible to get Royal Mail to rebuild the wrecked brick post box near the Chapel. Run off of rain water down Stocksbridge Lane continues to be a problem which it is hoped will be addressed soon by Wiltshire Council using better grips and a small bund to direct water off Pennings Drove. Homington Road through Coombe Bissett is to get the requested 20mph limit and the C12 is having the speed limits re-assessed.

SNOW WARDEN REPORT Cllr. C Chelu:

There being no particular falls of persistent snow this winter, there is little to report. The Parish has plentiful supplies of salt for next winter and volunteers are organised ready to clear snow and salt walkways.

CHILDRENS PLAYGROUND AND RECREATION FIELD REPORT Cllr. A Bird:

The playground is in a good state of repair and is a well-used facility in the village. Some of the bark chippings will need to be replaced and there are some weeds growing up through them in one corner, but the council will address this. Broken palings have been replaced.

The dog fouling signs were replaced last year, and dog walkers are using the bins provided. Generally litter has not been a problem.

The cricket club continues to maintain the field to a very high standard and the CHAVs have also cut back hedges etc. where needed.

Two new picnic benches have been sited and there are two new bins.

The field has been requested on a couple of occasions for wedding marquees.

During the summer months, cricket nets are available for public use.

A new bench donated to the village has been fixed in place.

COOMBE BISSETT PLANNING REPORT Cllr. P Crosthwaite:

During the year we have dealt with 24 planning applications, 3 of which related to tree work. The PC objected to 6 of these applications, the majority of which related to the Bake Farm Solar farm. Of the others, one application was subsequently withdrawn and the other was approved by Wiltshire Council. We are still awaiting decisions on 4 applications, but during the year 2 were withdrawn, one was refused, one modified and 16 were approved.

By far the most complex of these applications was for the solar farm at Bake Farm. The first application was withdrawn and replaced by a second, which was moved away from Foundry Cottages. This application was rejected by Wiltshire Council, largely on the grounds that it was in view from the Cranborne Chase AONB. A third application removed the areas largely seen from the AONB and was quickly followed by a modification of this application removing more of the panelled area, but retaining the outline planning area. The Parish Council's main objections were now mainly reduced to the fact that Grade 3A land was being used, contravening Government guidelines. This application was passed by Wiltshire Council, but compared to the original application it is about half the area and hopefully will hardly be seen at all from the high viewpoints around Coombe Bissett.

The 4 proposed Council Houses on the Wiltshire Council Chalk Pit site were approved in October and it was expected that building would start in April 2015. Following tenders from builders, which were higher than, expected a few changes were made, but a start date of April was still expected. To date no building work has started.

In March the Parish Council were notified that a landowner is pursuing the possible development of the field between the A354 and Homington Road for housing. No application has yet been received and the site needs to be adopted by Wiltshire Council into its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment before an application can be made.

FLOODING REPORT Cllr. P Crosthwaite:

The work agreed by Wiltshire Council to help dispose of possible flood water in the Homington Road area was carried out during the autumn, and the drains along Homington Road were cleaned in early December. In addition parts of the river were cleared by residents to assist flow. Ground water levels were high in the autumn but the winter passed with no flooding issues. The flooding first aid kit promised by Wiltshire Council was not delivered but we had enough sand and sand bags to cope with a flooding incident. Also, on closer inspection by WC engineers we were notified that the solid drain cover on the Homington Road between Wyckfield and The Old House could not be changed to a grill cover.

RIGHTS OF WAY REPORT Cllr. G Bundy:

Since joining the Parish Council in September last year, I have walked all of the Rights of Way within the whole of the Parish at least once, including the one that goes down to Toyd Corner on the road to Rockbourne. The central ones within the two villages I walk sometimes two or three times a week. I am nearly always carrying a pair of secateurs as at certain times overhanging hedgerows might need a little trimming back. The Bridleway part of Shutts Lane has been well cut back recently, voluntarily by Richard Shearing to enable those on horseback to get through easily and our thanks are due to Richard.

At the request of Peter Hartgill part of the footpath leading to Stratford Tony just beyond Ron Shorland's house was very muddy in the winter and 11 CHAV volunteers spent an hour with wheelbarrows putting down road planings, provided free from Wiltshire Council to improve the surface. This has proved very successful and thanks are due to the CHAVs. If it is possible to get more planings then other parts of this footpath could be treated in the same way and one or two parishioners have suggested a similar treatment to the footpath on the northern side of the river at the bottom of Stocksbridge Lane.

Following a report, sent to the village webmaster by members of the Ramblers Association their complaints about the state of the stiles leading up over Homington Down on Footpath 4 to the main A354, Salisbury/Blandford Road has ensured that the stiles have now been improved and a footpath direction sign has now been put in position on the A354 by the Wiltshire Council rights of way team.

Improvements are also being considered, for safety reasons, to the surface of Footpath 6 that leads from Marsh Lane eastwards past Homington House.

The works carried out on Footpath 7 at Homington have been mentioned in the Homington Report.

A major problem over my short time being involved has been fly-tipping which has eventually been solved by reporting such problems on the "My Wiltshire app" and eventually with a little "chasing" the Wiltshire Council has cleared away the offending items, mainly garden waste, hedge trimmings etc. It is to be hoped that the £40 charge for emptying Green Garden waste bins will not make fly-tipping a worse problem over the coming years.

COOMBE BISSETT CEMETERY REPORT Cllr. G Bundy:

There have been two burials during the past year with £90 having been received in fees to date. The Bawden grass cutting maintenance team has kept it looking very neat and tidy, which befits such property, and the fixed price contract with them is to continue for the next year. Last year they also dealt with the trimming of trees, hedges and shrubs but it is unlikely that any such work will be required this coming year. On the northern side, the hedge which belongs to the next door neighbour has been, at her instruction to a professional, cut and laid with a view to allowing it to grow and be laid again, so that over a reasonably short period of time it will end up being much thicker and more dense which will then in the future create more privacy for both the cemetery and the neighbour. A small CHAV group has helped clear up on the cemetery side and thanks are due to them.

The wheelie bin for rubbish clearance is now being emptied on a monthly basis in accordance with a commercial contract with the Wiltshire Council and to date this year a sum of £91 has been paid for this service.

The Parish Council and others have noticed that the entry gates and the gateposts are falling into disrepair and need replacing. The Parish Council have accepted the very generous offer from Ken Mould who has offered his time and labour for free to make new gates and to arrange for them to be hung on the new gateposts which he will install. The

Parish Council will be paying for the cost of the materials only and they are most grateful to Ken for his very generous offer. Chris Baughan has very kindly made a wooden marker cross for the benefit of funeral directors.

HOMINGTON REPORT Volunteer Cllrs. D Hobson and S Gledhill:

Traffic: Additional traffic calming measures in Homington were completed. These included 'Gated' signs at the entrance to the village and additional road markings. The cost to the Parish Council was £390, which represented 10% of the total cost.

The small team of Homington Community Speed-watch volunteers has continued to monitor traffic speed through the village. Vehicle drivers caught speeding receive a warning letter from Wiltshire Police. The village remains enormously grateful to all the volunteers, and especially coordinator Philip Alfry. However as always, more volunteers are needed, so if you would like to help reduce traffic speed through the village – please volunteer.

An application was also made to Wiltshire Council through the Community Area Transport Group (CATG) for a 20mph speed restriction through the village. Unfortunately this was rejected by the CATG. However it should be noted that despite the fact that funding is available for only two 20mph schemes in South Wiltshire one of them has been agreed for Coombe Bissett.

Although it is still early days there is some anecdotal evidence that a combination of the new signage and Community Speed-watch may be leading to a reduction in the number of vehicles exceeding the speed limit through the village

Flooding: Following the high ground water conditions of last winter which put several houses at risk of flooding, work has been conducted with Wiltshire Council and community help to clear ditches and culverts to improve drainage. This included two pipes under the Town Path, which were almost totally blocked with silt. We are grateful to the CHAVs for assisting with this.

Footpaths and Rights of Way: A major project to improve Footpath 7 as it leaves the village was completed. The Project, which lasted several months, was led by Des Hobson. It involved detailed planning and liaison with Wiltshire Council and the contractors, as well as extensive consultation with the landowner and villagers. As a result the footpath surface, which was waterlogged and muddy, has been raised and enhanced and the ground water drainage from Lower Road towards the River has been cleared and improved. The work cost £2900 and was funded by the Parish Council, with the support of a £1500 grant from Wiltshire Council. In addition a broken gate on Footpath 7 has also been repaired.

Planning Applications: Three planning applications have been considered over the last year. Two of these were for sizable developments.

Village Defibrillator: A community Defibrillator has been installed in Homington bus shelter and is registered with the ambulance service. Two other Defibrillators have been provided at the Village Hall and Coombe Bissett Village Shop. The Defibrillators were funded through a grant from the Area Board. Thanks go to the Parish Council Clerk for initiating and managing the project and to Vince Ryalls who fitted the cabinet in the bus shelter.

Homington Triangle Seat: The seat has been refurbished by Vince Ryalls and Jim Webb. The Parish Council paid for materials.

Grit Bin: Following a request from villagers and two unsuccessful applications to Wiltshire Council, the Parish Council purchased an addition 'green' grit bin for the bottom of Barbers Lane.

Parishioner's Questions:

Mr R Maycock asked if there had been any progress by the Environment Agency with regards to flood defence in the village. P Crosthwaite reported that a representative had planned to inspect the river last October but it was not known if this had occurred. She said she would write to the Environment Agency and make enquiries.

J Johnson wished to explain that cuts in Wiltshire Council funding year after year meant that statutory responsibilities took priority and it was often a hard task to pay for other requested items. This will be an ongoing problem until at least 2020.

Date of next Annual Parish Meeting: Tuesday 10th May 2016.

The meeting closed at 7.00pm.

Signed:-----Dated:-----