

DRAFT

KILMINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT 7.45 P.M. ON MONDAY 15th MAY 2023 IN THE MAIN HALL AT KILMINGTON VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs P. Ball (Chair), S. Seward, A. Dare, M. Jones, B.Reed, A. Collier
The Clerk (A. Jenkins),
49 members of the public

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Parish meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

DCC / EDDC Cllr. I. Chubb, Cllr. O. Miller, Cllr. K. Veberth, Cllr. N. Bayley,
Pastor M. Hudson, L. Quincy, L. Rew, S. Ward

2. **MINUTES OF THE 2022 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:**

J. Falconer proposed that these be approved, seconded by P. Trumper, Agreed by all.

3. **MATTERS ARISING:**

None

4. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball gave the following report:-

I will now attempt to summarise what your parish council has been doing over the past year and our priorities for the coming months.

This time last year I have just taken over as chairman of the Parish Council and we were starting face-to-face meetings again following the coronavirus pandemic. Coronavirus remains with us in the village in a small way, and the World Health Organisation have declared "Covid-19 no longer a health emergency of international concern,". Thankfully life is almost back to normal.

I would firstly like to thank my fellow councillors for their support and hard work through the year. I believe we have kept the village moving in the right direction through what has been a very busy period including A Platinum Jubilee, A Monarchs Funeral, a Kings Coronation and a local election.

First the local election: Four of our councillors took the opportunity to resign. I would like to say a special thank you to each of them:

Julia Mears Bonetta has now moved to Axminster after some Six years as a councillor. We wish her well and say thanks for her work in the parish.

Ben Trott, our past chairman and last year vice-chairman has had increasing work commitments and

after 10 years decided the time was probably right to resign. Thanks to Ben for all his work. Applause.

Sally Huscroft has also retired after serving the parish for 22 years during which she has seen through many projects that have benefitted local residents. Thanks to Sally and the support of husband Peter.

I think 22 years deserves a special applause.

And finally, although he doesn't look a day over 21, Mike Collier has retired after would you believe 42 years serving our community as a parish councillor, Chairman and Vice Chairman. A massive thanks to Mike and of course to his wife Gill who, in addition to her own village activities, has supported Mike in many of his.

Mike, Gill our heartfelt thanks for all you have done. I would say happy retirement but I'm sure we'll be getting helpful comments from you when you see fit!

It's a great shame you're retiring as we're now looking at a long service recognition policy for the future. It's a shame you just missed out on it!

With the loss of four counsellors, we sadly lost around 80 years PC experience. However, I'm pleased to say unlike many Parish councils, we have managed to fill all nine positions and we welcome Bev Reed, Nicky Bayley, Olivia Miller and Andrew Collier. Continuing their service we have Stafford Seward, now vice chairman, Arnold Dare, Mark Jones, Kieran Veberth and myself. I have just agreed to continue as Chairman.

Also I'm very pleased that Adrian Jenkins stays with us as Clerk, providing us solid back up to the rules and regulations.

Councillor's contact details and their specific responsibilities will be announced in the next Postscript, listed on the village website and will be posted on the two notice boards. Please use these notices as a guide as to who best to contact with any specific questions and issues you may have.

I'd like to mention the Kilmington Now Facebook site. Social media can be a great way to get a message out quickly to some of our residents and I do post council notices on it sometimes myself. However, the village website, noticeboards and Postscript remain our official lines of communication, not Facebook. If you have an issue you wish to raise, then please contact counsellors via email or telephone. Don't expect answers to any random posts on Kilmington now.

On to the report 'What your Council has been doing over the past year'.

I guess the most significant program has been the Neighbourhood Plan, which took some seven years to pull together and get approved. I'll cover this separately later.

The other big issue is roads and traffic. I'll start with the A35: We continue to hassle National Highways to provide us with some solutions as quickly as possible. Once again there have been delays the latest update which I received last night is as follows:

A35 Update from National Highways (NH)

Kilmington Verge Works

April - Targeted herbicide treatment directed at any invasive and injurious species and being

applied to those only, so that they don't spread and overrun the wildflowers which are there.
June - Doing ecology surveys of the verges, building on those which were completed in 2022 to monitor what is happening on the verge.
September - will be carrying out a cut and collect, intended to help the new wildflowers thrive by reducing the nutrient levels and preventing grasses from taking over these plots.

Honiton to Charmouth Safety Study NH are currently in the process of finalising costs and are looking to move the scheme forward into the next stage, which is preliminary design. Given the standard time frame for preliminary design, the scheme is likely to move into construction in the 2024/25 financial year.

- Work is grading all bends on the route to bring in consistency through better signing and lining thus making the route more intuitive. Current proposals are also for the implementation of average speed cameras in Wilmington, Kilmington and Hunter's Lodge to 'protect the villages' as well as some amendments to the village gateways.
- As discussed, the severance side of the work for the route will follow on from the safety aspects. It makes sense to separate out these elements as any safety work will then change the situation in relation to severance.

Route Walks to discuss your specific issues will be on June 12, 13 & 14 and we'll therefore be in touch this week to confirm when we're looking to come out to each village.

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All the other roads other than the A35 are the responsibility of Devon County Highways. Once again we continue to hassle them to agree to a 20 mph limit within the central residential area, basically replacing the existing 30 mph area.

I asked them for an update for this meeting two weeks ago. And, despite leaving messages and sending emails, I have not even received an acknowledgement from them. We will continue to try to move this forward but, as you can imagine, it is extremely frustrating.

To support our application for the 20 mph limit we have been progressing Community Speed Watch.

At last year's meeting, a number of residents were very outspoken about speeding through the village. However, we only had six volunteers step forward to help; They have now had initial online training.

The equipment has been ordered. Possible sites for speed monitoring have been identified and we are waiting for the police to give their approval so that we can start the program. If anyone else would be willing to assist in the program, please let Stafford Seward know who is leading the project.

Devon Highways are also responsible for the condition of these roads and repairing potholes etc which we continue to report. Funding is clearly the biggest issue. However, with the government recently making additional budget available, we have recently seen some repairs: Gore bridge, Bimbom Lane, Whitford Road, mixed results on the Hill – fixing a couple of potholes and leaving others that are clearly going to be an issue very soon. But there are a number of sites which remain outstanding including the repair of railings.

Kieran Veberth has resurrected the village Welcome Pack which goes to new residents. We will also soon post this on the village website.

Management of the allotments continues. We recently bought the hedge which runs between the

allotment and Newton's orchard. This has been held for many years as a ransom strip, but recently became available at a reasonable cost. So it made sense to purchase it. We've also been reviewing the electricity supply for the water pump. As electricity costs have risen we have been considering our options, which included solar power. However, we have now secured a new commercial account which insures costs remain relatively reasonable.

I hope you would agree that Kilmington celebrated both the Queens Jubilee and the King's Coronation in style, and as enthusiastically as any other Parish with some well supported community events. A big thank you to the Kilmington Community Association who organised much of the program and all of those who assisted them in the organisation, including the RBL.

Other ongoing management within the Parish included defibrillator training which was attended by some 22 residents. Familiarity with the equipment and how to use it helps to speed response time for treatment.

We were also asked to investigate first aid training, but we had a little response for the one day session, so we shelved it.

We continue to provide small grants for community services such as Postscript and the Ring and Ride.

The Parish Council contributed to the cost of solar panels and batteries for the Village Hall which should help to fund hall users electric costs.

We have also resolved not to raise the Precept for the coming year.

Thanks to all our residents who have assisted us with village projects throughout the year.

5 Coronavirus Support Group Report.

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball reported that following the excellent response from residents to help others in the village, we could happily wind down our pandemic team. Together with both St Giles and The Beacon some support was offered to provide 'Warm Spaces' this winter. Thankfully, take up was minimal. However, thank you to both organisations for their initiatives and response.

6. Recreation Ground Report

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball said he firstly needed to make it clear that the Recreation Ground was owned and managed by the Arthur Hitchcock Charity. The Parish Council was only responsible for the Children's playground. During the year there had been some play equipment repaired. The Parish Council had recently appointed a maintenance company to take on the task of monitoring and maintaining the play equipment.

Michael Collier, the Chair of the Trustees of Arthur Hitchcock Trust who own and manage the recreation ground then gave a report.

He reported that the tennis club's new all-weather surface has allowed persons to play all year round at a very reasonable costs for both members and non-members.

He reported that it had been a very successful year for the Cricket Club, with the first team continuing to play to a high standard maintaining it's league position, the second 11 team gaining promotion and the Youth team also being successful.

He said that since 2019 there had been a mounting problem with dog mess, with owners allowing their dogs to freely exercise on the playing fields and then not picking up any dog mess the dogs may have made. The problem had got worse when the pandemic started.

The trustees had been deeply concerned about the serious health risks associated with dog fouling:-

Toxocariasis

This is an infection (caused by roundworm parasites that are commonly found in dogs) which can cause many symptoms including :Headache, stomach pains, fatigue, skin rashes, breathing difficulties, seizures, blurred or cloudy and painful vision. In rare cases the larvae can infect organs like the liver, lungs, eyes and brain with a risk of permanent loss of vision.

People of all ages can catch the infection, but it usually affects young children who handle soil or sand contaminated with the dog fouling. The eggs produced by the worms can survive in soil or sand for many months. Children are also at particular risk of getting hydatid disease requiring surgery but can be fatal.

It is a particular problem on sports pitches resulting in many persons over the country requiring hospitalisation with one rugby player having to have his leg amputated due to dog fouling causing a serious infection.

The recreation grounds are regularly used by the schoolchildren and also by the cricket club and the Trustees have a legal duty of care to all these users and as well to the volunteers who maintain the grounds. The volunteers are the ones who have had to do a thorough check of the area for dog faeces and pick up /remove any found before they can start their ground keeping work. If they should not spot some dog faeces there is a risk that when using grass cutting machinery the faeces can be sprayed by the machines onto them, their faces and clothes.

The trustees had sought to resolve/reduce the problem with prominent signs on the two gates about the issue and asking all dog owners to be more careful about ensuring that they pick up after their dogs.

However, this had not resolved the matter so they checked if other recreation/sports grounds also had similar problems and what measures they had taken to combat the problem. Uplyme and Axminster had taken the decision of requesting a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for a total dog ban for their grounds in order to completely remove the issue.

The Trustees had considered the matter but felt that a total dog ban would be to draconian a measure. However, due to their duty of care the Trustees felt that they had to take some action in order to reduce the hazard from dog faeces and unanimously decided to ask for a PSPO for all dogs to be on lead.

Whilst this would not entirely remove the hazard, dog owners would be more aware that their dog had defecated and they needed to pick up.

The PSPO had this month come into force. A petition signed by 156 persons had been received objecting to the PSPO and asking that the problem be resolved without this extreme decision and imposition which affect the majority of responsible dog owners.

A number of signatories were present at the meeting and voiced:-

- Their opposition to the PSPO
- that there should have been a consultation firstly with residents
- that the Trustees should have made the Community more aware of dog faeces problem to make those not picking up more aware of the need to be responsible and pick up after their dog.
- that the majority of dog owners who are responsible and pick up after their dogs were being penalised by the few irresponsible dog owners.
- that the problem is probably caused by dog owners from outside the parish and not by the village dog owners.

- That the problem could have been reduced by having an additional dog waste bin on the other entrance gate to the recreation grounds and that this additional bin should be provided in any case.
- That they may appeal to EDDC against the PSPO

Another person complained about a grounds person being aggressive to an elderly dog owner about not picking up dog mess when it was not her dog who was responsible.

Michael Collier said that he could not comment on the aggressive incident as he was not aware of it.

He said that the Trustees had a duty of care to all users of the recreation ground and that the dogs on lead PSPO was a reasonable and a fair / medium way to deal with the problem. They had not banned dogs altogether as other recreation grounds had. They had consulted with EDDC on the PSPO and gone through the necessary application processes of justifying the need for the PSPO.

Cllr. Jones spoke about the request for the additional dog waste bin and advised the meeting that whilst the purchase price for a bin was in the region of £120.00, there would be an ongoing yearly charge of £360.00 from EDDC for emptying this bin. This could not be justified when there is one on the other gate within 70m, a reasonable walking distance.

Cllr. Seward said that in his opinion the Trustees had been left with no option but to take some action to deal with the problem in order to protect the users of the recreation ground from the hazards posed by dog faeces. Whilst the PSPO had not removed the hazards entirely, dog owners should be more aware if their dog is defecating if it is on lead and that they need to pick up. This may not be the case if a dog is off lead and wandering around by itself in the grounds.

He felt that the dogs on lead PSPO was the appropriate and sensible measure for the Trustees to take, although it was clear from the views expressed at the meeting that it was not popular with all dog owners.

The Chairman thanked Michael Collier for his report and asked him to speak to grounds staff to request they advise dog owners in a reasonable manner. He thanked the others who had commented and taken part in the discussions tonight on the PSPO issue.

7 The Common

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball reported that work had started on the common to rejuvenate the central area and establish an overall ongoing management plan to encourage the growth of wildflowers and improve biodiversity.

The central area is classified as Lowland heathland, and there is now little of it remaining in the southwest. We have had advice and some small funding from EDDC ANOB team. Judith and David Simson have led the volunteer work with a group of enthusiastic residents. Our thanks to them all for their hard work.

This will not be an overnight project, and it will probably be sometime before we see results. There is also Japanese Knotweed at the top of the common and we will be treating this to try to eradicate this invasive weed, as it can cause real problems.

We have had complaints about top soil being left in the top entrance following adjacent building work. Truck movements and heavy rain have resulted in deep ruts and mud. The KPC agreed to investigate some landscaping work here to try to solve the issues.

8 Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball reported that Kilmington had one of the highest referendum

turnouts of voters in East Devon with 41.5% that's 305 of our 735 eligible voters turning out and 94.5% that's 288 said yes to the proposals within the plan. The plan was approved in July and now forms the basis of our wishes for future development for our village until 2031. We believe it gives us a stronger say in what goes on. If you haven't read it, and it is quite a hefty document, it is available on both the village and EDDC websites.

The Parish Council now uses the NP as a guide to respond to all the planning applications at parish council meetings.

Our ongoing NP work includes consultation with developers on the two nominated development sites at Dares Field and Whitford Road, next to the Beacon. We need to ensure that it delivers what residents asked for. The KPC also use the NP when discussing the new local plan with EDDC which takes us to 2041. The NP should help to negotiate a gradual increase in new housing of the size and type to satisfy the requirements of local residents. Only time will prove how effective it is.

9. County Council report from DCC Cllr. Chubb

10. District Council report from EDDC Cllr. Chubb

No annual report had been received but Cllr. Chubb had earlier in the evening attended the earlier Parish Council meeting. He was unable to attend the Parish Meeting as he had another Parish Council meeting to attend.

11 Footpath Report

The Chairman, cllr. Peter Ball reported that maintenance of parish council trees and footpath's continued, managed by Mark Jones. He thanked Tom Cook who is our new footpath warden. You will have seen one footpath has just been re-routed and another has a temporary closure due to the foundations of the footbridge being washed away. Details of these are on the website and noticeboard.

12 Reports from Village Clubs and Organisations

St Giles

Reverend Julie Lomas reflected on what had been a great year with the village celebrations last year for the late Queen's Jubilee and recently for King Charles III coronation. These events had allowed the Community to come together and had demonstrated the community spirit which exists in the parish. Everyone's contribution, however small, through their involvement with the various village organisations and the Churches helps to foster this spirit of fellowship, harmony, welcome, love and good works in the Community.

She said that the Churches are supportive of the British Legion and are prepared to be part of the discussions for an additional War Memorial close to the Village Hall.

The Church had last year received a bronze award for being an Eco Church. The church has a recycling bin for empty blister packs for medicines.

She gave a big thank you to the volunteers who support and help at both the Churches. She also thanked the Parish council for supporting the churches warm welcome Initiative.

Kilmington Garden Club

Jean Falconer and Bev Perkins reported that whilst the Gardening Club activities had suffered

during the covid pandemic period, it now had a full programme of events and is a very friendly and active group.

It has a lively programme of events throughout the year - talks, visits to gardens, a Plant Market, Flower Show and social events. New members are made very welcome.

Annual membership is £10.00 per person and includes the following benefits:

- Free admission to the Club's talks, including refreshments (visitors pay £3)
- Discounts at local gardening outlets (10% off at Groves in Bridport; seasonal discounts at Gardens Group centres in Yeovil, Sherborne and Poundbury through the Club's membership of the Gold Club).
- A card provided to us by the RHS which allows any two members at a time to visit an RHS garden completely free.

Talks are held at 7:30pm in the Village Hall every month except August and December, generally on the second Friday in the month.

Coach visits to gardens are arranged during the summer months as well as half-day self-drive visits to local gardens. Details of visits are announced at the monthly talks, on the website www.kilmingtongardeningclub.co.uk, by email to members, and in Postscript magazine.

Our Plant Market and Coffee Morning is held in May, offering a wide selection of bedding as well as plants grown by members of the Club.

Our AGM takes place in November and is combined with a social event.

Finally, the July Flower Show is the main event of the year for the Club, allowing members to show off their flowers, fruit, vegetables, baking and preserves, as well their skills in art, craft and photography. We look forward to seeing everyone at this popular event.

Royal British Legion Kilmington Branch

Stafford Seward, the Chairman of the RBL Kilmington branch said that the branch had now been in existence for 98 years and reported:

A big thank you to all who support the branch and attend the various events. The two coffee mornings a year and the Big Family BBQ event which will be on Friday, 7th July. The event will be held inside and outside the Village hall and will be advertised on posters and in Postscript. Tickets are available. Please get your tickets and come along to this great family event.

The location of 'the War Memorial' is a very difficult issue, as A35 traffic is now so great, particularly for the Remembrance service necessitating road closures to ensure the safety of those attending. The relocation of the War Memorial remains an issue of great importance but to date I have had only had one response from parishioners. I would ask all those with an interest to let me have their thoughts as soon as possible.

If there is no further communication from residents, Kilmington RBL will submit a request to the Parish Council to consider erecting a new monument close to the Village Hall. The original monument will not be moved.

As always, we continue to look for new members, so if you would like to join this fantastic charity and help those who have given everything to protect you, please get in touch and remember, you do not have to be a member or veteran of the armed forces to become a member!

Village Hall 100+ Club

Jean Falconer spoke and explained that the 100+ Club supports the Village Hall by providing a pot

of money to help pay for maintenance of the hall. Over the past year this has assisted in the provision of the Solar Panels and a new dishwasher.

There is a monthly draw with cash prizes. If anyone would like to join the Club, to please get in touch with her.

She said that the Village Hall bookings were now now returning to pre Covid levels. Their major project for the last year had been the Solar Panels/ Battery Storage project. This would substantially reduce the electricity costs for running the hall and hopefully generate monies from the export of electricity to the grid. She thanked the Parish Council for their generous financial support, EDDC for their grant and others for their donations and support.

Axe Valley & West Dorset Ring & Ride

Cllr. Peter Ball read out the 2023 report which had been received from Sandra Ward, the Chairperson:

“Just a few short words to most humbly thank Kilmington Parish Council, on behalf of its residents, for being such a brilliant and caring supporter to the Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride, during the past year.

I have had conversations with the Chairman of The Council, during the past year, to ensure that The Council has knowledge of what we do and how the monies donated to keep the service running are spent. I am sure many will have seen our mini bus in the village (please we are so sorry about the mishap in Silver Street. The driver was only trying to do as he is told- go door to door. So sorry).

So, what about this last year. It's been hard. It's been hard for many reasons. Covid is still very much still with us. With both drivers of our minibuses going down with it and passengers, the numbers using the service, as well as the service itself has been down.

However, it is recovering and numbers from Kilmington are going up as well. But we have yet to get back to pre covid levels, which is a common factor across a wider range of public transport.

Other external factors have played a part also. The rise if fuel prices, the consequential rise in maintaining the vehicles as well as the continuing shortage of parts have all played a part. Challenging for our coordinator Jane. But with true British grit she has continued to find a way to keep the service going.

For those not familiar with the service we offer I will just say a few words to this. We offer a door to door service for those who find it difficult to use the public transport by way of age or infirmity. We cover a wide area. Kilmington gets a morning shopping trip once a week. The destination varies such as Seaton, Bridport, Chard etc. the passenger club in the afternoons and Saturdays, offers a variety of destinations a little further afield, like Bath or Weymouth. These are all booked services in advance as we operate within the Transport Law, but under the heading of community services.

Everyone here, I believe, either might know of someone, who could benefit from our service. So I send you all out with the task to ask, and look you can ask The Clerk for details, or telephone us direct (afternoons, weekdays please) on 07510 255965 and speak to our oh so friendly Jane.

Once again thank you most sincerely for supporting the service.

Sandra Ward, Chairman

(oh for those wondering yes I do use the service being a wheelchair user. But you don't have to have a wheelchair to use the service)”

Kilmington Players

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball read out the Kilmington Players report 2022/23 from Louise Quincey:

“Following a couple of successful entertainment evenings pre 2020 last autumn we took the plunge and decided to stage a pantomime. Having waded through many a script we found one we felt was just right for Kilmington - Jack and the Beanstalk.

We tentatively advertised and spread the word and were delighted that we were able to cast the show welcoming both familiar and new faces. We were also fortunate to have many willing volunteers for all the supporting roles behind the scenes so crucial for a successful production. And so rehearsals began in early November and over the following months after many laughs, retakes and much hard work we presented Jack and the Beanstalk to great audiences on four evenings in February. We had both a fabulous cast and behind the scenes support for which we are very grateful. Thank you to all our audiences and to anyone who helped with the production in any way. Kilmington Players has been in existence for approx. 70 years and very much alive and kicking. We are a friendly bunch who just love to get up on the stage! As a group we often contribute to village causes using monies raised from our productions. In recent times we have donated funds to the school and to the village hall.

We welcome anyone who fancies getting involved both on and off the stage so do get in touch with Louise if you would like to find out more. For future productions watch this space!”

Kilmington Community Association

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball reported that the Association was formed to manage the Kilmington Village Show and other village social events. Last year they organised the Jubilee events, the Annual Village Show, an Elvis film evening and the Coronation celebrations.

Kilmington History Group

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Ball, advised that a group of eight residents started the history group this time last year. Already a significant amount of material has been collected and some research has been done on specific properties and village areas. Two sell out film shows were held in the village hall and some funds generated to help fund a history database and website. If anyone has property deeds, photographs or other paperwork, please let the group have access so they can scan and return the material to you. All this work will ensure we don't lose the valuable historic material. Further events for residents will be held in the coming months.

13. PUBLIC FORUM:

Persons spoke expressing:-

- a) thanks to John Watts and Jenny Nickolls for the Community Cinema.
- b) thanks to Peter Ball and others on the Neighbourhood Plan team for their hard work over a number of years on the Neighbourhood Plan.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.