

HAM PARISH COUNCIL

HAM PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF A QUARTERLY PARISH MEETING

A Quarterly meeting of Ham Parish Council took place at 7.00pm on Wednesday 20 November 2024 in the Village Hall.

Present: Mr C Dean (Chairman), Mr M Humphreys, Mr J Marriage, Mrs. J Lamb, Mr A Taylor and 2 members of the public

1. **Apologies:**

Lady Mary Walker, Chris Daking

2. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the following meetings were confirmed and signed by the Chairman: Annual Parish Meeting 15 May 2024, Parish Assembly 15 May 2024, Planning Meeting 3 July 2024, Quarterly Parish Meeting 15 August 2024, Planning Meeting 18 September 2024.

3. **Matters Arising:**

None.

4. **Roads, Signs and Speed Limits**

Mr. Taylor reported that everyone should continue to use the My Wilts app to report potholes and other issues.

5. **Flooding**

Mr. Humphreys reported that there were currently no flooding issues reported and that all drains and ditches were clear and performing well. It was suggested that the ditch in Church Lane could perhaps be cleared out at some point as there was a quite a lot of debris in it.

6. **Bridleways and Footpaths**

The Chairman and Mr Humphreys said that the footpath near the nature reserve was like a "war zone". Wiltshire Wildlife Trust leased the land from Ham Estate and since the trees had been removed, the path/track had not been reinstated and there was now no discernible path. The Chairman said, if necessary, a working party to be organised to help tidy this up but he would speak to Andrew Melsom.

Mr Marriage reported that there weren't any issues with the other footpaths.

7. Finances

The Chairman reported that the precept was increased to £2000 for the 2024/25 year and suggested that it remained unchanged for 2025/16. The Chairman explained that he had spoken to Chris Daking who had confirmed there was no reason for an increase at this stage. The council all agreed to keep the precept unchanged at £2,000.

8. Christmas Lights

The Chairman along with Dave Bicknell had checked out the Christmas lights on the tree on the Green and whilst most of them were still working, a couple of lengths needed replacing at a cost of about £76.00. This expenditure was agreed. The Christmas light switch on is on Friday 28 November 2024 at 6.30pm. The Crown & Anchor kindly agreed to provide some mulled wine from 6.00pm. John Watson's daughters had been asked to do the honours of switching the lights on and they were delighted to have been asked.

It was noted and discussed that the work to the tree on the Green had not yet been carried out. Even though the work is not extensive, the Chairman said he would chase up the contractor who had been instructed to carry out the work.

Mr Humphreys suggested it would be nice to renovate the metal signpost on the Green. It had had some work done to it in the past but might now be a bigger renovation job that would need to be done professionally.

9. Other Correspondence

The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council elections would take place in May next year, alongside elections for the local County Councillor. The cost of the election is approximately £200 if uncontested (as long as no more than 6 people apply). If more than 6 locals wanted to apply to be on the Parish Council the bill would be closer to £500.

Oxenwood Outdoor Centre was being discussed at Shalbourne Parish Council meeting on Thursday 21 November to discuss the vision for Oxenwood's future. It was agreed that this was a really important facility, and everything should be done to secure its future.

10. Any Other Business

Art Gallery, Manor Farm House

Mrs Lamb mentioned a few people had raised concerns over the increased traffic and parking at the Gallery at Manor Farm House. She said that the current use of the gallery did not seem to accord with the permission that had been granted, namely a studio. The gallery is currently open 4 days a week and weekends by appointment. The Chairman said that he had spoken to Sara Stewart, from Fine Art Commissions, who said that the opening two weeks of the gallery were very busy and they were mindful of keeping parking away from the public footpath.

There was a discussion with varying viewpoints, and it was decided to monitor things and see how things went, and revisit if necessary.

Ham Open Gardens

Mr Taylor said that a small group of villagers had held a meeting to discuss the idea of organising an Open Garden event in Ham on Saturday 21st June next year. Several people had already offered their gardens. Although the organisation was in the early stages, the event would be ticketed and well organised with an afternoon tea, plant stall and face painting for the children.

The Crown & Anchor had been approached, and they would be happy to get involved by providing a special lunch. Money raised from ticket sales would go towards a Charity or charities suggested by Ham residents.

The Chairman said that Lady Walker was working on a similar idea with money raised going to a Charity close to the late Diana Baring. It was suggested that Lady Walker should be contacted with a view to combining events. Mr Humphreys and the other Councillors agreed it was a great idea and were supportive.

Noticeboard

The Chairman said he had spoken to John Watson concerning the broken glass in the noticeboard and some Perspex would be installed for the time being. Mr Taylor said it was not worth replacing the glass until spring as the hare coursers (who were responsible for the damage) were still very much in the area and active.

11. Date of Next Meeting

To be agreed.

The meeting closed at 7:45pm.