

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Saxtead held at
Saxtead School of Dance, Saxtead on Thursday 26 April 2012 at 19:30 under
the Chairmanship of Councillor George Cullingford**

Present: Parish Councillors: George Cullingford (Chair), Kevin Davis, Graham Ward, Kate Hoare, Barry Mallion, Anita Beamish. Tony Hutt (Clerk), Cllr Chris Hudson (SCDC), PC Mark Bryant. 11 members of the public: P Hammond, A Hurlock, M Mouzer, E Abbott, L Harris, W Harris, J Handley, J A Handley, P Jones, C Jones.

The meeting started at 7.33pm.

Apologies: Lisa Handley, PCSO Christian Hassler, L Yorke, Cllr C Walker (SCDC), D Sharman, M Sharman, S Ellert.

Approval of Minutes for Last Year's Parish Meeting

The minutes for last year's Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 27 April 2011 were approved and signed as correct with one amendment to the last paragraph of the Chairman's report: change "Chairman for 30 years" to "on the Council for 38 years and Chairman for 30 years".

Report by the Chairman of the Parish Council

presented a written report (filed with these minutes). He mentioned the following verbally:

- The Royal Wedding celebration had been a good event
- The Hedgerow Survey was finished and well done, over two years; he thanked those who took part.
- There was a shower of planning applications during the year including Manor Cottage, Post Mill Bungalow, Ashmeade (a demolition and rebuild, after footings were found to be inadequate), Manor Farm, Highfields and Little Green Farm).
- Thanks were due to Louisa Yorke for her work with setting up Wild About Saxtead and organising four working parties. Two were WAS only, the other two involving SCDC and SWT as well. He was disappointed that few people were at them, but appreciated two elderly people who gave encouragement.
- The toilets had closed but were now open two days a week and Bank Holidays. The Parish Council wished them to be open every day.
- He thanked the two District Councillors and Colin Hart, County Councillor.
- He thanked his fellow Parish Councillors including Anita Beamish who was coopted at the last meeting and had already received training.
- He specially thanked the Clerk, Tony Hutt, for dealing with the mountain of emails and correspondence, and hoped he would continue in the post.

Report from the Governors of Earl Soham CP School

A report was requested but unfortunately none was received. The parish is in the catchment area for both Earl Soham CP School and Sir Robert Hitcham School, Framlingham.

Report from Suffolk County Councillors

No report was received.

Report from Suffolk Coastal District Councillors

No report was received.

Report from Police (SNT)

PCSO Hassler had sent a written report (filed with these minutes). In it he reported that only three crimes were reported in the preceding year 26/4/10-26/4/12, compared with 11 the previous year: fraud, common assault and criminal damage to a vehicle. Many burglaries in nearby villages have been from outbuildings. Crime reduction advice was to keep property locked and secured; not to leave valuables in view; to move rubbish bins away from gates; and to use signs for dogs, CCTV and alarms.

PC Mark Bryant attended to report on Saxtead toilets. Police had been aware of the problems with the toilet, included repeated damage and nefarious goings-on. Others had closed recently, e.g. at Blythburgh (Toby's Walks). Problems have possibly increased because of Internet publicity, and the reason for closure is probably the cost of repairs.

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Cllr Cullingford said problems had been occurring for many years, which SCDC and Police were aware of, but were annoyed that the toilets had been closed for other reasons. Angela (the cleaner since 1983 when they opened) said there had been no damage for a long time. PC Bryant said requests had been made regularly to get them repainted. Cllr Cullingford said that a year ago District Councils had been trying to get Parish Councils to take over responsibility for public toilets, e.g. Framlingham and Southwold. PC Bryant said he was not certain what the answer was. Mrs Hartley asked why Police did not check up on Friday and Saturday nights, when activities were supposed to be happening? PC Bryant said there was only a slim chance of Police being around Saxtead at that time due to other commitments; it was a low priority unfortunately. When they were open all the time midweek afternoons were a favourite time. They moved people on, but when the Police disappeared the activities resumed, he thought. Mrs Hartley asked about CCTV. PC Bryant said it was expensive and impractical. We have to be realistic. It is not an offence for people to meet together. Although closing toilets might be seen as a solution, complaints had been received from a farm less than a mile away of cars parking in their drive. Angela thought people were still visiting behind the toilets.

PC Bryant said it was more a daytime issue. Public complaints were not the driving force for the issue. Cllr Cullingford said closure had been an over-reaction. When Saxtead Mill was first restored there were thousands of visitors and only one domestic toilet, which was completely inadequate for coach parties. PC Bryant said it was not an isolated issue; groups target isolated locations, although Saxtead is next to a main road. The closure of toilets at Blythburgh may lead to increased activities in Saxtead. Cllr Beamish asked if having public toilets at Saxtead Mill might be a solution. Cllr Cullingford said Cllr Hudson (SCDC) suggested a catering facility. PC Bryant said he would support any practical ideas or help.

Report from Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr Ward provided a report to the meeting which had gone out to households with the letter from the Chairman. Concerns included:

- Speeding vehicles through the village
- Litter—a litter pick was arranged for Sunday May 13th, 2pm
- Burglaries in Framlingham, Earl Soham, Brandeston and Dennington
- Seven burglaries in other villages in the area at the end of March.

To obtain further information or to be placed on the mailing list for the electronic newsletters, please contact one of the following: Scheme coordinator Graham Ward, Telephone 01728 621047, Email graham.ward@uwclub.net; Assistant Scheme coordinator Gordon Heffer, Telephone 01728 685687.

Report from Saxtead Town Lands Trust

Mr M Sharman, Treasurer of the Saxtead Town Lands Trust, had sent a financial statement 31 Dec 2011, which Cllr Cullingford read out, as follows:

- Net Income after expenses £1,841.
- Amount to All Saints' Church Saxtead for maintenance of the fabric £613.
- Welfare and other payments to 21 recipients - totalling £1,044.

One third of the income went to the church. Most grants were around Christmas time; also books to students.

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

Cllr Cullingford said there another meeting next week to finalise the programme. It was hoped to get a team to visit each household to find out which event was likely to be attended. A concert was planned for early Sunday evening. Mugs with a line drawing of Saxtead Mill would be purchased—about 30 (for sale at £4.70 each) on top of those for the 68 children estimated to be in education, which would be given out at 2pm by Dr Dan Poulter MP. [The Clerk to contact Dr Poulter with arrangements.] The programme would be distributed in the third week of May.

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Saxtead Green Management

Cllr Cullingford had hoped a representative from Natural England would be present to speak. On 7th February there was a meeting on the Green concerning Natural England assisting SCDC for a new Stewardship Agreement to come into effect in 2014. Lisa Chenery (NE) had been asked to come to the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr Cullingford emailed her the next day but unfortunately she was moving and said she would ask someone else to come. After four further attempts Cllr Cullingford had a reply on 25/4/12 from Matthew Ginn who apologised for not being able to come.

Two guided wildflower identification walks were arranged on 19 May and 16 June—details in the WAS report and on the website.

Wild About Saxtead (conservation group)

Louisa Yorke had provided a report to the meeting which had gone out to households with the letter from the Chairman. In it she advertised the walks (above) and thanked participants in the winter's volunteer parties. Some growth has been cut back to improve hay cutting, which is now done by a cattle farmer. Habitat on the periphery has been retained for wildlife.

Parish Council Finances as at 31 March 2012

The Clerk reported the finances of the Parish Council as at the end of the year (31 March 2012). The written report is filed with the minutes. Saxtead Parish Council ended the financial year with:

- £559.63 in the Community account (after allowing for £180.20 for cheques unrepresented at 29/3/12)
- £294.47 in the Business Saver Account.

This means that the Parish starts the new financial year with reserves of **£854.10**. This represents 26% of the annual precept, which is the main income for the parish, and is outside the recommended reserve levels of between 50 and 100% of annual income but is not a cause for concern.

The Saxtead Amenities Fund has a total balance of £1,100.80 in the two accounts, increased by 77p during the year. This is not part of the Parish Council funds.

The Parish Council reviewed the budget for 2012/13 at the meeting on 6 Dec 2011 and agreed a precept of £3,500 for the year 2012/13, a slight increase (7.7%) from the previous year 2011/12 of £3,250. This increase covered expenditure for WAS, war memorial cleaning, training for new councillors and a contribution to the Diamond Jubilee Celebration or seats. Any further increase in 2013/14 may be subject to a referendum being imposed by the Localism Bill, which is an expensive and unfruitful procedure.

The Parish accounts are being prepared for audit with a view to their being signed off at the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 22 May and then submitted for internal and external audit.

Cllr Cullingford said generous donations are being received from local individuals and companies for the BBQ. Any surplus will go towards seats for both greens, taking money from the Saxtead Amenities Fund also if necessary.

Questions from Parishioners

None.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

www.saxtead.suffolk.gov.uk