

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AT LITTLEHAM VILLAGE HALL
THURSDAY 14th MAY 2009

Present: *Cllrs Atkinson, Mrs Beer, Mrs Galvin, Hamilton, Heard, Hassall, Ms Lamb, Stevens, and Torridge District Cllr Pennington. 17 other local residents also signed the attendance sheet.*

Apologies: *Cllrs Poole, G Smith, M Smith and Devon County Cllr Barton.*

Parish Council Chairman Doug. Hamilton, presided and thanked those present for attending.

2009(a) Minutes 2008 (a) to (f) of 2008 Annual Parish Meeting:

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr Mrs Galvin, seconded by Cllr Hassall, that the Minutes of the 2008 Annual Parish Meeting are approved and signed as a correct record.

2009(b) Matters arising from Minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting: None.

2009(c) 2008/09 Chairman of the Parish Council's Annual Report:

The Former Chairman Cllr Mrs Galvin thanked Councillors and the Clerk for their work and conveyed best wishes to the new Chairman, Cllr Hamilton and the new Vice Chairman, Cllr Mrs Beer. She especially mentioned former Cllr Mrs Fiona Wilkinson and new Cllr Ian Hopkins, who had been co-opted to the Landcross vacancy that evening.

Cllr Mrs Galvin summarised **2008/09 Parish Council business**, by referring to: -

Finance: Receipts £3,090; Payments £2,669; Balance 31 March 2009 £1,808 (which includes £1000 for Littleham Village Hall Improvements).

Planning: Ten Planning Applications were considered during the year and we continued responding to the N Devon & Torridge Strategies & Options Report, Torridge Local Development Framework and Core Strategy & Options Report. Cllr Mrs Galvin thanked Former Vice-Chairman Cllr Chris Hassall for his expertise and guidance through these complex on-going processes.

Highways: The Parish Council notified DCC of several highways' problems and Cllr Mrs Galvin thanked Steve Elsworthy of DCC Highways for acting quickly and effectively in response to our concerns. A bus-bay was requested at Landcross and works will commence shortly.

We also during 2008/09:

- Attended meetings and commented on proposed Unitary Local Government in Devon. The Boundary Committee are expected to report on 22 July 2009.
- Commented on the N Devon & Somerset Coast Shoreline Management Plan Review and took part in stakeholder consultations with Western Power & Distribution. Cllr Hassall's was again invaluable.
- And we objected to Post Office closure proposals for Buckland Brewer

Within Littleham & Landcross:

- We further assisted development of the Littleham & Landcross Community Web Site, which holds several months of Parish Council Minutes and has the popular web-cam in a nesting box containing blue tits.

Minute 2009(c) continued: -

- We assisted Littleham Village Hall and Playing Field and Cllr Doug Hamilton remains the Parish Council 's Trustee on the Village Hall & Rifle Field Charity.
- Mr Paul Jarrett was thanked for getting play equipment for Littleham Playing Field.
- We continue to move forward with the Parish Plan Action Plan (Housing Survey)
- We asked TDC to consider working within requirements of the Sustainability Act
- And Cllr Mike Smith received recognition for his Broadband work, as part of DAPC's "Councillors Make A Difference Democracy Week".

Littleham & Landcross Biodiversity Audit Reports:

Drafts of the DCC reports are being circulated. The documents are interesting, but the drafts await amendment. Local knowledge needs to be incorporated into the report and Cllr Mrs Galvin looked forward to the Annual Meeting's Guest Speaker Tom Hynes, of Devon Coast & Countryside Service, providing more information and encouraging local residents to participate in the Biodiversity Audit.

Other Local Societies mentioned were the Film Club, History Group, Tapissers and those who organised the successful Littleham & Landcross Art and Music Festival.

County Councillor Hugo Barton and District Councillor Phil Pennington have attended most of our meetings and they have supported us in many other ways during the year. Their work in the Parish is much appreciated and Cllr Mrs Galvin thanked them for their involvement and dedication.

Finally, Cllr Mrs Galvin thanked the people of Littleham & Landcross for all the support given to her during her four years as Parish Council Chairman.

2009(d) County Councillor Hugo Barton:

County Councillor Barton and had tendered his apologies, due to illness and the Chairman conveyed the Meeting's best wishes for his speedy recovery.

2009(e) Torridge District Councillor Phil. Pennington:

TDC Cllr Pennington congratulated Cllr Hamilton on becoming Chairman and thanked Cllr Mrs Galvin for chairmanship. He referred to the sad loss of two long-serving prominent Torridge District Councillors, the late Cllr Bill Pillman and the late Cllr Des Shadrick. He advised that awaited Boundary Committee proposals had taken up a lot of Torridge time this year and he expressed concern that current difficulties in Unitary Cornwall would not arise in a Unitary Devon. He wondered how local empowerment would evolve in the new local government structure and what would be the effects of the current background of national and global uncertainty?

He applauded Devon C.C. being awarded the highest status achievable and welcomed Torridge D.C's progression to "Good" classification. He was concerned that achieving Central Government imposed targets could over-ride service provision and he expressed concern because the "Credit Crunch" has reduced the Planning workload and drastically increased demand for Housing Benefits. During the year Torridge tenants were transferred to Tarka Housing Association and the Refuse Collection and Recycling service continues to expand to meet ever increasing environmental requirements.

Cllr Pennington praised Littleham and Landcross for their admirable community spirit. It is something to be proud of and envied by those who live in larger urban areas.

2009(f) Guest Speaker Mr Tom Hynes of Devon Coast & Countryside Service:

Mr Hynes, accompanied by his uncle from Australia, gave an illustrated power-point presentation and began by describing the work of the Devon Coast & Countryside Service, particularly in respect of the N. Devon Biosphere Reserve.

He then explained the purpose and benefits of the DCC Biosphere Audits and expressed satisfaction that Littleham and Landcross were among the first Devon parishes to be studied, because the parishes are known to be active communities with demonstrable interest in wildlife. To get the best from biodiversity he advocated, "Think County, Act Parish!" He promised to liaise with Andrew Tregoning and David Hogan, so that the Littleham & Landcross *DRAFT* Biodiversity Audit Reports can be published on the Community Web-Site.

He saw local churchyard management as an important part of the next stage, so that wild flowers and grasses can seed in designated areas. He advocated stimulating interest in traditional hedge-laying and referred to the Million Ponds Scheme, BBC's Breathing Places Campaign, the merits of planting hazel-nut copses and the "Million Trees In a Day In the UK" project. He referred to dormice colonies being nurtured along the Tarka Trail and reminded everyone that Saturday 6th June 2009 is Bee Aware Day.

Mrs Corkery and Cllr Atkinson asked questions about tree planting and Cllr Mrs Galvin asked why there were fewer cuckoos. There were also questions about skylarks, hedge flailing machinery, the need to ensure that the increasing demand of wood-burning stoves is met, the problem of Spanish Bluebells and opportunities for volunteers to train in hedge-laying.

Cllr Chris Hassall, gave a vote of thanks to Mr Hynes, on behalf of Littleham and Landcross.

The meeting commenced at 8.00 pm and ended at 9.10 pm.