



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ANSTEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2015 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Andrew Marchant (Chairman)  
David Oxley (Vice Chair and Village Hall Committee – Publicity)  
Mandy Parker  
Jan Pledger (Village Hall Committee)  
Simon Bagnall

County Councillor: Rose Cheswright

Village Hall Committee: Kate Oxley - Chairman of Village Hall Committee  
Rod Hart – Treasurer of Village Hall Committee  
Sue Smith - Secretary  
Ruth Hart and Annabel Brooks-Ward – booking clerk Village Hall  
Norman Marston and Neil Richards - Maintenance  
Patti Marston - Housekeeping  
Colin Smith - Publicity  
Annabel Brook-Ward

Others Present: Gus Goymore  
Officers present: Caroline Jones (Clerk)

The Chairman wished everyone a good evening and welcomed them to the 2015 Parish AGM Meeting. He informed parishioners that Colin Phillips had sadly passed away today. There was 30 seconds silence in respect of him.

**1. Apologies for Absence** Apologies were received from Cllr Stephen Wylie, PCSO Amanda Higham, Mary and Anthony Pearce.

**2. Declarations of Interest** – none

**3. Minutes of the AGM held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

The Chairman read through the minutes from last year's meeting. He requested any changes or comments, none received. The Chairman duly signed the minutes from the last meeting, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014 as being a true record of the meeting.

**4. Chairman's Report** the Chairman read his Report to those present at the meeting.

*Thank you for attending and welcome to our joint annual Parish Council and Village Hall meeting.*

*As always I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their attendance and input which implemented the smooth running of the Parish Council affairs over the last 12 months especially Stephen Wylie who decided not to stand in the forthcoming elections for the Parish Council. I would like to thank him for his past valued input, especially in setting up the village website which will live long after all of us here have departed! Amanda Parker has offered to stay on the Parish Council until or if a suitable replacement can be found, for which I thank her most warmly. Peter Sapsed succumbed to intense pressure and "volunteered" to stand for the Parish council which means with Peter replacing Stephen we have a full 6 standing and therefore no elections and associated costs required.*

*I would also like to take time in thanking The Parish Council clerk Caroline Jones for the superb support that she gives me as Chairman and the rest of the Parish Council in the arranging of meetings, agendas and keeping us informed of all local and district council decisions, changes and opportunities, also especially this year in the successful application for the grant to assist the purchasing of the skate ramp which is the new playing field addition.*



*I also thank Councillor Rose Cheswright our county councillor, who due to excessive workload hasn't been able to attend our Parish Council meetings, but I know was at the end of the phone, or E-Mail to help where she could. Thanks also to our PCSO Amanda Higham who keeps us up to date with all local policing concerns which fortunately at this point of time are of a very low count at present.*

*This year on the Parish Council again we have experienced the expected and ongoing battle conversing and reporting with the highways. I believe we are now on top of these and repairs appear to be much quicker in being remedied with the exception of the flooding and subsequent bulging of the road at Snow End which we are still chasing an adequate response for.*

*We have had a few village planning applications to consider, one which proved not to be in keeping with the principles we apply to planning applications, so on behalf of the village we opposed it and although the application was taken to appeal, the planning inspectorate agreed with our views that it should be rejected. We have hopefully considered each application on its merit and responded in what we have thought to be the village's best interest. One application that was passed last year was for the quarry's extended time for winning and working, it transpires that the quarry business has now been sold and we do need to keep an eye on the practices now in operation there as it does appear that more lorries are operating in and out of the quarry, but also fires have been reported, which is against any planning consent as only inert waste should be allowed into the quarry. Please report any concerns with photos, dates and any other evidence you may have.*

*Again, I hope everyone appreciates that the village is kept in a respectable and tidy condition and would like to thank David Moule for his constant patrols and vigilance.*

*St George's Church still receive assistance from the Parish Councils funds to assist with the grass cutting and puts this to good use with the church yard looking much loved, and especially at this time of year when it looks superb. Further to my comments last year on the huge explosion of successful planning applications in Buntingford, there has been a breather granted for two of these developments due to the intervention of Oliver Heald in pressurising Mr Pickles. I would like to thank Alastair Parker for his efforts in lobbying and mobilising Mr Heald.*

*The village website set up by Stephen is moving forward due to assistance from Colin Smith and now Jenny Goymour has agreed to use her skills in correlating village history for inclusion on the website.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank the past Village Hall Committee, especially Tom Sealy for their efforts in managing the village hall and the handover to the new committee who we thank and wish good luck to, it is much appreciated.*

*As always I would like to thank the Village Fair Committee for their hard work in planning and delivering Anstey Fair and the much needed funds to the different recipients in the village and also Adrian and Alison Cosser for allowing the village to take over their lovely grounds at Anstey Bury.*

*Thanks also go out to John and Patricia Hamilton for the newsletter editing, Simon and Liz Bagnall for the help with Newsletter production, Mike Thompson for his assistance in auditing the PC accounts and finally the weekly diary which is circulated by Ian Jennings one of the newest and most useful village assets, many thanks to Ian. Finally, Mary Pearce has represented the Parish Council and the village on the Barkway Stallibrass Alms Houses Trust Committee. Mary has asked to be replaced and we are seeking a replacement and would like to thank Mary for being our representative in this most valuable and needed local asset.*

*Andrew Marchant*

## **5. 2014-15 Statement of Accounts**

The accounts were explained. The Internal Audit has been completed and the Accounts were agreed and signed off for the External Audit. The largest expenditure was the repairs in the playing ground; swing and net repairs. All these items were kept within budget.

One parishioner asked how the precept was allocated. Is the amount stipulated by East Herts or is it an amount requested? Can it change or go up?



The Chairman answered that the precept is the amount that the council have budgeted for the expenditure of the forthcoming year. Anstey haven't increased it during the past 4 years and have eased back on the donations made to the church and the chapel. If there are reasons for an increase due to expenditure or a suggestion put forward, we could ask for an increase in precept monies.

## 6. Village Hall Committee Report to Annual Parish Meeting April 20<sup>th</sup> 2015

A new village hall management committee of eleven was formed in the autumn. I am Kate Oxley, and I am the committee chair. The treasurer is Rod Hart, secretary Sue Smith, booking officers Ruth Hart and Annabel Brookes- Ward, maintenance Norman Marston and Neil Richards, housekeeping Patti Marston, publicity Colin Smith and Dave Oxley and our 'historical oracle' is Jan Pledger.

Our aim is to continue the good work of the previous committee in maintaining and improving the facilities of the village hall in order to promote the community life of the village.

### Improvements

So far we have installed movement activated security lights, repaired the guttering, redecorated the lower hall and we are in the middle of installing a new heating system, as several of the old heaters were broken. I am grateful for the help of Councillor Cheswright in securing a £500 grant from Herts County Council to help pay for some of this work, but we obviously need to raise funds as well to replace the capital we have spent on improvements.

### Events

We had a very successful Christmas Dance at the end of November, which raised several hundred pounds and was much enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Sue, Ruth, Yvonne and Jan who were chief organisers of the event.

In January and February we sent a questionnaire to every Anstey household asking how people would like to see the hall used. Two of the most popular events are scheduled for the next couple of months.

On Saturday May 16th, Edward Burton will challenge our wits at a **Village Quiz Night**, with supper and bar, from 7.30.

On Saturday June 27th we are holding a **Summer Music Evening**, when a number of local musicians will entertain us while we (again) enjoy a bite to eat and a drink or three.

We hope very much that you will be able to come to these events, both to enjoy yourselves and to support the improvements to the hall. Tickets are available from Dave & Colin here tonight, at £10.

We also plan to hold another **Christmas Dance** in late November.

### Use of the Hall

In addition to these special events, the village hall is used regularly by various groups, such as the carpet bowls club and the Hormead gardening club, and hired for private functions, as well as being used regularly by the school. Over time, we hope to promote more community events and private hirings to ensure that the hall is a well used and sustainable village resource.

### Treasurer's report

You will have found a statement of accounts prepared by Rod on your seats I hope. As you will see, Anstey Fair committee once again made a generous donation to the hall, for which we are very grateful. The income from private hirings has increased significantly, and there is a steady income from regular users of the hall as well. The cost of the decorating materials and of the heating system will appear in next year's accounts. Please feel free to ask us any questions.

*Kate Oxley 20.4.15*



### Questions from the Village Hall Committee Report

What events increased the private hire?

This was the Christmas Dance and more hirers.

Where are the costs for new heating?

The new heating and materials will be in next year's accounts.

What were the Village Hall Meeting costs?

Cheese and Wine at the Village Hall for the committee changeover meeting.

It was noted that the electricity bill had reduced even with an increase in functions.

The details of the heating costs were discussed. The costs amount to £4,000 with a grant of £500 so far. The heating improvements are classed as an improvement not capital which means smaller grant allocations.

CC Rose Cheswright attended last year's meeting where the majority of the discussions centred on whether the hall would still be used and what it could be used for. She congratulated Kate and her team on such an active committee. She felt that by the events listed they were doing a great job.

The Chairman felt that the enthusiastic team were doing a good job. It is hard work to maintain village hall usage in these modern times and the committee were doing really well.

Councillor Oxley confirmed that questionnaires had been sent out to residents with 35 returns out of 156 houses – over 20% return. He also confirmed that the main items was to sort out the heating which will in return boost interest /bookings. Decorating was planned to make it more homely.

### 7. Open Forum – Parish Council

A resident asked if anything could be done to deter birds from resting on the top bar of the swings. The swing seats were constantly dirtied by the birds. The Chairman confirmed that this will be looked into.

The Chairman confirmed that the concrete will be removed from the playing field and new round benches put in. The concrete removed will be used in the skateboard base.

A resident asked where is the ramp was going? It was explained that it will be set back off the main area and to the right and adjacent to the brook. It will be on view from the road but not obtrusive. Details are still to be finalised with the school as they use the field.

Question raised was; will the brook to be fenced?

It was confirmed that a short part would be fenced to discourage children from going down to the brook.

A resident asked what happened with the Appeal at Holly House.

The Chairman confirmed that the Inspectorate supported East Herts Refusal and the views of Ansteys residents regarding Holly House – it was turned down.

The Chairman asked for any further questions, there were none. He thanks everyone for attending the meeting and subsequently closed it at 7.57pm.