

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting held on 12th March 2012

Present

Cllrs. P Tandy (Chairman), D. Crane, S Langdown, Mrs. C. Godber, Mrs. S. Sykes, S. Allsopp & R. Gilbey

In attendance

Cllr. E. Heron

Mrs. R. Jones

Mr Spinney Adlem

B. Mair (Clerk)

5 electors of the parish.

Public Participation

Mrs Bowles commented about a pothole in Damerham Lane. The Chairman said he had already reported this to HCC Highways. She also said that the hedges at Russell's Cottage and South End Farm needed cutting back, Cllr Allsopp said he would attend to his hedges.

The state of footpath 14 was raised and discussed at length; Mrs Jones and the Chairman said they would talk to Mrs Mullen's about possible improvements.

The state of the exit of the footpath from Court Hill to Channel Hill was raised. Mrs Jones said she would investigate and talk to Mr Bryant.

A request was made for additional salt grit bins – One at South End Farm and one at Eleven Cross. Cllr Gilbey to contact HCC Highways

1. Co-option of a new Member

RESOLVED to co-opt Mr Peter Doherty as a Member of the Parish Council.

2. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Gilbey

3. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations.

4. Minutes of the previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2011 be signed by the Chairman as correct records

5. Matters arising

Cllr Crane asked about the position of the Give Way sign at the south end of the High Street. After discussion Cllr Heron agreed to review the need for any changes and discuss with HCC Highways Cllr Heron said that repositioning the sign was not possible but that the road marking were due to be repainted.

6. Report from Parish Footpaths Officer

Mrs Jones presented her report (copy attached to these minutes)

7. Report from Parish Watercourses Officer

Mr Adlem said that the only problem was a shortage of water and suggested that the Parish Council exhort all residents to conserve water where possible.

8. Report from Transport Representative

Cllr Gilbey had circulated his report prior to the meeting (copy attached to these minutes)

9. Correspondence

There were no items other than those previously circulated to Members.

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10. Planning Applications

10.1 To note decisions by NFDC

11/97999	Old Channel Hill Farmhouse – Secondary Glazing	Refused
11/97937	Hyde View – Tack room and Stables	Appeal allowed

10.2 To note planning application

98349 South Allenford Farmhouse Single-Storey Extension
RESOLVED to recommend permission irrespective of Planning Officer's decision.

Members discussed the difficulties in the planning process at NFDC particularly where the Conservation Officers are involved. The Chairman agreed to talk to Chris Elliot with a view to him attending a Parish Council meeting for discussion of the topic.

11. The Localism Act and Neighbourhood Planning

Cllr Heron reminded Members that this was primarily an Enabling piece of legislation and time would show the effect on the Parish Council/

As to producing a Neighbourhood Plan, Members were of the opinion that the time was not now.

12. Reports from Councillors attending other meetings

There were no reports

13. Any other item that the Chairman considers to be urgent.

PlayTrail Maintenance

Cllr Tandy said that he had not yet been able to meet FunQuest but would do so before the next meeting.

Cllr Allsopp said that Shaun Davis would probably cease his maintenance activities. Cllr Heron suggested that the NFDC Direct Work-force might be a suitable replacement and gave Cllr Allsopp contact details.

In the event that a local resident might be suitable, Cllr Allsopp said he would produce an advert for the Parish Pump.

Litter Pick

Cllr Tandy suggested the weekend 14/15 April. Members agreed

Parish Council Web site

The Clerk asked that the damerham-pc.gov.uk site be closed and Parish Council matters be transferred to damerham.net. Members agreed.

Resignation

The Chairman confirmed that he had received the formal resignation of Cllr Jerrard with immediate effect.

14. Any other business (of a minor nature)

Cllr Mrs Sykes gave a resume of the progress with the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations Cllr Heron agreed to make a donation of £150 to the funds.

15. Date of next meeting was set for Monday 14th May 2012 after the AGM)

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Report from the Parish Transport & Traffic Representative

1. LOCAL ROADS

a) The closure of **Lower Daggons Lane** for water main laying only took five days instead of the planned three weeks. The speedy laying of new mains was achieved by the use of a “mole” drill rather than digging up the whole road for three hundred yards.

The only bit of bad news is that **Cheater’s Lane** (off Lower Daggons Lane towards Alderholt) will be closed from April 12th for up to three weeks for further work on the water mains.

This road is also used as a cut-through to Alderholt & Fordingbridge by quite a number of people from further afield.

b) The closure of **Cranborne Lane** was again done in less than the specified time and is now re-opened.

c) The work on **Littlemill Lane** was completed without too much inconvenience, but the work on **Rockbourne Lane** at the Rockbourne end isn’t at all satisfactory due to “spot patching” rather than a complete re-surfacing and this has resulted in a very bumpy ride on the way to Rockbourne!

d) The recent reporting of pot-holes appears to have been handled very satisfactorily – two to five days seems to be the response time for repairs and a number of local situations have been recently completed.

I would like to have a note in The Pump as to how pot-holes should be reported, either by the internet to <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/transport> or by phone to Hampshire Highways on **0845 603 5633**.

One can also check on the reaction times to specifically reported problems on the Highways web-site and this should give an indication as to when that danger will be resolved.

2. TRAFFIC MATTERS

The status of the nominees for the SpeedWatch programme is still in the melting pot!

The time to get approval has recently been quoted as four months - Hampshire’s Chief Inspector responsible for the New Forest area is aware of the bottle-neck and is trying to get the situation resolved.

The problem is that the checking is done centrally by a Government Department and not by the Police.

A back-log has been allowed to build up to such an extent that this has had an impact on us getting our local SpeedWatch programme off the ground. I will keep the Parish Council aware of any progress.

In the meantime, the local Camera Van has been in Sandleheath by St. Aldhelm’s Church and a number of speeding motorists have been caught.

The situation in the High Street/North End of Damerham continues to be used by some as a “race track” – and this needs to be urgently taken in hand. The police are aware of our concerns and hopefully will be taking action.

May I remind you that anyone can report a regular offender to the Fordingbridge Police Station and our local policeman will issue warnings as required.

All it needs is the registration number, the colour and make of the vehicle (if possible) and the time the vehicle was seen – in writing, or over the counter in Fordingbridge, and they will handle the matter from there.

3. TRANSPORT

There is nothing to report that has any relevance to Damerham and the surroundings.

Robert Gilbey
Traffic & Transport Representative

12th March 2012

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Report on the Broadband Meeting in Winchester 17th February

As most will be aware, I have been carrying out a survey on the speeds of broadband connections within the Parish of Damerham.

An invitation to attend a conference on Faster Broadband to be held in Winchester on February 17th was forwarded to me and I attended the meeting accordingly.

The seminar had obviously been hurriedly put together as a result of Hampshire County Council having been successful in getting a grant of £5 million to improve the speed of broadband in rural areas.

Unfortunately the panel of “experts” were more interested in promoting the interests of companies providing “Superfast Broadband” than the needs of those who live in out-lying areas that have extremely slow speeds with their broadband connections – i.e. well below the target of 2.0mbps to all that the government has recently set to be achieved in the next three years.

When delegates tried to query what could be done about the locally perceived areas of complaint, they were told to wait until the Q & A session at the end of the afternoon.

It was only when Daniel Fearnley of Hampshire County Council took the question and answer session that this subject of pathetic performance was discussed and it was evident that many other areas are having the same problems as us.

The generally perceived outcome of the meeting (perhaps wrongly) is that all of the money will probably be spent in the inner city areas and only when more funding can be achieved will the “fibre to cabinet” solution materialize and to how many rural areas will be covered remains to be seen.

I have attached some of the correspondence to this report and await information on the next meeting where our concerns will again be raised.

Bob Gilbey

12th March 2012

Update on the survey –

So far I have received reports from about 50 households within Damerham. The speeds vary from the fastest at 6.75 mbps in High Street down to 445 kbps in the Lower Daggons/Lopshill areas – and please note that these people are better off than those in some parts of Hampshire where there is no broadband at all and they have to resort to “dial-up” to get any connection!

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From: Robert Gilbey [mailto:bobgilbey@hotmail.co.uk]
Sent: 23 February 2012 15:58
To: Murray, Karen
Cc: Phil Tandy Damerham Parish Council; brian.mair1@btinternet.com
Subject: Faster Broadband?

For the attention of Karen Murray

I was very disappointed at the meeting held in Winchester last Friday in that the focus was far too much on the future SuperFast Broadband and only towards the end of the meeting did the subject of very poor broadband performance in rural areas be raised.

It struck me that the representatives pushing the SuperFast concept were unaware that speeds below 500 kbps are commonplace and, as pointed out by one of the other delegates, **no** broadband at all isn't uncommon in some parts of the county.

We are currently carrying out a survey of all houses in the village of Damerham and the results to date vary between 6.75 mbps (acceptable) and 440 kbps (very unacceptable).

Unfortunately it would appear that almost half the village is getting well below the targeted 2.00 mbps that the Government has said must be the minimum, and with more and more people working from home, this must be addressed.

In terms of expenditure, although £5 million sounds a lot of money – you may be aware that Cornwall County Council is spending in excess of £135 million to get really fast broadband to most of their properties! (According to the magazine "Cornwall Today").

Any help to receive at least the target figure will be most appreciated.

Regards

Bob Gilbey
Damerham Parish Council

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Re: Faster Broadband

From Daniel Fearnley HCC

We will ensure that all premises have access to a minimum of 2Mbps and that 90% have what is called superfast broadband.

Whilst I appreciate that 2,4,6 or even 10Mbps is a luxury for many, it isn't the speed in itself that is important, more the infrastructure to deliver it. We want to use our money to build an infrastructure that can cope with the demands of today and the future.

This is where the talk of 24Mbps comes in. This can only currently be delivered by laying fibre optics to the cabinet. We know that even after we deliver this that 60% of people may not sign up to services this fast initially and may go for speeds of 8Mbps for instance.

We have however left residents with an infrastructure that means it can be upgraded economically over the decades, as fibre is scalable to speeds of the future.

Despite all this, nobody will be left behind. We hope to also have news of a limited pilot in the worst affected areas, where we will make a small number of grants available to install technologies such as Satellite to see if these can deliver the services promised of 4-10Mbps. Can I suggest you keep an eye on the www.hants.gov.uk/broadband website for news of how to apply?

Finally, I know we talk of the £5m investment, but in reality this is more like £20m. BDUK provide £5m, Hampshire and our partners match £5m and the private partner will invest £10m. So whilst this isn't on the scale of Cornwall, it is also fair to say that with areas such as Basingstoke, Rushmoor, Fareham, Gosport and Eastleigh likely to have little work we have less premises to reach.

We plan to arrange 1/4 updates where we can give much more information about our plans so I'm confident we will improve from the event on 17th.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regard
Daniel Fearnley

Footpath Report - March 2012

The trees which fell across several paths in the January gales have been dealt with: thank you to those responsible.

Footpath 6 between Spring Meadow Nursery and the storm drain has been widened and flattened and is altogether easier and safer to walk on. I rang Mrs Humphries to thank her and she said that the same gales had blown the fence down and Richard had been able to get a digger out on to the path to good effect! My thanks to both.