

SWANTON MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING was held at the Village Hall, Manns Lane on Monday 16th April 2007 at 7.30pm and was attended by 53 members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Mr R Atterwill, Chairman of Swanton Morley Parish Council and attended by five Parish Councillors – Mr J Carrick, Mr. C. Clegg, Mr. C. Perry, Mrs. Q. Wood and Mrs. R. Northall.

1. Apologies for Absences

Apologies were received from:

County Councillor Mrs I Floering-Blackman

Mrs J Leary (PCC)

Mr T Harris (Daisy's Mite Charity)

Mr M Johnson (Breckland Council Nominee)

P.C. Craig Maxwell

Mrs M Thomas

2. Minutes of Previous Annual Parish Meeting

Mrs Janes proposed that the minutes be accepted with the addition of the question from Miss Hart about the use of a £40,000 grant in the construction of the village hall and its facilities. Mrs Wood seconded this proposal. The amendment was made and the minutes signed.

3. Matters Arising

None received.

4. Chairman's Report - Mr Roger Atterwill, Chairman of Parish Council

Mr Atterwill introduced all the Councillors and announced that there would be no election in May due to there being only seven nominees for the seven available places.

The Chairman's report had been distributed to all electors, but focused on the following:

- The reasons behind the demolition of the Old Village Hall, the future plans for the site and what this meant for the village. An offer had also been made to the cottage owners for Right of Way across the village green.
- The footpaths had been resurfaced in the Burial Ground as a result of the Disability Audit.
- The church wall is being monitored for deterioration and pressure had been put on the Highways Department to conduct a feasibility study for widening Mill Street. A good relationship had been built with the new Highways Engineer and many improvements had been made in the village.
- The proposed pedestrian crossing on Greengate will go ahead.
- Vehicle Activated Signs had been installed advising drivers when they exceed the 30mph speed limit.
- Details of the Public Works Loan Board being considered for village projects.
- The proposed improvements to both Mill and Burgh Commons
- The investments in play equipment on the Gooseberry Hill playing field
- The success of the budget process.

5. Parish Council Annual Report

The Clerk gave her report which outlined the following:

- The reliability of the new street lighting contractor and the resolutions to street lighting problems on Farrow Close and Middleton Avenue.
- The partnership with Breckland Council in enforcing the Clean Neighbourhoods Act 2005 in relation to dog fouling, and the success of the Good Citizen Dog Scheme.
- Advice on Parish Council meetings and the promotion of use of the website and notice boards.
- Closer communication with Robertson Barracks after their appointment of a Community Development Officer.
- The Quality Council Project
- Appreciation for all those in the village who provide voluntary services.

6. Reports from Village Organisations

a) Swanton Morley Surgery – Report by Mrs P Louch

Swanton Morley surgery started 3 years ago but moved into new accommodation and was formally opened by Keith Simpson in 2005. The improvements have been made since then are that the surgery now does not close for lunch and also has a direct phone line. An ultra-sound pilot is currently under way and early morning surgeries are also to be piloted. Negotiations are also underway with a complimentary therapist.

Ms Louch also advised that it was easy to switch doctors to Swanton Morley surgery. A receptionist will provide a registration form and the surgery will do all the work from there. She also thanked the Patients' Participation Group for all their hard work and the Parish Council for their support.

b) Patients' Participation Group – Report by Mr T Peachment

This group was set up as a liaison between patients and the doctors and nurses. Membership is open to all patients of the surgery and a member of the Parish Council has been invited to join the group.

Meetings are relatively informal and are held bi-monthly. Any queries about the surgery should be made to Mr Peachment.

c) Small's Charity – Report by Ted Peachment

As set out in the will of William Small, grants are available to Swanton Morley born boys embarking on apprenticeships or similar further education courses to purchase tools, equipment or books. No grants had been applied for this year but a progress letter had been received from a previous successful applicant.

Applications must be made in writing to Mr Peachment or Mr H. Harris.

d) Link Up Magazine - Report by Mr T Peachment

Financial adjustments had to be made for 2007 with the cover price rising to 50p and an annual subscription to £5. This magazine covers Swanton Morley, Beetley, East Bilney and Hoe and is run by volunteers. Mr Peachment thanked the Parish Council for a donation of £50 and made a plea for more articles of interest.

e) Barrett's Charity – Report read by Mr Carrick

This charity was set up with the monies from the income from 52 acres of land. The monies are used for small gifts for the elderly of the village at Christmas time, and also those in residential care who have had to move out of the village. Approximately £1200 is distributed to those who need it most and a similar amount is given to the churchwardens to help maintain the church. If anyone is in reduced circumstances and feels they are deserving of a gift, please contact Mr N. Saffell at Brown and Co, Queen St, Norwich.

f) Parochial Church Council – Report by Mrs J. Leary read by Mr Atterwill

The church has maintained a programme of services in the past year. There are two communion services per month, one morning prayer and one family service. Christmas services were well attended, especially Christingle.

Fund raising events have been arranged and the Friends of All Saints Church were thanked for all their hard work. Schemes are often frustrated by 'Ecclesiastical Red Tape' but the hard work goes on. Future projects include drainage, electrical work, heating, a kitchen and perhaps even toilet facilities. It was emphasised that a warm welcome will await anyone coming to the church.

g) Village Hall Management Committee – Report by Mr J Carrick

The village hall has 19 clubs and village organisations using it on a regular basis, however it is also dependent on bookings from outside hirers, of which there are 34 events currently booked. With use of the village hall's own resources and grant assistance, future plans include the addressing of acoustics, sound and light systems, kitchen and bar fittings, car park and entrance. The social club is trading well and making a contribution to the village hall.

Volunteers on the village hall management committee were thanked but a plea also went out for more help, even for just single events.

h) Swanton Morley Womens Institute – Report by Mrs J Austin

Swanton Morley Woman's Institute celebrates its 86th birthday this year. The group consists of like minded women who not only have an interest in home and family lives, but also in diverse matters. This year the group has lobbied the local MP on the future of Norfolk Community Hospitals. They have also been very active in village life, having supported the church flower festival and recently competing in a county craft festival.

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month and new members and guests are always welcome.

i) The Angel Bowls Club – Report by Mrs D Janes

The green was formed in the 1920's and has been in its present form for the last 40 years. The green is on National Trust land beside the Angel and the team currently has a membership of 24. Games are played as part of the Dereham and North Elmham League and last season was one of the most successful ever.

Work has been done upgrading the green and future projects include the replacement of changing facilities, but this will depend on the assistance of outside funding.

j) Swanton Morley Cricket Club – Report by Mr G Northall

After a lapse of about twenty years the Club was reformed in 1983 and since then has grown to a membership of around fifty players whose ages range from 8 to the mid 60's. Home matches are played at the "Angel Cricket Ground," Hoe Road, Swanton Morley which has a large car park with improved access for the disabled. The Club is a member of the West Norfolk Cricket League, games are played on Saturdays, and the Mid Norfolk Sunday League. There are also mid-week evening fixtures. Spectators are always welcome

Adult practices are on Thursdays from 6:00pm onwards, while on Monday evenings, 6:00pm onwards, there are special coaching sessions for youngsters (boys and girls) aged 6-14 years. Qualified coaches devote their time to develop the children's skills throughout the summer. The youngsters play games against other village sides.

The annual subscription for anyone wishing to be Vice President is £20. Non-players have the opportunity to support the Club in this way and their interest and help is much appreciated.

The club is increasingly concerned by the increased development around the ground which could threaten its long-term future in that location.

k) Under 5's Group – Report by Mr Steve Derrick

This group prepares children of the village to start school life, and the success of the group has been recognised by OFSTEAD. The limiting factor to the group is the village hall as the children need a dedicated area. An opportunity has arisen to move to an area within the school grounds with a modular building being considered.

l) Any other reports from Village Organisations

i) Daisy's Mite - This was set up in 1991 with the proceeds of the book by Daisy Rayner to assist with the purchase of equipment for studies. In 2006, the charity recognised the efforts of Georganna Sell and Emma Hall who received who received £65.00 each. Nominations for 2007 are currently being collected for discussion within the next few weeks and nominations for 2008 are also being collected.

ii) Swanton Morley Bowls Club – This group are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year. The season starts with the Brownlow cup which is open to everyone.

iii) Swanton Morley School – Mr Perry reported that the new head teacher, Gareth Flemington, had worked hard with the school council and parents' council. The school had participated in a travel plan, which had had impact on the village, such as the vehicle activated signs and pedestrian crossing. The OFSTEAD report well. 45% of children have parents in the army and are thus affected by events in Iraq and Afghanistan. The school works closely with these children to discuss their concerns. Future projects include improving sports provisions.

7. Police Report by P.C. Craig Maxwell

Mr Atterwill read the statistic from September 2006 to April 2007, totalling 28 crimes. There had been a recent increase in vehicle theft, but this was a trend that was also reflected in areas such as Dereham, Mattishall, Shipdham and Bawdeswell.

8. Report from the Playing Fields Sub Committee

Mr Atterwill reported that the most significant work of this group had been the improvements to the Gooseberry Hill playing field. The project has had to be phased due to restrictions placed by grant bodies. Successful grants had been received from Breckland, NPFA, Awards for All, WREN and NEWS and two donations had also been received. This has funded the recently erected play equipment and fencing at a cost of £24875 plus VAT. Phase 2 was hoped to begin in the autumn and future projects included addressing the needs of teenagers. Mr Atterwill thanked Miss Woolnough for all her work with the grant bodies.

9. Report from the Churchyard and Burial Ground Sub-Committee

The group began the year with a successful project to resurface the Burial Ground pathways. This came as a result of advice from a Disability Audit on the village. The committee also made good progress the issue of the deterioration of the church wall, meeting with the DAC, Norfolk County Council and local landowners to discuss the matter, and also instigating a feasibility study by the Highways Department into the widening of Mill Street.

The year however, was also one of sadness with the passing of Mr Ted Broady who was an active member of the committee.

Future projects involve the creation of a memorial garden in the Burial Ground and also the continued project of the church wall repair program.

10. Report from the Commons, Environmental and Open Spaces Working Group

Mr Carrick reported that there are two areas of common land maintained by the Parish Council, one of 10 acres known as Mill Common and one of 2.5 acres known as Burgh Common. Both have been neglected for some years, however in recent months Mill Common has been successful in obtaining Higher Level Stewardship status, meaning that the Parish Council will receive funding for maintaining the area.

Fencing will begin next month and it will be grazed by cattle, as the movements of the cattle's hooves will help promote orchid growth. Burgh Common is one of the few areas of the Wensum in public ownership and Natural England has provided a proposal to improve fishing in the area.

11. Report from the Planning and Development Working Group

Mr Clegg reported that the group was formed as a result of support in the Village Appraisal for affordable housing. The Parish Council has been approached by Broadland Housing to suggest land for a potential 'exception site' – one which is close to the planning boundary and also suitable from a highways and utilities point of view. As part of Breckland District Council's Local Development Framework, Swanton Morley has been allocated the status of 'Service Centre' due to the level of services in the village. However, latest suggestions are that Swanton Morley is not in line for any large scale development.

12. Presentation on the Community Emergency Plan

Mr Carrick reported that there had been a group established that would assist the village should an emergency occur that would prevent attempts to leave the village and the emergency services getting in, such as flooding or extreme snow. He and Mr Fearnley have worked closely with the Barracks to help create a plan for the village hall to be used as a rest centre. They are also identifying people with key skills that can assist in the event of an emergency.

13. Presentations from Nominees Standing for Breckland District Council

Kate Millbank, the Conservative candidate, introduced herself. She advised that should she be elected she would address the state of the roads in the area and speeding traffic. She would look into amenities for teenagers and look to improve youth clubs, liaising with Mayor Cheetham on this matter. She would look into problems of public transport and would give Parishioners advice on Council matters at all levels.

14. Parishioners' Questions

Mr Peachment asked how the Council felt about the Homewatch Scheme. Mr Atterwill responded that he valued the scheme but felt a greater police presence in the village was needed.

Mrs Stone asked about the 90th Anniversary of the village school. Mr Perry responded that this celebration will occur on 25th May from 2pm onwards and all were welcome to attend

Mr Harris requested an update on the Community Car Scheme. Mrs Northall reported that the Parish Council has budgeted £1000 this year for the project, the Breckland Council has match funded. Volunteer drivers will receive 40p per mil as expenses, half of which will be paid for by the passengers and the other half divided between the Parish Council and Breckland Council. There are currently 10 volunteer drivers, and more are welcome. An organiser and a deputy are required which will be formally appointed by the Parish Council on the 14th May.

Mrs Wharton asked whether funds from the Old Village Hall could be used to pay to upgrade the street lighting. Mr Atterwill responded that this had not been agreed on yet, but more money could be raised for village groups through match funding by using the Old Village Hall money for grants.

Mr Turner asked who is responsible for clearing the Old Village Hall site. Mr Atterwill answered that the Parish Council was paid by the contractor for all reclaim material, Mr Carrick cleared the rubble and the wood pile is to be addressed.

Mr Ellis paid tribute to the three retiring Councillors and to Mr Carrick for his work at Breckland Council. Mr Carrick replied that he will continue to serve the community and urged others to volunteer. Mr Peachment added his personal thanks to Mrs Northall.

Mr Atterwill asked Mr Derrick whether the proposed Under 5's building would be a permanent one or a mobile. Mr Derrick answered that it was modular but outline Planning Permission had not yet been sought.

Mr Ellis suggested the Parish Council approach Mr Keith to purchase the village hall land rather than the current lease of £1 per annum.

15. Any other business/comments/questions

None

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 14th April 2008 at 7.30pm.

_____ (Chairman) _____ Date