

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Damerham Parish Council

Held in Damerham Village Hall on

Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Cllr. P. Tandy (Chairman)

Cllr. Mrs. C. Godber

Cllr. P. Doherty

Cllr. G. Perrens

(Minutes taken by Cllr. Gilbey)

Cllr. D. Crane

Cllr. R. Gilbey

Cllr. B. Vincent

Cllr. E. Heron (District & County Cllr.)

Public Participation:

In attendance 5 electors of the Parish

- a) Mr. H. Cracknell asked about the footbridge – it would appear that the handrails had been treated, but not the bridge itself. Cllr. Tandy has been told by Hampshire County Council that the water level in the river must go down before the remedial work can be done.

Mr. Cracknell pointed out that he had written twice about the dangerous state of the bridge when there was no water in the river, but no action had been taken at that time. Cllr. Tandy explained that the delay was due to HCC tendering processes taking so long that the window of opportunity had passed and nothing could be done at present.

As far as the question of dangerous surfaces, HCC have performed a risk assessment and feel that the bridge is safe to use.

If the Parish Council were to overrule that decision, it would be vulnerable in the event of an accident and not HCC.

Cllr. Tandy will try to establish a date for the work to be done.

Cllr. Vincent commented that the quality of work on the bridge so far left a lot to be desired.

- b) Mr. Cracknell asked about the state of the beacon and its supporting post. Cllr. Tandy explained that the beacon had been removed for painting and the post would be treated before the beacon was remounted. He also explained that the post was not charred from the heat of the beacon and the post was in fact protected by a metal cap under the basket.
- c) Mr. J. Godber asked about the excess water at Mill End and the flooding caused by the sluice gate being closed.

Mrs. E. Marshall (resident of Mill End) had been in discussion with Mr. Munro of the Environment Agency about getting Mr. Cobb of Hill Farm to open the sluice to divert water away from Mill End.

She said that she had been told by Mr. Munro that nothing could be done as the problem was just the “volume of water”.

Cllr. Tandy will ask Mr. Robert Brown of Hampshire highways if anything can be done to protect the roadway, but he pointed out that no repairs would be done until the water levels were reduced.

- d) Mr. J. Godber asked again about the Grit Boxes. Cllr. Tandy said that the order for two new boxes had been placed and we are waiting on HCC to deliver as soon as possible.
- e) Mr. Godber asked if the Parish Council would consider having a defibrillator within the village. He added that a motorist from Martin had had a heart attack last week outside Damerham Garage and succumbed as a result - in spite of the efforts of the First Responders.

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

Cllr. Tandy pointed out that the unit would require a power supply and a telephone connection. This could only be achieved by using the BT telephone box – and this is under threat from BT to be removed at some time in the future.

Cllr. Heron told the meeting that Martin Parish Council was considering the purchase – but as yet had not identified a place to mount it.

Cllrs. Crane & Mrs. Godber will raise the subject again at the Village Hall meeting as to whether they would re-consider having the defibrillator on the hall premises. Previously they had declined.

1. **Apologies:** received from Cllr. Langdown.
2. **Declaration of Interests:** There were no declarations of interest declared.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on November 11th 2013**
It was resolved that the minutes be accepted and signed as a correct record of this meeting.
4. **Matters arising:** Cllr. Doherty wished to raise two items not on the agenda: - The Parish Pump and the Parish Councils responsibility for village events. Cllr. Tandy suggested that these be dealt with under the heading of Any Other Business.
5. **Report from the Parish Footpaths Officer:** Mrs. Jones informed the meeting that there had been 246 mm of rain in December against an average of 95 mm. Her report is attached to these minutes.

She added that there was still a large tree across the footpath to Knoll Farm – but Mr. Cracknell pointed out that he will be working with a team to remove this tree over this coming weekend.
6. **Report from the Parish Water Courses Officer:** Mr. S. Adlem pointed out that a lot of the local flooding was due to silted up culverts and drainage run-offs. In particular the ditches in Mill End are causing problems with trees and brambles growing in the water courses causing obstruction to the flow of water.

Cllr. Tandy will ask Hampshire Highways to clear these ditches and also ask Mr. Cobb if he will do his best to contain the flow through the water meadow.

Cllr. Vincent asked if there had been any attempt to stop parents parking on the water-logged verges when collecting their children from school. Cllr. Tandy pointed out that many attempts had been made, but until there is an alternative parking place, he felt that this would continue.

Cllr. Heron offered to come on the “Walk-About” with the Hampshire Highways personnel to establish a level of priorities within the village area.

Cllr. Vincent asked specifically for something to be done in Lower Daggons Lane, between “Greenbanks” and Steels Lane where a ditch is needed to drain water from the road.

Cllr. Heron asked if there were any instances of flooding within the village. Cllr. Mrs. Godber said that none had been reported.

Mr. Adlem asked if the Lengthsman could be used to clear ditches to assist with sorting out this problem.

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Damerham Parish Council

Held in Damerham Village Hall on

Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

- 7. Report from the Parish Transport Representative:** Cllr. Gilbey's report is attached to these minutes.

Cllr. Gilbey pointed out the good news in that the "Market Bus" that will continue to run on Tuesdays **and Saturdays**. This will be achieved by merging the two routes (301 & 302) – but the time-table will probably have to be altered to suit the company providing this service.

- 8. Report on necessary work carried out on the Play Trail during December:** Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that due to storm damage, three trees had fallen into the river from the Play Trail.

NFDC provided a working team to remove one of the trees completely and to seriously cut back the other two to make the area safe. He added that if there were to be more storms, then a number of other trees along the river bank are vulnerable and could suffer the same fate.

- 9. Finance & Payments:**

9.1 To review the draft budget for 2014/2015

Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that Mrs. Sue Sykes would be starting as Parish Clerk with effect from 1st February. She would receive a salary of £3,100 from that date.

Cllr. Vincent asked about the workload and whether it would be better if an hourly rate be used for the estimated 6 to 8 hours per week.

Cllr. Tandy pointed out that the figure of 6 to 8 hours did not include time spent at meetings and he felt that a fixed salary was a better method of remuneration from both sides.

Cllr. Crane asked if the figure for Asset Maintenance was sufficient if the War Memorial was to be included. Cllr. Tandy said that he hoped that the work on repairs to the War Memorial could be completed before the end of the current financial year and the figure of £300 did not include any of this work.

Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that any wide discrepancies from the budget would be studied closely by the external Auditor, so it was wise to try to set realistic budgets for the next year.

Cllr. Gilbey asked about the reclaiming of VAT. Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that there were certain items still to be passed and that no item of less than £500 is being considered at present.

9.2 To set the Precept for 2014/2015;

It was proposed to set the precept at £8,600.00 for the year 2014/2015

A vote to accept the budget as attached was proposed by Cllr. Crane and seconded by Cllr. Doherty. The result was unanimous acceptance.

9.3 To approve payments for November & December 2013

Chq # 481	Lockerley Stone -	2 nd instalment - Cleaning the War Memorial	£250.00
Chq # 482	James Byrne	Printing the October parish Pump	£20.00
Chq # 483		Data Protection Register	£35.00
Chq # 484	Mr. Quinnell	Play Trail Inspection	£50.00
Chq # 485	NFDC	Tree Clearing on Play Trail	£360.00
Chq # 486	James Byrne	Printing the November Parish Pump	£20.00
Total payments			£735.00

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Damerham Parish Council

Held in Damerham Village Hall on

Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

9.4 To approve the bank reconciliation for December 2013.

The Bank reconciliation for December is attached – showing a balance agreed to the December Bank Statement of £9,209.42

10. Planning applications:

10.1 To note the following decision by NFDC:

13/11097 Meadow Cottage, Lower Daggons – one/two storey extension.
Granted with conditions

10.2 To note the following application:

13/11555 Kingfisher Cottage.
Application for a Lawful Development Certificate

11. Reports from Councillors attending other meetings:

Cllr. Tandy had attended a SpeedWatch meeting at Lyndhurst Police Station at which he was informed that only two operatives were required to run the SpeedWatch system as against three previously. He was also informed that a new database was to be used with revised input forms to make things easier to operate.

12. Any other item that the Chairman considers to be urgent:

12.1 Position of the Parish Clerk

Cllr. Tandy had informed the meeting that Mrs. Sykes will take up the position of Parish Clerk with effect from 1st February. He proposed that the clerk's salary be worked out by Douglas Tonks, the payroll company that had previously been used by Brian Mair. They will draw up the necessary contracts and submit a monthly charge for their work.

This methodology was agreed unanimously by the meeting.

12.2 Jubilee Bench update:

Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that the chosen company had failed to provide a pro-forma invoice which was needed to reclaim any VAT – but they had gone bankrupt during the negotiations!

He has re-ordered a bench from a new company and it should be delivered within the next 4 to 6 weeks. Cllr. Tandy will try to ensure that the bench is received and paid for within this financial year.

12.3 Footbridge update:

Work has commenced on the re-furbishment of the footbridge, but as mentioned earlier, the water levels have to recede before the treads can be done.

Cllr. Tandy will monitor the quality of work once finished as adverse comments have already been registered by others.

12.4 War Memorial update:

A number of alternatives have been explored.

Cllr. Tandy has met with Malcolm Parker to get a quote to re- cast the concrete the base of the memorial as a new plinth. An estimate for this work is still outstanding.

Cllr. Crane has explored more suitable alternative of having a stone plinth to cover the old concrete. Two firms have quoted for this work at £1,853.00 and £2,998.00 respectively.

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Damerham Parish Council

Held in Damerham Village Hall on

Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

In addition to this work on the base, Excalibur Stone have quoted to refurbish the cracks in the memorial itself at £1,152.00, giving a total spend of just over £3,000.00 including VAT.

After discussion, the meeting voted unanimously to accept this figure and to commence work as soon as funds can be identified. Proposed by Cllr. Perrens and seconded by Cllr. Mrs Godber.

Cllr. Heron added that there will be the possibility of a grant for half of the total from Hampshire County Council. Cllr. Crane will still pursue the possibility of a grant from the War Memorials Trust.

It was proposed that fund-raising will be carried out in the village to raise money for this work.

12.5 Work for the Lengthsman:

A list has been submitted to NFDC to get the Lengthsman to Damerham as soon as possible. In addition to this list a number of other jobs have since been defined.

They include:

- a) Clearing the ditch of tree cuttings at the junction of Littlemill Lane and West Park Lane.
- b) Clearing the ditch in Mill End of over-growth.
- c) Clearing as much as possible from the “grips” on Court Hill.
- d) Clearing the “slot” drain opposite Royal Cottage.
- e) Repairing the wooden railings at the culvert opposite St. George’s Cottages.

Cllr. Tandy pointed out that some of the work on clearing the Play Trail had been done by NFDC when they cleared the last grass cut and this would free up the Lengthsman for other tasks.

12.6 Beacon:

Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that the repainting of the Beacon was under way by the Bryant’s at Court Farm. They expect to complete this work shortly and be back in situ by the end of January. They will also treat the oak post prior to reinstalling the beacon.

Cllr. Mrs. Godber thanked the Parish Council on behalf of St. George’s Church for the use of the beacon at the Carol Service in December.

12.7 Hedges in West Park Lane:

Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that Bob Brown of Hampshire Highways has written to Tylney Investments regarding the overgrown state of the hedges in West Park Lane, but as yet hasn’t received a response. Cllr. Tandy will ask for an update.

(We understand that Richard Bestow is standing in for Mr. Brown in his absence).

12.8 Play Trail Supervisor:

Cllr. Tandy asked for a volunteer to become the Play Trail Supervisor now that Cllr. Allsopp has relinquished that post. This will need to be agreed and finalised at the AGM in May. In the meantime, Cllr. Tandy will assume this role.

Cllr. Crane asked about the length of the contract to maintain the Play Trail in its current form. Cllr. Tandy said that the contract was for ten years from 2009 and any major changes prior to that date could result in having to repay some, if not all, of the grant money received.

It could be possible to downsize the facility after the initial contract period. He also pointed out that we would be obliged to maintain the “meadow” as it was prior to the Play Trail installation.

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Damerham Parish Council

Held in Damerham Village Hall on

Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

Cllr. Tandy told the meeting that NFDC had installed new septic tanks for nos. 29/31 West Park Lane and that he is pleased to report that no disruption to the Play Trail is visible.

13. Any Other Business (of a minor nature):

13.1 Cllr. Crane asked about the sale of 47 acres of Quinitiq land at the top of Court Hill towards Sandleheath.

Cllr. Gilbey had asked Woolley & Wallis for information and he was informed that an offer had been made to buy the area as “amenity land” by a person from Surrey.

No indication was made as to what use the land would be put to, but no approaches have been made for planning/building either to Sandleheath Parish Council or to Damerham.

13.2 Litter Pick. Cllr. Gilbey had raised the subject in previous correspondence with Cllr. Tandy and Mr. Cracknell has offered to organise and run a litter pick towards the end of March.

Cllr. Tandy said that some of the equipment was already with Mike Jerrard and the bags, etc were available from Debbie Vine at NFDC, Fordingbridge.

Cllr. Gilbey will post a notice in the March edition of the Parish Pump asking for volunteers.

13.3 Cllr. Doherty expressed his dissatisfaction at the letter/report in the Parish Pump regarding the Fireworks Display.

He found the letter in the Pump from Rob Shepherd totally unapologetic to those who had missed the display because of the vagueness of the timing and the poor organisation by those involved.

He expressed that he felt that the Parish Council should be more involved in events in the village – for example in the preparation of Risk Assessments and that proper time-tables that should be drawn up and stuck to.

Cllr. Tandy said he had taken notice of the comments and expressed his surprise that the display lacked an expected degree of professionalism that would normally come from Mr. Shepherd.

14. Date of the next meeting: The Next Meeting will be held in Damerham Village Hall on **Monday, 10th March 2014 at 7.30**

The meeting closed at 10.12 p.m.

Signed _____
Chairman

Date _____

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Damerham Parish Council

Held in Damerham Village Hall on

Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

Report from the Parish Transport & Traffic Representative

1. LOCAL ROADS

The recent heavy rains have caused chaos on the roads. Not just flooding; the surfaces have been damaged and the result is that there are extremely deep pot-holes.

Be warned! – the puddle that you drive through may be hiding a hole that could cause damage to your vehicle. There have been reports of broken suspension and numerous punctures caused as a result of going down into these pot-holes.

Please report any holes in your local area – the only way they will get repaired is by logging on to Hampshire County Council web-site and logging the location of the hole.

2. TRANSPORT

Dorset County Council has given a ruling on the subsidies for the Damory “Market” bus service. The wording of the outcome is good news for Damerham & Martin as follows.

From Colin Wright: Principal Transport Officer, Hampshire County Council, after liaising with Dorset County Council: -

“The report approved by their cabinet includes provision for Services 301/302 to be combined into one service using one bus rather than two, which would continue to operate on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Officers there are currently preparing routes and timetables for negotiation with the bus company. Provided that the company consider it feasible, the combined service would continue to include Damerham and Martin on both days, albeit that times may change as the service would be scheduled to run between journeys to and from Queen Elizabeth School, Wimborne.

It is envisaged that any changes would be introduced from 7 April 2014; these would need to be registered by the operator with the Traffic Commissioner by mid February, so it should be possible to confirm the position then”.

Confirmation of the timings of the revised service will be published shortly.

Robert Gilbey
Traffic & Transport Representative

13th January 2014

DAMERHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Damerham Parish Council

Held in Damerham Village Hall on

Monday, 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m.

Footpath Report 13th January 2014

State of the Paths: WET

Problems: in the gales before Christmas several ivy-covered trees and boughs blew down across F'p 17: I wrote to Mrs. Wallis and all but one have now been removed. The last one is massive and is clearly waiting for heavy lifting equipment.

After two and a half times the average rainfall in December several paths and tracks are waterlogged or flooded, but still passable with suitable footwear (chest waders?).