

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 1st September 2011 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 8.00pm

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Peter Moore - Chairman
Andrew Bull – Vice Chairman
Fran Laskowski
Clare Condie
Alan Collard
John Levick

Also in attendance:

Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council
4 Members of the public

Apologies were received from:

Shaun Sheldrake

2. Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council, including Village Plan update:

Anne Read reported that the fence at 'Doghouse' appears to be coming down but the hedge has not been moved. Peter stated that Highways are pursuing the matter and at present there is nothing the parish council can do. The owners are aware of the position and the action required.

Anne asked if the Parish Council will be having a stall at the village show on the 10th September and to confirm the football match starts at 2.30pm. The Flower Show is on the agenda and the outcome will be relayed to Anne once the decision has been finalised.

Malcolm Braithwaite expressed his thanks to the parish council with regard to the minute's accessibility on the website and the content as they are very informative.

Malcolm commented that the grassed area around the village sign in Gainsford End has not been cut for sometime and asked who was responsible for doing it. Peter stated that a parishioner used to cut the area. Malcolm stated that he would cut the grassed area if it could be cut down to start off with.

Malcolm also mentioned that the police constable who runs the mobile police van has been made redundant therefore we may lose this facility. Great Yeldham station is closing and Halstead station's times are being halved. Kaaren to write to Essex Police re this valuable service ask what is replacing it.

Village Plan update: - the results should be in next week. Once the results are in a programme will be worked out on how to present the findings to the village on 13th October at 8pm. The issues raised will be looked at and the discussion groups reformed. Malcolm has met with Peter with regards to how the group will continue. Malcolm is meeting with Nick Rouse from Ridgewell parish council on 13th September to discuss how they implemented their plan and to learn from them. The RCCE are being very supportive and the subscription renewal due shortly. An article on the village plan will appear in this month's village newsletter. The village plan is a 15 year programme to move forward on. So for the biggest issue to come out of the questionnaire is communications. A draft action plan will hopefully be available in January

2012. Peter stated that the meeting on the 13th October is an important milestone and all should be encouraged to attend.

3. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the meetings held on 11th August 2011 were approved and signed by the chairman as being an accurate record of the meetings.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

Doctors Car Service – Andrew will speak to Mrs Dyson regarding service and ask for a report on how it is progressing.

Speed limit – No further information available. Peter will be writing to highways as it is now 3 years this has been going on and will comment on the strong views on this matter both on a parish council level and a community level.

Recreational Equipment – further quotation has been received from PlayQuip for Toppesfield and Gainsford End play areas. A separate meeting will be held to discuss this matter only. This will be held on Tuesday 20th September 2011 at 8pm in the Green Man.

5. Actions from Previous Meeting:

- Peter Moore to pass mobile phone to Dave or Margaret Dyson – phone received and passed to Margaret Dyson.
- Peter Moore to speak to Highways regarding articulated Lorries using Toppesfield Road. Andrew has spoken to Environmental Health on grounds of noise pollution – they referred him to the planning department. The owner of the coal yard should have reapplied for their license to operate but has not done so. The matter is with the environmental health and awaiting their response.
- Clare Condie to ask Paul Thompson to do a new map showing the revised footpath. Paul has been asked but he has not been able to do this as yet due to work commitments. Paul will liaise with Anne Read regarding this. Andrew has a jpeg of the map and will speak to Paul.
- Kaaren Berry to contact Bulmer re play area costing and design – contact made and details to be emailed to Kaaren within the next week. Kaaren to chase so information available for the meeting in the 20th September.
- Peter Moore to speak to other villages re their village plan objectives and how the parish councils have acted following publications. Also speak to Malcolm re expectations and how the V.P. group goes on after the publication of results. Peter has spoken to Malcolm and once the views are known consultations with the parish council will happen and there will then be a co-ordinated delivery to the public.
- Kaaren Berry to check with the insurance company if the allotments are covered under the existing policy – letter received. They cover the council if they are solely responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the allotments; however they are unable to cover the individual plots of land once they have been leased out to individuals. Need to check as we don't lease plots and holders don't pay rent are we covered. Kaaren to write to Tony Davison to ask if the land has been officially swapped to the parish council as this may effect any insurance liability.
- Kaaren Berry to chase up RCCE for Oyster magazine – summer edition. Magazine now received and in the parish council office if anyone wished to view it.
- John Levick to follow up County Broadband information. John has spoken to BT regarding the Great Yeldham exchange and when is Toppesfield likely to receive an improved service. Halstead is due to be updated in 2012. The enquiry has been logged and John is waiting a response. John will contact Buzz Com. re radio broadband.
- Clare Condie to contact Ridgewell regarding number of allotment plots. Clare spoke to the clerk at Ridgewell – they have 10 plots £20 for a large one and £10 for a small plot per year. Income just covered water and rental charges from Essex County Council. Fran didn't feel the holders would object to pay a fee to cover the water bill. Clare stated that

things are looking good with Edible Essex and they could receive a grant up to £1600. It was agreed that the parish council would underwrite the water bill as long as every effort was made to pay by the holders. Peter will speak to Will Kettley regarding the footpaths and land issues regarding the allotments.

- Fran Laskowski to get quotes for signs for allotments. Quotes were ranging from £8.50 to £35.00 – Fran to come back with actual figures and Clare to check whether or not the signs could say 'by order of the parish council'.
- Kaaren Berry to write to Ridgewell and Stambourne Clerks re Community Issues meeting dates – Kaaren has written to the clerks and they will ask their councillors at their meetings later this month.
- Kaaren Berry to contact Barclays re change of address – Kaaren has tried to speak to Barclays but they need to speak to Peter as details have not been changed. Alan will speak to someone he knows in Barclays.
- John Levick and Andrew Bull to look at raising income from adverts in the newsletter and seek competitive printing quotes. A quote for producing the newsletter came in at £476 for 300 copies from a Haverhill company. Please see appendix C for further information on aims, pricing and considerations.
- Alan Collard to draft welcome pack information. Alan is putting this together – it would include a welcome letter and a sheet from the shop, church, school, village hall and basic details of trades in the village. A note in the newsletter will be asking for peoples contributions.
- Kaaren Berry to contact BDC re 'poo' bags and bin for the allotments. 'Poo bags' were ordered and have been received and a meeting is set up for the 6th September regarding the dog bin and its positioning.
- Kaaren Berry to speak to Dave Dyson re Polling Review. Kaaren has spoken to Dave – and a letter has been sent off giving Dave's comments about the polling station.

6. Planning Issues:

A request was received from Essex County Council regarding an extension of time for the temporary classroom with the school grounds – objections/comments had to be received by the 19th August 2011. No objections were raised – a thank you for a quick response was received from Essex County Council.

7. Transport / Highways issues:

Jubilee Oak Scheme – Fran attended a meeting regarding this and 3 sites have to be identified and then Highways will come out to inspect them for suitability. Suggestions are: the church yard – Clare has spoken to Brain Moody and no objections were made to this but Fran will liaise with Dennis Mortlock regarding position. Other suggestions were at the back of the village hall or down the causeway. Application needs to be returned by 30th September 2011. It was also suggested that the school should be involved and a time capsule be placed under the tree. Fran and Kaaren to write to St Margaret's school.

Puddle opposite 2 Church Lane – Kaaren has spoken to the highways and they have said that the drains will be jetted to identify if there are any problems.

8. Financial Accounts:

- The clerks report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval was received and approved, (Appendix A). The payment to E.on was questioned and whether the football club should be paying it as the bill relates to the changing rooms.
- Barclays - progression – this was dealt with in the actions list.
- Charities – see appendix B for report from Alan. Alan also handed out a map showing the original plots. Income from these is shared half to the church and half to those in need in the village – trustees are Tony Davison, Ted Mortlock and Dusty Miller they look after and distribute the income.

- Parish Lawn mower – Clare was who owned the lawn mower held at the village hall as there are differing accounts and whether or not the lawn mower could be used to cut the grass at the allotments. The lawn mower was purchased many years ago by the parish council, the village hall store it and the parish council pay for the maintenance on it. The lawn mower is for use within the parish and it can be used at the allotments as long as the holders pay for the fuel/oil and for repairs if any damaged is caused whilst being used.
- Accounts – Alan has produced a spreadsheet which will give running totals of income and expenditure throughout the year. Kaaren has collated the information and drawn up the accounts for last year (2010/2011) and has an appointment with the accountant on 3rd September 2011. Alan suggested that a comparison of budget against actuals would be useful to record.
- It was agreed by those present that a laptop with word/excel on it would be purchased for Kaaren to use and would remain the property of the parish council so all information is held in one place. Kaaren to purchase laptop up to a value of £350.

9. Correspondence:

Play safety inspection reports received for Gainsford End and Toppesfield recreational areas – to be discussed on 20th September 2011.

Jubilee Oak Project pack received – application to be in by 30th September 2011.

Braintree District Council, Meet the funders' day on 6th October 2011 – Andrew Bull will attend.

Clerks and Councils Direct – subscription renewal due – it was agreed to renew this subscription.

Braintree District Council Winter Salt Scheme – it was agreed that we would take part – application to be returned by 30th September 2011.

I-trust: ICT workshop – no interest by those present at this time.

RCCE – Community Led Planning information evening on the 11th October 2011 – it was agreed to forward this to Malcolm as it relates to the village plan and the parish council will pay the course fee.

Email received from *Safety Surfacing* re wet pour surfaces for play areas. This was forwarded onto Andrew Bull.

EALC training course and county update – Kaaren asked to attend the New Clerks Day on 5th October 2011. This was approved by the parish council – booking form to be sent off.

R & R A – from Essex County Council – information regarding residential care homes – this was passed to Andrew for the newsletter.

10. Any Other Business:

Dick Ruggles Memorial bench – Clare stated that Rob Stafford-Baker has asked if a bench could be placed in the park and dedicated to Dick Ruggles in recognition for what he did for the village. Alan will speak to Mrs Ruggles before this could be progressed.

Clare reported that the parish notice board near Camoise Close needs attention. Andrew will speak to Margaret Dyson for her views and to be updated as necessary. Three quotes will need to be sort for the works required.

Village Flower Show – it was agreed that the parish council will have a 'P.C. Surgery' at the flower show, Andrew will produce a sign for this and 'poo bags' will be handed out to dog owners.

Website – parish maps – John has received the scanned maps of the parish from Shaun and these were sent off to be put onto the website. Unfortunately they are not good enough for publication. It has been recommended that we approach Essex County Council and ask for a copy of the boundary map – John to progress this.

Torch bearers – any nominations need to be made by the 12th September 2011.

Peter has asked that attendance by councillors is recorded and every six months a percentage of meetings attended is given. The reasons for this are that councillors should be committed to their role and if not perhaps they need to question their commitment.

11. Date and Time of the next meeting:

The next parish council meeting will be held on Thursday 6th October 2011 at 8.00pm, at the Village Hall

12. Close:

The meeting was closed at 10.25pm.

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Chairman

.....
Date

Action Summary:

Kaaren Berry to write to Essex Police re the mobile unit and what will be replacing it.

Kaaren Berry to chase Bulmer re recreational area costings etc.

Kaaren Berry to write to Tony Davison regarding the allotments.

John Levick to contact Buzz Com re radio broadband.

Peter Moore to speak to Will Kettley re footpaths and land issues around the allotments.

Fran Laskowski to finalise quotes for signs in the allotments.

Clare Condie to find out if the signs can say 'by order of the parish council'.

Alan Collard to contact Barclays.

Andrew Bull to pull together a list of former and current advertisers of the newsletter.

John Levick to draft a letter detailing changes etc to advertising.

John Levick to draft invoice template for advertisers.

Fran Laskowski and Kaaren Berry to write to the school regarding a time capsule.

Andrew Bull to speak to the football team re the electric account for the changing rooms.

Kaaren Berry to purchase laptop.

Kaaren Berry to forward RCCE meeting information to Malcolm re the training on 11th October 2011.

Alan Collard to speak with Mrs Ruggles regarding the bench and dedication.

Andrew Bull to speak to Margaret Dyson regarding the notice board by Camoise Close.

John Levick to contact Essex County regarding boundary map for the website.

Appendix A

Accounts - 01 September 2011

National Savings Deposit Account:	£	£
Balance as at 12 July 2010	2498.26	
Community Account Balance as at 30 June 2011		8764.82
Subtotal:		----- 8764.82

If all previously issued cheques cashed balance should be

Total		7402.92
Credits:		2000.00

Payments to be approved:

Chq No:		
1295	E.on – Changing Rooms	19.26
1296	Playsafety Limited	309.60
1297	mh-p – newsletter	18.00
1298	Audit Commission – late fee	25.00
1299	Clerks& Council Direct renewal subscription	11.00
1300	EALC – training course	60.00
Balance		----- 2498.26 =====
		----- 8960.06 =====

Last bank statement received - 30th June 2011.

Appendix B

The Toppesfield Charities

A great deal of research into the various charities was undertaken in the early 1980s by Sid Read, who also wrote a couple of good histories about the village.

The subject has over the years been surrounded by a fair bit of mystery and I thought it would be a good thing to prepare a summary of what Sid discovered.

The following is directly taken from Sid's notes at the time.

"There are 4 trusts that are for the benefit of parishioners:

- a. The Durnford Annuity or Rent Charge
- b. Robert Edwards Annuity or Rent Charge
- c. Robert Edwards (Education) Trust
- d. John & William Edwards Settlement

a. The Durnford Annuity

The origin of this Annuity is obscure. The first reference to it is in the Parish Book for 1757 as being a rent charge on Olivers Farm of £1 per annum. By custom the amounts had been distributed to the poor of Toppesfield by way of coal and blankets.

On 28th June 1837, the Charity Commission issued a declaration that the Trustees should be the Minister and church wardens of Toppesfield Church.

b. Robert Edwards Annuity

This Trust was established by the will of Robert Edwards dated 28th February 1730 and it created a rent charge of £3 per annum, charged on New House Farm, Stambourne. This is to be distributed to the poor of Toppesfield Parish.

On 28th June 1837, the Charity Commission issued a declaration that the trustees should be the Minister and Church Wardens of Toppesfield Church.

c. Robert Edwards (Education) Trust

Also by the will of 28th February 1730, a further rent charge of £10 per annum was created. This provided that the money be applied for the education of the children of the poor of the parish of Toppesfield.

On 16th November 1897, the Charity Commission issued a comprehensive indenture to clarify the position of the Trustees and also to define the beneficiaries of the Trust. On this latter point, reference should be made to the indenture. As to the Trustees, provision is made for their appointment: there are to be three, two of whom are to be appointed by the Parish Council, together with the Rector [Minister?] of Toppesfield Church as an ex-officio member. The Trustees are to be appointed for a term of 4 years and they are to meet once a year. A quorum is two Trustees.

d. John Edwards and William Edwards Charity

This Charity is evidenced with a settlement of land constituted in an indenture dated 19th May 1712, stated to be 11 acres 2 roods and defined by the names of the fields. In the indenture, the Trust was created for 'reparation of the Church of Toppesfield and the relief of the poor of the parish and other charitable uses, by the discretion of the chief inhabitants assembled for that purpose'.

The Trust was reviewed by the Charity Commission who issued an indenture dated 21st September 1897. The area of land had been amended to 12 acres 3 roods 2 poles, a cottage having meantime been sold. It is possible to identify the land by reference to the Tithe Award Map of 1836, as follows:

No.	Name	Area		
		Acres	Roods	Poles
469	Cottage & garden	1	1	12
479	Cottage & Allotments	9	1	2
495a	Part New Field (Long Purstace)		1	0
538a	Part Bursted Field (Penstead)		2	0
549a	Part Pea Field (Pansfield)		3	0
639a	Dale Field (Moor Dale)		2	0
644a	Collins Slip (Copland Slip)	1	2	0
<hr/> TOTAL		12	3	2

(NB 1 rood equals 0.25 [acres](#), 0.1 [hectares](#), or 10,890 [square feet](#)
1 pole equals 1/40th of a rood or 1/160th of an acre.)

The Charity Commission had decided that the Trust should be considered as half Ecclesiastical and half Eleemosynary. The Trustees were defined as being the Rector [Minister?] and Church Wardens of Toppesfield Church for the Ecclesiastical portion and the Parish Council to have the appointment of two members for the Eleemosynary portion.

The Ecclesiastical portion is to be applied to the reparation of the Church and the Eleemosynary share is to be applied to the relief of the poor and other charitable purposes."

The following link to the Charity Commission website gives basic financial information about the Charities: <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/index.aspx>
Enter 'Toppesfield' in the 'Search for a charity' box at the top of the page and you will find all Toppesfield related registered charities, including those described above.

It seems that the Durnford Annuity has now been included under the Robert Edwards Education Trust.

The currently appointed Trustees are shown against each charity.

Alan Collard
August 2011

Appendix C



Toppesfield | Gainsford End

Parish Council

1/9/11

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Newsletter

Aim: to make the newsletter cost neutral through increasing advertising revenue and thereby reduce the cost burden on parish finances

Pricing: it is suggested that the following rates are applied to the newsletter:

¼ page - £30 per issue

½ page - £55 per issue

1 page - £100 per issue

On current take up this would yield in the region of £450-£500 per edition.

We could encourage series deals by offering a discount on rate card ie take 6 x ¼ page insertions throughout the year and pay only for 5 or permutation thereof.

Considerations:

- 1) existing in-parish advertisers would cease to have free adverts so we might lose one or two advertisers
- 2) past, current and potential advertisers to be contacted by letter detailing the changes and the reasons why
- 3) look at increasing print run and widening distribution
- 4) offer artwork facility – we design the advert for client
- 5) set up simple invoicing system that can be administered by KB

Actions:

- 1) AB to pull together list of former and current advertisers
- 2) JL to draft letter detailing changes etc
- 3) JL to draft invoice template for advertisers