

ALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting at the Coronation Hall, 7.30, February 9, 2012*

Present: Steve Hepworth (Chair), Peter Emery, Charles Fletcher, Polly Carson, Kate Fielden, Robert Carpenter Turner, Jayne Drew. In attendance: Cllr Robert Hall.
Apologies: Ben Owen, Jenni Frost

001/12 Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising not covered by the agenda:

002/12 Playing Field – Community Asset Transfer: Kate Fielden raised the issue discussed at the previous pc meeting concerning the clause in the proposed transfer stipulating that, should the space no longer be designated for community use, ownership will revert to Wiltshire Council. She urged the clause be omitted if possible. After brief discussion it was **agreed** that the matter should be considered when the pc takes legal advice.

003/12 British Waterways / canal issues: Steve Hepworth reported that BW's Manager for the K&A Canal, Mark Stephens, had accepted an invitation to attend the next pc meeting on March 15 and had suggested a canalside meeting at Honeystreet earlier that day to discuss concerns on the spot.

Several pc members stressed problems which needed to be tackled urgently. These included: noise from generators and other sources, including in one case a chainsaw and in another a large loudspeaker mounted on top of the boat; large items of litter dumped on the towpath and in the canal, including concrete sleepers; boaters urinating on the towpath in full view; dogs from boats fouling the towpath; also biting towpath-users (two known cases at Honeystreet in the past month).

Members emphasised that the great majority of problems came from boats which ignored BW's mooring limits and continuous cruising rules, staying for up to six weeks at a time. They stressed the need for BW to enforce its own rules.

Robert Carpenter Turner said that the 8am to 8pm permitted time for generators to be run was "totally unacceptable in a residential area." He pointed out that on some stretches of waterway there were "no generators" notices. That should be adopted for Honeystreet.

Members discussed the option of a strictly enforced 24 hour mooring limit at Honeystreet. But the preferred view was that mooring should be banned altogether on the towpath side of the very short stretch of the canal between the Barge Inn and Honeystreet Bridge, which is

directly next to dwellings. Boats should moor immediately west of the Barge, where no residents would be affected.

The following resolution was proposed by RCT, seconded Jayne Drew:

The Parish Council proposes that British Waterways continues to allow boats to moor on the canal at Honeystreet to the west of the Barge Inn. In view of the serious noise and other nuisance to residents, there shall be no permitted mooring along the towpath between the Barge Inn and Honeystreet Bridge.

Agreed nem con.

004/12 Canal issues – parishes’ meeting: Deferred to next pc.

005/12 Street lighting, Brown’s Lane: SH said a formal request had been received stating that all the residents of Brown’s Lane wanted the one street light in the lane removed, believing it to be wasteful and an eyesore. Wiltshire Council said that confirmation was required, via the pc, that all residents and regular users of the road wanted the light removed.

One pc member spoke strongly in favour of keeping the light. Others were concerned about light pollution. There was agreement that, rather than removing the light altogether, it should simply be switched off or the bulb removed, preferably for a trial period.

In view of the need to consult residents, it was agreed that the next issue of the newsletter should propose that the light be switched off for a one year trial period, and seek opinions.

006/12 Playground litter bin, bench & table: Peter Emery said the bin had been removed because the lock was broken. He questioned whether a replacement was needed; the situation had improved since the bin was removed. JD said the bench needed to be repaired or replaced. Agreed that JD investigate cost of a new bench, PE to check cost of repair, & report back to next meeting.

007/12 Salisbury Festival White Horse pageant: SH said it was proposed that the three parishes of Stanton, Woodborough and Alton organise a ‘Bicentenary Fair’ as part of the White Horse pageant organized by Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival on June 30. SH and Charles Fletcher outlined the possible costs involved and grant, for which a submission to Pewsey Area Board had been prepared. Polly Carson stressed the costs which Salisbury had failed to fund, notably to cover health and safety issues. Who was going to pay for parking

arrangements, stewards, portaloos? She was appalled and angry to be told the event was going ahead with or without local consent. RCT and PE said the pc was being expected to take on a massive amount. JD asked why the parish was expected to pay £250, CF said it was for matched funding. JD asked why the pc could not simply sell tea and cakes at the Coronation Hall for the roof repair fund and leave it at that.

Several members said that if the local community had been involved 12 months ago, the response might have been different. They voiced astonishment that Salisbury had been planning the event for three years “but they haven’t bothered to tell us.” There was little information or evidence that the event would be professionally organised to cope with large numbers. The experience of Honeyfest had shown costs were very likely to climb, ending in a net loss.

Summing up, SH said: “My gut feeling is I don’t want to be putting our Parish Council in a position where it is using funds it could lose and which we could have given to the Coronation Hall in the first place.”

Resolution, proposed RCT, seconded PC:

The Parish Council, concerned at the arrangements put in place by Salisbury International Arts Festival, will not support a combined parishes’ ‘Bicentennial Fair.’

Agreed unanimously

Resolution, proposed JD, seconded KF:

The Parish Council wishes to apply for funding from Pewsey Area Board to host an Alton Village event to coincide with the White Horse pageant on June 30.

Agreed unanimously

008/12 **Planning application:** The following application, which was circulated and discussed by pc members by email and accepted with no objections, amendments or observations, was noted for the record:

E/2012/0007LBC, The Manor, Alton Priors

009/12 **AOB – Footpath repairs:** SH reported that Wiltshire Council had agreed to pay £400 plus VAT towards the cost of repairing the cobbled footpath between Alton Priors and Alton Barnes. This meant, with £100 from New College, £500 had been gathered so far.

010/12 **Wiltshire Core Strategy:** KF pointed out that the deadline for consultation was April 2 but that the government’s National Planning Framework was due to be published only two days earlier. Wilts Council was not keen to allow more time. Cllr Hall said it was very unlikely that the Framework would be out by that time. It might be delayed until September. It was agreed that KF draft a letter to Jane

Scott, leader of Wilts Council, to raise the issue of timing; that she highlight the relevant parts of the strategy and circulate those to pc members for views; and that she then draft a letter of response from the pc to be sent to the council.

SH thanked Councillor Hall for attending. There being no other business the meeting ended at 9.00pm.

*Subject to approval by next pc meeting