

MINUTES OF THE HUNTON PARISH ANNUAL MEETING
held on Thursday 24th May 2007 at 7.45pm at Hunton Parish Hall

PRESENT:

Cllr Roger Sawtell	Chairman
Cllr Keith Eatwell	(also Field Committee and Football Club Chairman)
Cllr Les Leonard	
Cllr Mrs Lorraine Redfarn	
Cllr Moira Walter	
David Swan	Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE:

Borough Cllr Brian Mortimer	
Borough Cllr Colin Parr	
County Cllr Paulina Stockell	
Mr Alan Bishop	Chairman, Parish Hall Committee
Mrs Anne Bishop	Tree and Pond Warden
Mrs Margaret Carpenter	Secretary, Hunton Bowls Club
Mrs Alison Ellman-Brown	Churchwarden
Mr Dudley Farman	Webmaster, Hunton website
Sue and David Heaton	Editors, Hunton Herald
Mr Phil Nichol	Committee member, the Hunton Club
Mr Mike Nichols	Treasurer, Hunton Bowls Club
Mrs Liz Oliver	KM correspondent
Mr John Scott	Chairman, Peace Cottage Trustees
Mr Simon Taylor	Treasurer, Hunton Cricket Club
The Revd and Mrs Peter Walker	Rector
Mrs Sue Wood	Head teacher, Hunton Primary School
Four residents	

1. Chairman's welcome and introductions

The Chairman welcomed all present, in particular County Councillor, Paulina Stockell, our new Borough Councillor, Colin Parr and those who would report later. He introduced the Members of the Parish Council and the Clerk.

2. Apologies for absence

These had been received from Parish Cllrs David StJohn and Gary Thomas and Borough Councillor Adrian Brindle and Alan Peckham of Hunton Village Club.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 9th May 2006

The main points of the Minutes, which had already been agreed by Members, were read by the Clerk and endorsed by the meeting. With the agreement of those present any matters arising would be taken during the meeting.

4. Reports

The Chairman said he proposed once again to invite those with reports to speak first and he would speak at the end.

4.1 Anne Bishop, Hunton Tree and Pond Warden

Anne reported a quiet year but useful work had been done to the nearby ash tree and several crowns had been lifted to make maintenance easier.

4.2 Alan Bishop, Chairman, Hunton Parish Hall Committee

Lettings had been healthy this year and the Hall itself was in good condition, thanks to Roger Crooks who had painted it internally. Planning permission had been given for a store which was funded largely by the Borough and County. There were to be special events in June but if these were to continue new Committee members were badly needed.

4.3 Keith Eatwell, Chairman, King George V Field Committee

Closer co-operation between all the Field stakeholders, significant work on Health and Safety matters following risk assessments and the replacement of part of the boundary fence to improve access for bowls players including those in wheelchairs were among the improvements made since the Committee began. The Field is now being cleaned regularly. A sub-Committee has been formed to oversee the replacement of the play equipment, the biggest project so far. All were welcome to the Committee AGM on 14th June at 8.30pm.

4.4 Alison Ellman-Brown, Churchwarden

David Way and the Fabric Committee were praised for the enormous amount of work they had done in dealing with the asbestos problem in the organ blower box. Money is still needed to replace the funds used for this and there will be a fund-raising concert in the church on Saturday June 23rd. The PCC were grateful to the PC for the loan of the mower which had made care of the churchyard easier.

4.5 Sue and David Heaton, Editors, Hunton Herald

Thanks to teamwork the paper had appeared more or less on time every month but more articles would be welcome and should be submitted by 15th of each month.

4.6 Mike Nichols, Hunton Bowls Club

The Club had been formed in 1936. It had been involved in friendly competition through the Weald League since it began in 1960 and the 2006 season saw success for the "A" teams. The Club relied on the enthusiasm and hard work of its members and Committee. It was grateful to them and to the support of the KGV Field Committee and Parish Council.

4.7 Phil Nichols, Hunton Village Club

Thanks to the work of volunteers in manning the bar, cleaning and decorating all the Village Club's debts had been cleared. New windows and doors and bar billiards had been installed. Several very successful events had been held. The no-smoking ban would take effect from 1st July and this would enable further redecoration to be done.

4.8 John Scott, Chairman Peace Cottages charity

The Committee of the Peace Cottages charity which was responsible for the village Almshouses, was very indebted to the Devas family who had donated the land and been responsible for the building. In particular Michael Devas who died recently had done a great deal and had only retired as chairman when he was 80. The cottages have seen various recent improvements and a major review of the heating is to take place. The charity has a sound financial base for the future.

4.9 Simon Taylor, Treasurer, Hunton Cricket Club

The Club was grateful for the continued support of the Field Committee and the Parish Council. It had some 40 active members and fielded three League Teams with some success. The groundsman, John Adams had recently suffered a heart attack and the Club hoped to see him back soon. Apart from a real need for new, younger, players there was a vacancy for an umpire and scorer.

4.10 Sue Wood, Head teacher, Hunton School

The school is definitely not closing and approvals have been given to build a fourth classroom. Several joint projects had been carried out with other schools, often at Hunton thanks to the new school hall. The school was one of the first in Kent to attain healthy schools status, great strides have been made with new IT equipment and they have enjoyed lots of outside visits. 42% of pupils went on to grammar schools last year.

4.11 Keith Eatwell, Chairman, Hunton Football Club

The Club had had a good season, both teams being able to field regular sides with substitutes. The first team finished fourth in Division One and the Reserves fifth in Division Three but the Club had been knocked out in the early rounds of the cup games. The Club was grateful to the Parish Council and Field Committee for providing superb facilities which are the envy of many clubs in the league.

4.12 Roger Sawtell, Chairman

The Chairman warmly thanked all those making reports.

Hunton had a wide range of organisations but there was one common theme – that more participants were needed, preferably from village residents, and that some organisations urgently needed committee members if the present standards and range of facilities were to be maintained.

One way to help make sure Hunton's voice was heard was to produce a village plan. This was not something the Parish Council itself could do but he offered every encouragement to villagers to get together to produce one. It would be very helpful to the Parish, Borough and County Councils to know what the village as a whole sees as important in the way of new building, affordable housing, parking provision, road improvements and so on.

Leaflets about a day course next month on Parish Plans were distributed and all present were invited to go along to find out more. Those who did so could let the Parish Council know what they thought after the meeting. This was a challenge the village should not ignore.

He thanked our County and Borough Councillors for their help in the year and offered his personal thanks to the Members and Clerk. He was sad to have to report that the Clerk, David Swan, had indicated his wish to stand down at the end of the year on medical advice. He said would be hard to replace.

5. Finance

The Clerk made copies of the accounts available. They had again been audited internally and minor errors corrected. After signature they would be sent to the District Auditor and if all was in order they would be signed off. The report was adopted without question. Details would be included in the Minutes of the Council AGM.

6. Open Forum and matters to be noted

6.1 Street furniture and highways

A letter was read from Michael Taylor who was unable to be present. It concerned various items of street furniture including the street lights, the telephone box and finger post signs all of which were discussed.

Others present raised missing or damaged sign posts. The Council had met the Kent Highway Services Inspector a few weeks ago and action was in hand to replace the traditional sign at the bottom of Hunton Hill. Photographs of other signs and various highway deficiencies had been given to the Inspector before he was driven round the village to see them at first hand. Action was awaited on many items although drainage of West Street at the north-eastern corner of the playing field was in hand.

Mr Ellman-Brown raised the state of the roads generally, particularly for those in small cars or on cycles. Mrs Stockell suggested that he meet with the Cabinet Member for highways.

6.2 Rubbish left in the churchyard

Mr Way complained about those visitors who ignored the rules and left rubbish of various sorts in the new churchyard. This included plastic, paper and rubber gloves. He asked people to take their rubbish home.

6.3 Chances, Lughorse Lane

The Inspector's hearing of planning enforcement decision is on 20th June and Cllr Mortimer encouraged the parish to be represented.

6.4 Playgroup

Anne Widdecombe is to open the new children's garden at the village hall on Friday 8th June. The garden has been created by the Linton and Hunton playgroup.

7. Conclusion

There being no further business the meeting ended at 9.20pm. The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and invited them to join him in the Hunton Club for a drink and light refreshments.