

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**HELD THURSDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2010**

**APOLOGIES** R Hewison, J Demirtges, G Lamacraft, C Nicholson, W Wake, P Webber, R Webber.

**MINUTES** The minutes of the last meeting were read and signed.

**DUNSTER DEER PARKS**

Guest speaker Mr Andrew Speed talked about improvements to Dunster Deer Parks. The main intentions for the whole area are to protect and enhance sites of SSI, reinstate the historic Deer Parks, work with Natural England to bring the area into a favourable status and to encourage the public to visit the area.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr Sully mentioned a number of resignations during the last year and said it had been a difficult year for all concerned. Councillors had needed to remain impartial in respect to proposals for a cafe at the Castle. He hoped that in the new financial year we could move forward. There are currently three vacancies on the council which will be advertised. Mr Sully gave a vote of thanks to Jill Demirtges the Clerk, Mrs Ell Vice Chairman and all the councillors for their contributions.

**MEMORIAL HALL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr Brunt said the 2009 financial year started with the sad death of Mrs Dore who for many years had been Honorary Curator of the Doll Museum. He thanked Mr Melbourne and Mrs Harris for stepping into her role. Receipts from bookings were £1560, however, income from the Dolls has dropped significantly but longer opening hours of the Museum are planned for this year. Balance of accounts at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 stands at £3213.59.

**DOLL MUSEUM REPORT**

This was given by Mr Melbourne who said the Museum still has no Curator as such but they are grateful to Anne Harris who has provided some professional leadership. They are, however, looking for a new Curator. Since opening this season they have welcomed 608 visitors and income from donations and sales has been approx £40 per week.

**TITHE BARN REPORT**

Mr Lamacraft said this was another year of consolidation and progress. Bookings have continued to grow which means they are in a comfortable financial position. Improvement works this year have included a new gas cooker and second dishwasher for the kitchen, blackout blinds in the Main Hall and a proper staircase fitted in the Meeting Room giving access to the boiler/store room. Repairs to the perimeter walls have been completed, the cost being shared with the Village Gardens Trust and Crown Estates. The Gallery in the Main Hall will also be reinstated. Mrs Oliver is standing down as Bookings Secretary and Mrs Priddy will be taking over. Mr Peter Creech is the new Caretaker. Finally thanks to the Management Committee especially founder member Mike Pitt who is standing down this year.

### **DUNSTER MARSH PLAYING FIELD REPORT**

This was sent in by Ruth Webber. Fundraising stalls have raised money towards a new Picnic Bench which has been installed, new swing seats and repairs to the mower. Their Lottery application was turned down but they have re-applied for a grant for a new slide. Thanks to all the committee for their support and hard work

### **PACKHORSE PLAYING FIELD REPORT**

This was sent in by Mr Hewison. An Agility Trail has been completed thanks to funding from the Somerset Community Foundation and Dunster Festival Committee. They also won a Whale Rocker in the Somerset Playing Field of the Year Competition 2008. A series of colourful Mosaics have been fixed to the wall of the garage of 26 Park Street. This was created by artist Adam Stanley working with pupils from Dunster First School and was the brainchild of Mrs Davina Jelley. They have unfortunately had to close the playing field during cricket matches due to a "near miss" incident. Thanks to all who gave donations this year, WSC for supplying black bin liners and all the committee.

### **DUNSTER WORKING GROUP REPORT**

Mr Lamacraft said work had been completed on improvements to the Luttrell Arms corner making it safer for pedestrians. The report by Ben Hamilton-Baillie looked at the principle of shared space between pedestrians and cars in the village. A Public Presentation was held on 27<sup>th</sup> October last year and the general reaction of the public was very supportive and positive. Meetings have been held with SCC and WSC to discuss the possible introduction of parking charges in High Street and bringing in changes to road surface colouring to assist pedestrians. Consultation continues with WSC and the Police regarding provision of CCTV cameras in the Steep car park. They also continue to look for a solution to the dangerous condition of the cobbles in High Street.

### **POLICE REPORT**

This was given by PC Fitzpatrick who said crime in the area was down last year. He emphasised the need for residents to report any incidents. Crime figures are linked to reports received and can affect police staffing levels.

Mr Sully thanked the Police for the local service provided to our community.

### **ALLOTMENT SOCIETY REPORT**

Mr Ellis gave a brief report and said there are currently 10 members of the society. They will hold their AGM this month and discuss whether to continue.

### **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT**

Mr Cliff Nicholson, Chairman, said that local businesses had voted to wind up Visit Dunster and form a Chamber of Trade. One meeting has been held and traders were asked to submit ideas to improve visitor experiences in the village. They are now in the process of producing a business plan on this and a constitution agreeing a subscription. They are also looking at funding. These items will be voted on and, if agreed, they will be in a much stronger position to move forward than Visit Dunster.

### **DUNSTER FESTIVAL REPORT**

Mrs Mott said the Festival Committee activities are currently on hold. Funds are still available and if any organisations require any money they can still apply.

### **EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK REPORT**

Dr Stone gave a report regarding the Dunster Working Group and the Dunster Action Group. A copy of the report received from Mr Lamacraft mirrors the same points as raised by Dr Stone.

### **MRS LAWRENCE'S REPORT**

Mrs Lawrence, our County Councillor, gave a brief update of the work she had been involved in during the last twelve months.

Mr Sully thanked her for all her efforts in providing various organisations in the village with small amounts of money from grants and various funding sources. These have proved very helpful.

### **MR LEAKER'S REPORT**

Mr Leaker, our District Councillor, said this had been a very interesting year with a number of residents in the parish needing his help. There will be Boundary Changes happening in October which may involve Timberscombe becoming part of Dunster Parish. Dunster Visitor Centre is still threatened with closure and no significant investments have been made in Tourism. We need to draw up a marketing plan with the Castle to promote local economy.

Dr Stone assured everyone that the ENP Visitor Centre would still remain in the village but they are looking to refresh it.

### **CAR PARKING**

A discussion followed led by Mr Les Griffiths regarding car parking in the West St area. Everyone agreed parking is a problem in the village and in the long term needs resolving.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Mr Mike Bushen raised concern over the state of the footpath from Packhorse Bridge to the Castle.
2. Mr Ellis raised ways of marking footpaths.
3. Mrs Sadler and Mrs Bale raised the issue of the number of vacancies on the parish council and asked what the procedure was for recruiting new councillors. The issue got quite heated and Mr Sully explained the procedure quite clearly. He also mentioned the fact that councillors put in a lot of their own time and are unpaid.
4. Mrs A Webber raised the topic of Topple Testing and asked who has to pay to repair those in need of attention.
5. Mr Sully said the parish council will have to pay for repair of graves where there is no family. Where there is family they will be asked to pay for necessary repairs.

Mr Sully thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 9.0pm.