

Goudhurst Parish Council



MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL GOUDHURST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

By Zoom Conference call on Thursday 22 April 2021 at 7.30 pm

PARTICIPANTS

Councillors Antony Harris (Chairman), David Boniface, Craig Broom, Alan Foster, Phil Kirkby, David Knight, Barry Noakes, Mrs Caroline Richards, Mrs Jayne Russell and Guy Sutton. County Cllr Seán Holden. 27 local residents. Claire Reed, Clerk and Anthony Farnfield, Deputy Clerk and Finance Officer.

STATUS OF THE MEETING

On 04 April 2020 HM Government brought The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 into force to allow local authorities to conduct meetings remotely. This meeting was held under those Regulations.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Were received from Rev Rachel Robertson (St Mary's PCC meeting) and Cllr Chris Ditton (holiday).

REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS

Kilndown Village Hall Trust and the Kilndown Millennium Green Trust. Mrs Tracy Roberts reported on behalf of the two Trusts. She thanked Mr Ray Lovell (now retired) for his dedicated work as the former Chairman and Treasurer of both Trusts over many years. She acknowledged and thanked, on his retirement, the voluntary work by Pete Watkins who has kept the Millennium Green mown and tidy since the inception of the Trust in 2000.

Goudhurst Social Club. Mrs Alison Webster, Secretary of Goudhurst Social Club, highlighted recent improvements to their premises and that the Club has now reopened outside following the easing of lock down restrictions. The Club AGM will be on 23 June 2021. The Club welcomes new members.

Kilndown Quarry Centre. The Clerk read a written statement submitted by Lynda Shepherd. Their shop has been providing a valuable service to the community by opening on Wednesdays and Saturdays. They welcomed the Covid-19 grants from Government which have covered the recent building maintenance work. The Quarry Centre has signed up for Broadband. Lynda thanked Clive Roberts, Ann Olley, Christine and John Macey, John Ward and Richard Crumpling for their ongoing support.

The Pop up Pub will be starting again in July in conjunction with a team from Christ Church who are hoping to swop pints for pounds towards the proposed new toilet facilities at the Church.

St Mary's PCC. The Clerk read a written statement from Revd Rachel Robertson. Revd. Rachel expressed huge thanks for the support from the Parish Council for good liaison throughout the year, for the amazing work done in the care and upkeep of St Mary's Churchyard and the Burial Grounds. Also for the new Play Area which is so well used. Recent highlights of St Mary's involvement include marking the life of Prince Philip in a service of prayer. The Community Cupboard is supporting 20+ families with food assistance. Blend and youth work, worship in school (on-line and in person), helping build mental health resilience in young people through the Weald Family Hub, major building works complete and continuing partnering with the Friends of St Mary's.

Christ Church Kilndown and the Kilndown Community Choir. Tina Gallagher reported on behalf of the Church and Choir. The choir has only been able to meet a few times over the past year due to COVID restrictions but hope to resume at the end of May, although numbers will be restricted. Christ Church have also been delighted to welcome the new vicar Revd. Rachel Robertson who joined us in January. The church has seen an increase in numbers and are planning to install new toilets for which there will be fundraising taking place in the coming months.

Kilndown Fishing Club. In a written report, Cllr Chris Ditton wishes to remind everyone that the Fishing Club exists and that new members are welcome. Current memberships are being renewed during April.

Goudhurst Parish Hall Trust. The Chairman of the Trust, Cllr Alan Foster briefed the meeting. The status of the trust is, with legal guidance, being changed to an Incorporated Trust and the charity has been reregistered. The Hall requires some major maintenance work and the Trust awaits quotes from a building contractor. Fundraising for the works will begin with a jumble sale on 26 June at 10am in the Parish Hall – donations gratefully received.

The Hall has benefited from Covid-19 grants from Government. In the meantime, some former regular customers are returning to make forward bookings for later in the year.

Goudhurst and Kilndown Local History Society. In a written submission, the Chairman of the Society Paul Griffin confirmed that he is still the Chairman. The Society is still active and they hope to recommence monthly meetings later this year, subject to any Covid-19 restrictions.

U3A. Ian Agnew reported that the U3A are currently running their meetings on Zoom. New members are welcome.

Goudhurst Amateur Dramatic Society. Rupert Williamson reported. They are planning to put on a production of "Midsummer Night's Dream" at Lower Ladysden Farm on 16/17 July 2021. They have enlisted several professional actors but need more female performers.

QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS

Traffic speeds on B2079 North Road in the Brandfold area. Mrs Laura Collins who lives in that area asked about the project to introduce 'Beware pedestrians' signs. Cllrs David Knight and David Boniface explained that the matter is in the hands of KCC Highways. There has been delays because Highways officers cannot identify a suitable site for the signs due to dense vegetation at the edge of the highway. Parish Councillors are due to meet Kent Highways to progress the

project. County Cllr Seán Holden wants to hear about excessive delays by Highways and he will pursue such matters at County Hall.

Signage at the junction of Maypole Lane and B2079 Balcombes Hill. Mr Robert Alden-Smith raised the matter of the road sign (warning of a junction) in Maypole Lane on the approach to Balcombes Hill (near to Lower Maypole Cottage). He believes the sign could be better placed to increase safety. Mr Alden-Smith's comments were supported by Mr David Nichol.

The Glebe Fields. Mrs Laura Freear asked about the Lower Glebe particularly and what plans the Parish Council has to further enhance the area for recreational use. She noted the big improvements in recent years at the Top Glebe (the Village Green). The Chairman of the Parish Council informed the meeting that the two areas in question are being considered for improvements 'as a whole' and the Parish Council will be consulting with local residents about this via a working group. Council has sought advice on the area from the Kent High Weald Project.

Footpath (Public Right of Way). Shiona Gardiner reported that some marker signs on the PROW by Smith's Lane and Crowbourne Farm are overgrown with brambles. The Parish Council footpaths team will look into a remedy.

GTAG (Goudhurst Traffic Action Group). Mrs Helen Samson informed the meeting that vehicle speed checks, by volunteers, will be carried out in Goudhurst shortly in conjunction with Kent Police. This project will also collect data and HGV movements in the Parish.

In closing the meeting, Cllr Anthony Harris mentioned the County and Borough Elections on Thursday, 06 May. Most people are fed up with the lack of progress on the introduction of fibre broadband but the Parish Council is working hard to speed things up. The monthly Parish Council e-newsletter is now being distributed to nearly 600 people across the Parish. E-mail clerk@goudhurst-pc.gov.uk or call 01580 212552 if you would like to be on the mailing list. Lastly, he praised and thanked the volunteers across the Parish who do so much work, quietly and unobtrusively, to make the Parish such a wonderful place to live and work.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm