

SWANTON MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 11th September 2006. The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Present: Mr R. Atterwill (Chairman), Mrs. R. Northall, Mr J. Carrick, Mrs. Q Wood, Mrs M. Thomas, Mr C. Clegg and 4 members of the public. Also present were Mrs I. Floering-Blackman as County Councillor, Mr D. Bennett (NCC), Ms T. Perks (NRCC) and Mr E. Mumford (Broadland Housing Association).

1. Apologies for Absence

Mr C. Perry

2. Declarations of Interest

- Mrs R. Northall – Personal interests as a member of Norfolk Wildlife Trust, in relation to item 13b – Felling trees as part of the churchyard management plan, and Secretary of Swanton Morley Cricket Club in relation to item 9a – Planning Application for Angel View, Greengate.
- Mr Atterwill – Prejudicial interest in the grass cutting contract.
- Mrs Thomas - Personal interest as a member of the Village Hall Management Committee.
- Mr Clegg – Prejudicial interest in the Old Village Hall

3. To Discuss the Housing Needs Survey - Guest Speaker Ms T. Perks – Norfolk Rural Community Council. Also in attendance was Mr E. Mumford from Broadland Housing Association.

Ms Perks briefed those present on the findings of NRCC's Housing Needs Survey for Swanton Morley. The average House Price in Swanton Morley was currently £194,963. She advised that 800 surveys were sent to residents of the village, of which 153 were returned. This return rate of 18% was deemed as average therefore the results were a good representation of the village. 73% of responses supported Affordable Housing. 13 households were identified as having a need for Affordable Housing, 10 of which were not on Breckland Council's Housing register. The survey also showed that 14 people had left the village due to lack of Affordable Housing.

The Affordable Housing Need for the village was deemed as four 1½ bed flats, one 2 bed house and one 3 bed house for social rent and one 2 bed house for shared ownership. These would be allocated to local people as part of a Local Letting Agreement, which means that housing would only be allocated to local people or to people working in Swanton Morley. Ms Perks suggested we publicised these results and would forward a draft letter to the clerk.

The Parish Council are to report to NRCC potential sites for development. These can be on 'Exception Sites' which are areas of land adjacent to the current planning boundaries.

A general discussion took place about the suitability of land and the following points were made:

- Any possibility of houses from the Base being made available for purchase in future years would not be classed as Affordable Housing for Local People as they would be made available to any member of the general public.
- Broadland Housing Association benefits from the rent collected, and this goes to pay off the Government Loan for building of the properties.
- The purchasing of land from Landowners would have to be at a greater value than current Agricultural Value for it to be attractive to the landowner, although purchase will still be made at a lesser price than could be obtained on the open market.
- Broadland Housing Association is responsible for negotiating purchase price with landowners. Price is generally between £6,000 and £12,000 per plot.
- Land inside the Planning Boundaries would be considered but this is generally at a higher cost than that outside the planning boundaries.
- Exception sites still have to be suitable to all parties, such as the Parish Council, Highways and Utilities.
- Although housing is deemed as low cost, the build is still of a high quality.
- There is a pre-defined rent per district, for example Broadland Housing Association's current rent for a 3 bedroom house is £70 per week.
- The Privacy of the landowner should be protected by Broadland Housing Association, therefore price paid for the land will not be revealed.
- A Working Party for this project is recommended to streamline the process.

4. To Discuss the Transport Needs of the Parishioners of Swanton Morley - Guest Speaker

Doug Bennett

Mr Bennett reported that the Village Appraisal clearly stated the need for a Community Car scheme. He advised that prior to pursuing the scheme further investigations into the following should be made:

- Identify more specifically where the scheme is needed, who requires it and at what times of the day.
- Identify the current transport resources, such as buses, taxis or existing community transport schemes.
- Identify an organiser who would be prepared to manage a potentially demanding scheme.
- Identify those eligible to use the scheme. The scheme can only be used by those who cannot access or afford other means of transport, and usage is limited for healthcare and social daycare journeys.
- Identify the costs to organise and pay drivers (driver costs approximately 35-40p per mile to cover petrol and wear and tear to vehicles)

Mr Bennett also identified areas of funding. NCC will only part fund up to £110 per annum and this must be match funded. Breckland do not have a fund specifically for Community Car, but Mr Carrick advised that any well thought out and presented project will be considered by Breckland. The Parish could chose to fund the scheme entirely, although this may not be popular with all Parishioners. Or the user can fund the cost of the full journey (but organiser costs would have to be funded separately). It was agreed that Mr Bennett is to provide the Council with contact details of other villages who run a Community Car scheme, to discuss any problems that occurred setting up the scheme and how they overcame them. The questions that arise from these discussions could then be put within a more detailed questionnaire to be issued within the village to help further identify the needs of the community. Discussions also took place as to the feasibility of a community mini-bus and it was agreed that this should also form part of the survey.

5. Minutes from Parish Council Annual Meeting of 14th August 2006 to be Accepted, Initialled and Signed.

Amendments to the minutes were noted. Mr Carrick proposed these minutes be accepted, Mrs Northall seconded. All in favour.

6. Matters Arising

Mrs Northall queried inconsistencies between the Burial Ground minutes of 4th July and the Parish Council minutes of 14th August with reference to the Burial Ground pathways. The sub-committee had previously shown great concerns about the quality of the pathways, however had not queried the payment to May Gurney. Mrs Thomas advised that now the pathways had had time to stabilise, her opinion had changed and the sub-committee's previous concerns had now been abated.

Mrs Wood requested the old filing cabinet be returned to her. Mr Atterwill agreed to arrange this.

7. Finance

a) **Accounts to be approved for payment** – Mr Carrick proposed the following be approved, Mr Atterwill seconded. All in favour, however, Mr Clegg was unable to vote on the payment to Mr Hancox due to a prejudicial interest in the Old Village Hall.

Payment	Amount	Cheque No.	Comments
Clerk's Salary	£281.22	101247	
Clerk's Expenses (Mrs LeBon)	£42.10	101247	
Zurich Municipal	£1705.58	101248	Village Hall Insurance
Nicholas Hancox	£3408.58	101249	Solicitors Fees to 01/09/06
Mr R Allsop	£656.83	101250	Grass Cutting (July)
Furniture @ Work	£233.95	101251	2 x Filing Cabinets
NPTP	£55.00	101252	1 x Chairmanship Course 1 x Initial Clerks / Councillors Course
E-on	£102.57	D/D	
Total	£6,485.83		

Mrs Northall requested that the Village Hall Management Committee refund the proportion of the insurance for Employers Liability, as had been done in previous years. This amounted to £105.00. Mr Carrick agreed to arrange this.

Mrs Northall also raised concerns about the amount being paid to Mr Hancox as she felt the initial meeting should have been given free of charge, but instead a charge of £170.00 plus VAT was made. She was also concerned about the amount of £340.00 plus VAT charged following an email from Mr Carrick and stated that all future correspondence with Mr Hancox should be done through the clerk to ensure no unnecessary expense is occurred. Mr Carrick apologised for by-passing the clerk. Mr Atterwill advised that the only way the matter of the Old Village Hall is to be resolved is to have all the facts present, and the only way to obtain these facts is to get professional advice. Mrs Wood suggested that Mr Carrick pay for his correspondence to Mr Hancox.

b) Income - £100 – Memorial for Mrs Sylvia Dewing – This was duly reported.

c) To discuss 2007/2008 Budget

Mrs Northall advised that the following costs for the Parish in 2007/2008 should be able to be agreed:

- Cost of electricity and Streetlighting maintenance for TT Jones (as this is a 4 year contract)
- Subscriptions – the clerk is to check any increase to NCAPTC
- Donations
- Cost of bin for Gray Drive
- Clerks Salary and Expenses

Mrs Northall also advised that the grasscutting tenders should be sent soon.

Mr Atterwill suggested a program for the replacement of the concrete columns within the village. This could be done over a series of four years. Mr Atterwill and the clerk are to speak with TT Jones to obtain an approximate figure.

Mr Carrick suggested better budgeting for legal fees.

8) Public Participation Session

Mrs Wood proposed the meeting be adjourned and opened to the public. Mrs Thomas seconded. All in favour.

Mrs Walden felt that the solicitor's fee was very high and felt a single letter to cottage owners would have sufficed rather than sending an identical letter to each individual owner, requesting information already given to the Parish Council. She confirmed that a letter would be sent back to Mr Hancox in due course.

Mrs Floering-Blackman was pleased that the problems with the Burial Ground pathways had been resolved and may get Jason Glasspoole to check them the next time he is in the village. She was also impressed with Mr Bennett's presentation and advised that if there is anything to do to assist, to please let her know. Following on from a letter received from the clerk about escalating the Parish Council's problem with traffic damaging the church wall, Mrs Floering-Blackman requested confirmation that the Council wished her to speak with Phillip Shram to reopen the file. Mr Atterwill confirmed that this was the wishes of the Council.

Mr Northall questioned whether Mr Hancox's advice would be contested by other solicitors, and that he is only giving advice, not solutions.

Mr Atterwill advised that due to the lack of legal knowledge within the council, it was necessary to hire someone to obtain the relevant facts for the Council, prior to them making any decision.

Mr Northall also raised concerns about the church wall and questioned it's age and what cost the church incurred prior to the Parish Council taking responsibility for this.

Mr Atterwill replied that the cost incurred by the Church prior were irrelevant as it is now the Parish Council who are liable for the consequences should any damage be done by the wall.

Mrs Wood queried whether we could claim any insurance costs after the latest accident.

Mrs Wood proposed the meeting be brought back into order. Mrs Thomas seconded. All in favour.

9) Planning

a) 3PL/2006/1162/F – Mr J Wells, 76 Angel View, Greengate – Raising of roof height, placing of attic trusses for loft conversion – Mrs Thomas queried the staircase that had been placed in the bungalow. Mr Atterwill proposed that Planning Consent should only be granted if a stipulation should be made that only Velux windows should be installed and no further alterations to windows should be

made in the future. Mrs Wood seconded. There were four in favour, Mrs Thomas objected and Mr Clegg abstained.

b) 3PL/2006/1190/F – Mr and Mrs C Simpson, 88 Greengate – Erection of garden room and extension – Mrs Wood proposed there be no objections, Mrs Northall seconded. All in favour.

c) 3PL/2006/1178/F – Mr and Mrs A Hansell, White House Barn, Mill Street – Alterations to existing barn to convert to dwelling and new garaging - Mrs Wood proposed there be no objections, Mrs Northall seconded. All in favour.

10) Old Village Hall & Car Park

Mr Clegg provided all Councillors with a letter to be read, and left the room.

Mr Atterwill read Mr Clegg's letter aloud. The clerk is to respond to Mr Clegg acknowledging receipt of this letter.

a) To receive updates on de-registration process.

Mr Atterwill advised that Mr Hancox is awaiting responses from the cottages, DEFRA and Breckland Council. In particular a response from Breckland is eagerly anticipated as Mr Hancox disputed the £90,000 demand for lifting of the covenant on Gooseberry Hill.

Mr Atterwill also reported that Mr Carrick has previous correspondence from The Land Registry that suggests that they would be happy for the Parish Council to register itself as the undisputed owner of the village green based on the conclusion of The Commons Commissioners in 1975. These letters that Mr Carrick has are to be put on circulation and copies forwarded to Mr Hancox.

Mr Atterwill proposed that the Council ask Mr Hancox whether there would be some legal framework to put in place that would allow cars across the village green, without the need for de-registration. Mrs Thomas seconded. There were four votes in favour with Mrs Wood objecting.

b) To report results of demolition tenders.

The results of the demolition tenders were that the cheapest quote was £4500 with the Council losing all rights to salvage material. This went against primary indications that the Council would in fact receive funds for salvage material that would exceed the cost of demolition. Mr Atterwill proposed that the clerk write to each of the parties providing a quotation and advise them the Parish Council have chosen not to do anything at the present time. Mrs Thomas seconded, all in favour.

Mr Clegg Re-entered the room

11) Streetlighting

a) To receive fault reports / matters for attention

The clerk is to speak with TT Jones to find out when EDF will be doing the changeover on column 31 Gooseberry Hill

b) Update on progress regarding proposed streetlight for Middleton Ave. / Hoe Road East - The clerk updated the Council, advising that there were problems progressing with the Deed of Easement. Originally it was thought that the Deed of Easement had to be between Breckland and the Parish Council, however, WF Smith have advised that the Deed needs to be between Breckland and Norfolk County Council. Norfolk County Council do not wish to get involved in the legalities of a Deed of Easement and have suggested we resort back to the Wayleave Agreement. However, WF Smith do not advise that a Wayleave agreement is suitable because it is terminable on notice by the landowner. The clerk is to go through all options with the Chairman prior to making any further instruction on this matter.

12) Highways

a) To Discuss Proposed Bus Stop Infrastructure Improvements - Mr Atterwill reported that Norfolk County Council had taken on board Parishioners' concerns about the relocation of the bus stops on Town Street and agreed to keep them where they are. He also advised that the positioning of bus stops at the bottom of Primrose Square would be investigated by NCC.

b) To Discuss Progress on Proposed pedestrian crossing on Greengate – Mr Atterwill reported that three objections to the zebra crossing on Greengate had been received by NCC. However, a need for a pedestrian crossing was identified in the village appraisal. Mrs Northall advised that there was a petition in 2003 that consisted of 176 signatures that also identified the need for a crossing. Mrs Thomas pointed out that the crossing would not just be beneficial to children, but to adults as well.

Mrs Northall proposed that the clerk write to NCC accepting their proposals. Mr Atterwill seconded, all in favour.

c) To receive reports of highways faults / matters for attention – Mrs Northall reported that the hedge between Middleton Avenue and Hoe Road East is making visibility for cyclists poor.

Mr Atterwill reported that the surface water between Ward Crescent and Primrose Square is very dangerous after a storm and requested the drainage problem be reported to Highways.

Mrs Thomas reported that there was flooding outside 47 Greengate. Although a drain had previously been installed, the problem had now moved further down Greengate. The clerk is to report these matters.

Mr Atterwill reported that Jason Glasspoole had been away on holiday, therefore this could account for the apparent lack of action by Highways this month. However, should problems still persist he will request another site visit.

Mr Atterwill proposed the meeting be extended. Mrs Thomas seconded, all in favour

Mr Atterwill asked Mr Carrick as District Councillor, to investigate whether the scope of Breckland's grasscutting contract had been reduced as the grass verges around the village have not been cut for some considerable time. Mr Carrick to investigate and report back to the Council.

d) To receive a report from Mr C. Perry on the progress of the Working Group - Mr Perry had provided the Council with his apologies and therefore did not provide a report.

13) Churchyard & Burial Ground

a) To receive an update report from Mrs M. Thomas on progress of the Sub Committee

Mrs Thomas provided the clerk with a report for circulation. This covered the following points:

- Tenders have been sent out for the removal of weed sycamores within the churchyard.
- The west gates are to be removed and stored until the walls are made safe, and then re-primed and painted and replaced.
- An invite has been made to Shipdham PC to attend the next meeting to advise on how they obtained funding for their church wall repairs.
- Mr Broady had replaced a sign at the Burial ground advising that household waste is not to be placed in the bin there.

Mr Clegg clarified which sycamore trees were to be removed and advised that previous reports by Mr Addison and Ms MacMullun were now out of date because the trees had grown.

Of the trees on Mr Carrick's land, the tree leaning dangerously, number 14 is to be removed by Mr Carrick.

b) To discuss the churchyard management plan – As discussed in 12a)

14) Youth & Playground Equipment

a) To receive an update report from Mr R. Atterwill on progress of the Sub Committee - Mr

Atterwill provided the clerk with a safety inspection to be circulated. He also thanked Mr Marsham for providing assistance with the delivery of replacement play bark that had occurred earlier that day, and thanked Mrs Wood for removing the knotwood on Gooseberry Hill. He also advised that Miss Woolnough would be following up on a grant application submitted to NEWS.

Mrs Northall queried the rotten cherry tree on the village green. The clerk is to write to Ms Heydon for her advice.

15) Commons, Open Spaces & Environmental

a) To receive an update report from Mr J. Carrick on progress of the Working Group

Mr Carrick reported that it was still his intention to submit an application for High Level Stewardship on Mill Common in time for the deadline of 30th September for the four month consultation period ending on 31st January 2007. It is hoped that the professional advice being provided will cost no more than £400, which is equivalent for the financial incentive to be received for submitting a quality application. Mr Carrick will advise the Council should the cost of professional advice come to more than this amount. All were in favour of Mr Carrick proceeding with this application.

Mrs Northall queried the ADAS report that had recently been circulated advising that two kissing gates were to be installed on Mill Common. Mr Carrick advised that these were not suitable for disabled access and would follow this up.

16) Correspondence

Mr Atterwill reported that a letter had been received from Mrs Broughton which showed concern about the maintenance of certain properties and garages on Gray Drive and also the visibility to traffic exiting Gray Drive. The clerk is to write to Breckland Council Environmental Department to find out what can be done about parked cars and the state of the garages, and also to request that the grass on the play area be cut. Highways are to be contacted about the hedges and parked cars that reduce visibility and Peddars Way are to be contacted to advise which properties they are responsible for.

Mrs Thomas reported that she had spoken to Rod Fearnley about the Village Emergency Plan and that he was displeased about the plan being drafted without him being consulted. Mr Atterwill is to approach Mr Fearnley to resolve this matter.

Mrs Thomas advised that the only group within the village currently showing any interest in the website was the Church. The clerk is currently trying to raise awareness of the site.

17) Information for Guest Speakers at Meeting of 9th October

a) To agree items to be discussed with Steve O'Brien, Dog Warden

The clerk is to write to Mr O'Brien asking him to provide the following information within his presentation: A brief description of his role, how the Council brings about Dog Control Orders, what areas the Council would be permitted to ban dogs from and how we deal with problems of domestic dog barking.

b) To agree items to be discussed with PC Craig Maxwell

The clerk is to write to PC Maxwell asking him to provide the following information within his presentation: A brief description of his role and what his responsibilities are, what sort of problems do we report to him, rather than calling 0845 456 4567, and how can he be contacted.

18) County / District Councillors' Reports

Mrs Floering-Blackman advised that she had been chairing a group promoting adult education for post 16 youngsters, and also 'Betterment' Evening Courses. There are approximately 350 courses in Norfolk and Mrs Floering-Blackman will forward the Parish Council some notices to advertise the project within the community.

Mr Carrick reported the purchase of Barnham Broom Golf and Leisure Club by Breckland Council, as part of its drive to spend money raised by the sale of council houses. He also advised that there was another large deal in the pipeline, details of which he was not currently privy to.

Mr Atterwill had asked Robin Goreham as Chairman of Breckland's Scrutiny Committee, as to why Breckland were able to purchase Barnham Broom, but not Crane Fruehauf. Mr Atterwill suggested that if Breckland had bought the freehold of the site from the Administrators at a market rate, this money could have been used to inject working capital into the business and possibly save jobs. If the business had then failed Breckland would have still owned the site and could have invited other potential manufacturers to the town. Mr Carrick felt that there was not the need to spend large amounts of money at the time.

Mr Atterwill also questioned whether Breckland had approached the Primary Care Trust to buy Dereham hospital, however Mr Carrick felt that they would not receive a commercial rate from a PCT. Mrs Northall questioned whether the general public were allowed to speak in a Scrutiny Committee meeting and Mr Atterwill responded that Mr Goreman had advised they were.

Mr Atterwill suggested to Mr Carrick, as District Councillor, that the present Development Control Committee structure was not adequate for its intended purpose. He pointed out that earlier in the year he had attended one of the meetings to speak in favour of the Lincoln House development. During the meeting Roy Rudling – Councillor representing Watton had objected strongly to the proposals. Mr Atterwill stated that it was unacceptable for a Councillor living in Watton to have influence over decisions affecting Swanton Morley. He went on to say that this probably happened during the debate over the "Cocos" development in Dereham and as a result the plans were approved contrary to overwhelming public opinion. Mr Atterwill suggested a better system would be to have smaller "cluster" planning meetings with each cluster being made of a market town and its surrounding "feeder" villages. This would mean only Councillors with good local knowledge would vote on local planning issues. Mr Carrick is to advise on the matters raised by Mr Atterwill.

19) Any Item to be Reported for the next agenda

Mr Atterwill made the Planning & Local Development Working Group responsible for investigating and reporting back to the Parish Council any potential areas for affordable housing. He also made the Traffic and Pedestrians Working Group responsible for the Transport Needs survey.

Mrs Northall advised that she had received complaints that advertisements for a Football Club Quiz, flyposted throughout the village, had still not been removed many weeks after the event.

20) Public Participation Summary Session

Mrs Thomas proposed the meeting be adjourned and opened to the public. Mrs Wood seconded. All in favour.

There were no further questions or comments from the public.

22. To confirm the date & time of next meeting to be held on Monday 9th October 2006 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

All in Favour

The meeting closed at 10.40pm

_____ (Chairman) _____
Date