

**Minutes of Wickhambrook Annual Parish Meeting  
4<sup>th</sup> June 2015 in the MSC Pavilion**

The meeting was opened at 7.30 p.m. by the Chairman of the Parish Council, Kerry Merritt.  
17 members of the public were present.

**1. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllrs. J. Barton and P. Couzens and Dr. & Mrs Lawfield.

**2. Minutes of the 2014 Annual Parish Meeting.**

With the approval of the meeting these were taken as read and signed.

**3. Matters Arising.**

3.1. A volunteer had offered to carry out risk assessments on Bury Road playground.

**4. Annual presentation of the Alf Hicks Crystal Biscuit Barrel.**

The Parish Council had unanimously decided that the Biscuit Barrel be awarded to Derek Redhead. Derek appreciated the gesture but did not wish to receive the Barrel. The Chairman said that as a mark of respect the Biscuit Barrel would not be awarded in 2015.

**5. Neighbourhood Plans.** Cllr. J. Wilson gave a brief explanation. A Neighbourhood Plan for Wickhambrook would build on the work done in the Parish Plan and would set out a vision for the whole village. Residents will be consulted on matters such as sustainable development, transport links, where further dwellings should be built and the type of dwelling needed, environmental factors and maintaining a sustainable economy to meet local employment needs. The draft plan has to comply with National and Borough planning policies. It has to be agreed with the Local Authority and passed by an independent Inspector. Once passed a referendum would be held and an approval rate of more than 50% would result in the Plan being incorporated into the St Edmundsbury Development Plan. This would have statutory weight. Volunteers were needed to form a steering group. A question was raised about costs. Cllr. Wilson said that grants were available from several outside sources but these would not cover the whole amount. A show of hands confirmed significant support to the proposal.

**6. Community Land Trust Schemes.** Cllr. Wilson again gave a brief explanation. Community Land Trusts can be used to provide land and buildings to meet the long term needs of a community. These could be local housing or a shop or a pub. A CLT holds the assets in trust so that the village benefits forever. It is a 'not for profit' organisation so that any surplus is re-invested into the village and can be set up as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee or as a 'Registered Society'. Villagers are encouraged to become members of the CLT for £1. Members elect a volunteer board of local people with particular experience e.g. personnel, tenant, employer, endower of land or property. Grants for start-up and development were available and other funding sources could include a charity bank loan or Section 106 payments. If the suggestion was approved the first stage would be to set up a steering group made up of volunteers with particular skills e.g. planning/development, accountancy/finance, law, HR, landowner. It was known that 'Affordable Housing' was needed in Wickhambrook; this could be the answer.

**7. Police Report**

Due to staff shortages there was no Police representation but a thorough written report was summarised by the Clerk. In the 12 months of 2014 there were 11 recorded crimes; to date in 2015 (January to May) there were 3. It was hoped that the local force would return to full strength within the next month.

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**Chairman**

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**Date**

**8. Chairman's Report.**

Cllr. Merritt summarised the past year's activities. The refurbished playground was complete and there were signs of progress on the transfer of the Bury Road playground.

Over the past 12 months the Parish Council had held 11 full council meetings and 2 extraordinary meetings, considered 29 planning applications (and objected to 8), passed £2,599 on to the MSC trustees for recycled materials and signed 116 cheques for village services. Work was continuing on the challenges of parking outside the school, flooding and speeding in the village and improving the lighting on the footpath between the MSC Hall and Browns Close.

He thanked the retiring Chairman, Cllr. Sammons, for her excellent work over the past 4 years.

**9. Estates Committee Report.**

Cllr. Walker outlined the responsibilities and the make-up of the Estates Committee. Six meetings had been held in the past year. She thanked those volunteers who had helped to make the three litter picks so successful. Councillors were working with the MSC trustees in an attempt to minimise dog fouling and asked that anyone who sees an offence being committed pass that information (description, car number, etc) on to any member of the Parish Council.

**10. Parish Council Financial Report.**

Copies of the Financial Statement comparison for the previous two years were on display. The Clerk stated that most income and expenditure headings changed little year on year and the only variations were the 'one-offs'. The 'one-off' in 2014/15 was the vandalism in the skate park which had resulted in a payment for repairs of £3,507 and an insurance claim of £2,732. Despite the claim the insurance premium continues to drop because of competition between companies.

**11. Reports by County and Borough Councillors.**

County Cllr. Mary Evans gave an update on Highway matters. The stalled repair of the culvert at Attleton Green was due to be completed at the end of July; re-surfacing of both Nunnery Green and the minor road running in front of the bungalows at Shop Hill had been included in the 3-year programme; and the owners of overhanging hedges had been sent letters warning them of enforcement action in September.

District Cllr. Clive Pollington despite being in the post for less than a month had already attended meetings on austerity, going paperless and devolution. Further details would follow.

**12. Report from village clubs and societies.**

**Wickhambrook United Charities.** Cllr. Wilson reported that the six former charities maintain the two Alms Houses, which need regular maintenance. The exterior of both had been painted over the last year. The resident who left owing the Charity money was paying monthly. One trustee had resigned and a replacement appointed. The charity gives small amounts of money to various local organisations. The sum of £63,000 borrowed in 2005 to refurbish the properties had now been paid off.

The chairman asked that appreciation of Derek Redhead's outstanding work as District Councillor over the last 20 plus years be recorded.

He thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

I confirm the above to be a true record of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

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**Chairman**

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**Date**