

Trull Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting held in Trull Memorial Hall, Church Road, Trull
on Monday 15th March 2010

Present: Mr G Hewett (Chairman)

Mrs J Wooldridge, Mr D Archer, Mr S French, Mr N Hancock
(part, leaving at 8.25), Mrs A Hudson, Mrs D Luke, Mr P Parris,
Mr C Ralph, together with nine Members of the Public.

In attendance: Mr Mark Edwards – TDBC Councillor
Mr J White - footpaths
Mrs A Harding – Clerk
Dr Kirby – Wilton & Sherford Community Association
Mr Threlfall – South Road & Area Residents Association

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Dr Kirby of the Wilton & Sherford Community Association who attended to speak before the meeting in opposition to the proposed development of the Killams Green Wedge. There were no other matters raised by members of the public.

Before addressing the meeting, Dr Kirby introduced Mr Threlfall of The South Road & Area Residents Association, who thanked the Parish Council for their support for the campaign against further development on the Killams Green Wedge. He reported that there is a huge amount of opposition to the development for which a draft strategy, containing both positive and negative comments, will be published at the end of the month. It appears that although all communities are against the encroaching development on Green Wedge land at Killams this opposition is falling on deaf ears. Mr Threlfall questioned if people wanted such large scale development and if there is the infrastructure to support it. He thanked the Parish Council for their support and handed over to Dr Kirby.

Dr Kirby addressed the meeting and referred to the application for development in the Green Wedge for the erection of Bishop Fox's School. This was an encroachment on the Green Wedge and there is now an application for 600 houses. The feeling now is that no part of the Green Wedge is safe from development but hopefully by banding together in opposition this very important asset can be protected. The Chairman added that if people feel very strongly about protecting the Green Wedge they should write to TDBC.

Mr Edwards informed the meeting that the consultation period for the Local Plan has now ended. There is to be an important meeting, chaired by himself, at the end of May and it is imperative that people attend to voice their concerns before the application goes to the Executive. This is the last opportunity for the public to speak. The Chairman reiterated his call for people to write to TDBC or attend the meeting.

158/09 **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies for Absence were received from Mrs Drew.

159/09 **Declarations of Interest**
Mrs Wooldridge declared an interest as one of the neighbours of the proposed development at 17 Church Road. The right of way for number 17 runs along the back of the terrace of houses where she is a resident.

160/09 **Chairman's Report**
There was nothing to report in addition to the Agenda items.

161/09 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2010 were agreed and signed by the Chairman. Mr Archer thanked Mrs Howat on behalf of the Parish Council for the excellent job she made recording the minutes for the February meeting in the Clerk's absence

162/09 **Matters for Report**

The Clerk reported on the issue of grit bins as discussed at the quarterly meeting of SALC. The advice given is that the Parish Council can provide bins through Section 137 but should have no involvement at all in the distribution of grit or the clearing of roads and footpaths. The Parish Council run the risk of being held responsible should there be any legal action as a result of this work.

As there may not be a need for grit every winter Mr French suggested that large bags were obtained when necessary for residents to help themselves. SCC will deliver these or smaller bags if requested and they can be sited where needed. Mr Parris added that SCC could deliver the bags in November ie. earlier in the year before the threat of severe weather. The Chairman indicated that he is happy to provide a space for small bags.

Another matter raised at the SALC meeting was the updating of Standing Orders. The consultation has been completed and a draft document is due to be issued after Easter which can be customised to suit Trull Parish Council.

163/09 **Report by Mr Steve Hale of Falcon Housing.**

Falcon Housing got involved and advertised the units once planning permission had been granted and became registered landlords for the four rental units. From a survey taken at the time, thirty five interested parties were identified and invited for interview which eventually resulted in a shortlist of nineteen families. Falcon Housing advertised through the Homefinder Scheme and there were a large number of replies – 181 for the 2 bedroom flats, 283 for the 2 bedroom houses and 231 for the 3 bedroom houses. Applications were filtered using the local connection criteria and the numbers were reduced to 8 for the 2 bedroom flats, 10 for the 2 bedroom houses and 4 for the 3 bedroom houses. The final decision resulted in fourteen very strong candidates who met the criteria and the units were all let by 7 March 2010. The current rental is £73.73 per week for the 2 bedroom units and £80.30 per week for the 3 bedroom units. In addition to this there is a £2.89 service charge for sewerage.

Mr Hale stated that there were ten families who were unsuccessful with their applications but who would have benefited from these units and that Falcon Housing could do with many more houses.

The Chairman told Mr Hale that he had heard nothing but complimentary remarks about the standard of the housing.

Mr Archer asked if the tenants were likely to be long term and Mr Hale replied that Falcon Housing were very happy with the chosen tenants who showed commitment to the village. However tenants may need to move on if the housing is no longer suitable ie. when families increase with the addition of children.

The Chairman asked the opinion of any residents present. A resident of Dipford House replied that he had written to Tim Burton at TDBC who originally supported the objections to the development. This support was eventually withdrawn on condition that there would be a 1m wide footpath to encourage people to walk instead of using the car. He added that the footpath is now complete but is not the required 1m wide, stones have been removed and the bank is collapsing. He has asked Tim Burton to contact Mr Hardy, Enforcement Officer at TDBC. The road is very narrow past Dipford House and he questions why the houses in Dipford Orchard have been occupied when the required conditions have not been met. He added that he is very happy to

welcome the residents of Dipford Orchard into the village. Mr Hale replied that it should be noted that these were Trull people already and felt that there was the beginning of a good community.

Another resident reported that the footpath is blocked by fallen trees forcing people to walk in the road. He added that there is no visibility and unsafe for families to cross the road suggesting that a sign would help.

Mr Lehner replied that SCC agreed all proposed work and that it was carried out with their approval. SCC has issued a statement agreeing that occupation of the houses can go ahead. An independent firm is to carry out a safety audit at Mr Lehner's expense.

Mr Archer informed the Parish Council that Greenslades were conducting the sale of the houses for purchase within TDBC guidelines and had proved to be very good agents. The details of any potential purchasers have been sent to TDBC but as they have been very slow responding two people have withdrawn. Mortgages have been difficult to obtain and only Halifax would take up the discounted mortgages. Mr Lehner informed the Council that all the houses were now sold.

Mr Hale thanked the Parish Council for all their support. The Chairman replied that the Council has always been in favour of affordable housing but the biggest problem is finding land at agricultural prices. Mr Hale agreed and added that Falcon Housing were mortgaging their own stock to raise money for more houses but that with the current plans for large scale development potential vendors were 'land banking' and building costs were escalating.

The issue of the speed limit for people coming into Trull from Dipford was raised and Mr Archer asked whether the 30mph sign could now be moved to incorporate the new housing. Mr Hancock replied that SCC had been approached before but they maintained that the density of housing did not warrant the change although it may be implemented as a concessionary measure, possibly as a result of the safety audit. Mr Hale agreed to write on behalf of Falcon Housing and Mr Lehner suggested that the additional nine houses might make a difference.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hale.

164/09 **Staplehay Weir**

The Chairman thanked Mr Michael Webb for his excellent report on the ownership of Staplehay Weir which shows that the weir resides in a now defunct company. Mr Webb added that we do not know the circumstances of the company's demise.

Mr Edwards reported that at a meeting in February SCC indicated that funding would be reduced to take into account money spent on scaffolding and other issues and that funding would be withdrawn if not used. Mr Edwards resisted this suggestion and asked the Chairman if the Parish Council would hold the money in their bank account for safe keeping. Other funding is to come from Mr Steven Martin-Scott's Community fund and Mr Edwards requested that whatever remains from this fund at the end of the year is also deposited in the Parish Council bank account, although he is not sure of the exact amount. Mr Edwards asked the Parish Council to cover the cost of the engineer from the Parish Council contribution. As soon as he is advised of the cost to meet SCC requirements he will inform the Parish Council.

Referring to the future of the weir Mr Edwards added that one thing had become clear and that was SCC's concerns regarding the total structure and its longevity. They are keen on the idea of setting up a trust and their funding is partly dependent on a long term solution. Mr Edwards has been in contact with Judith Jackson, solicitor at TDBC to help with setting up a trust.

Mr Hancock asked who would do the work transferring the ownership from the defunct company to a trust without incurring very high legal costs. Mr Edwards replied that with the work that Mr Webb had already carried out and with help from TDBC solicitors it could hopefully be completed without too great a cost.

The Chairman thanked Mr Webb again for his help indicating that Mr Webb was willing to continue to help with other issues regarding the weir.

Mr Hancock left the meeting at 8.25.

165/09 **Condition of the trees on Trull Green**

Mr Parris referred to the report from Mr Colin Inder on his inspection of the black poplars on Trull Green. The report indicated that all trees required work but that it was more urgent on some than others. The tree nearest the road is leaning to a great extent and there is a danger that it could fall into the road and damage the overhead cables. One other tree has no signs of life and should be removed. Mr Inder suggests that the trees be pollarded to reduce the weight at the top and that cuttings could be taken in the autumn. These cutting would hopefully provide replacement trees in four to five years.

Mr Edwards, as a resident of Trull Green, told the Parish Council that he and other residents would be very upset to lose the trees and asked if pollarding would mean that their life could be extended.

The Chairman suggested that a site meeting with Adrian Morris be organised and his advice sought.

Resolved: that Mr Parris contact Mr Morris with a view to a site meeting to discuss work on the trees.

166/09 **Planning**

The following applications had been received from TDBC for the Council to consider:

- 10/0004 - 17 Church Road, Trull
- Full - Erection of two storey rear extension and alterations. .
- Resolved** - To support the application

The Clerk advised of the following planning decisions received:

- 09/0042 - Full permission granted for the retention of 2.0m high at The Cottage, Amberd Lane, Trull
- 09/0045 - Full permission granted for the erection of a two storey extension at Kings Gatchell Cottage, Trull

Mrs Hudson reported that she had been contacted by Kim Burchill, a resident of Ladylawn, raising concerns that work has been carried out clearing land at the end of Mill Lane, Trull. Mrs Burchill believes the land is Green Wedge land and that the trees are under a preservation order. Mrs Burchill has written to Mr Hardy, Planning Enforcement Officer and is now requesting support from the Parish Council. The Chairman stated that Council would allow Mr Hardy to deal with the matter.

167/09 **Housing and Development**

There was nothing to report on this item.

168/09 **Playing Fields.**

Mrs Wooldridge's inspection showed all equipment to be in a satisfactory condition with the exception of the top rail of the climbing frame which is loose. The Playing Fields Association inspection in 2009 identified that the climbing frame should be removed and it was suggested that this should now be implemented rather than repair the frame.

The Chairman reported that Trull Primary School have been using the Playing Fields for additional play space as the school is oversubscribed with 240 pupils and already has 28 appeals for places for September. A letter has now been received from the school requesting permission to use the playing field and confirming that the school would be responsible for their insurance.

Mr Archer requested an update on the provision of play equipment. Mrs Wooldridge replied that approximately £16,000 has now been deposited with TDBC and that she has obtained catalogues for play equipment. Mrs Wooldridge added that only in the region of £5,000 would come to the Parish Council as some of the money is specifically for sports. The next step is to obtain two quotes.

The Clerk updated the Council regarding the bill for water to the pavilion. During the latest telephone conversation she was informed that Wessex Water would hold the Parish Council responsible for the bill. Mr Parris suggested paying the amount of the usual bill whilst the total amount was in dispute. He also added that the Council should show due diligence by taking readings each month. Mrs Wooldridge offered to read the meter during her regular playing field inspections.

Mrs Luke reported on the latest meeting of the Party in the Park Committee, which was well attended. Mr John Stark, a new committee member, was appointed as treasurer. Attractions were discussed and it was confirmed that the Winchester Arms would run the bar and obtain a licence. The Scouts are to hold the Barbeque and 'older' footballers have been approached for a match. The suggestion of releasing sky lanterns in the evening was raised but there was opposition amongst Parish Council members because of the danger of the wire or bamboo used to stiffen the lanterns getting into the feed of cattle and causing injury. As in previous years, the Parish Council will run the skittles.

169/09 **Footpaths**

Mr White reported on several matters:

- T212, Amberd Lane to Pitminster. Slabs have been set in to improve the footpath.
- The bridge at Three Bridges. Kick boards have been added and the handrail modified.
- T295, Wyvern Road to Eastbrook Hill. A stream runs across the road and is impassable in inclement weather. SCC ROW agree that a culvert could be fitted with the landowner's permission and budget allowing.

170/09 **Highways**

In Mr Hancock's absence The Chairman reported that the loose and dangerous kerbstones outside the shop had been drawn to the attention of SCC Highways.

171/09 **Allotments**

The Clerk informed the Council that she had received an email from Mr Paul Grant, Estates Manager for Queen's College to inform the Council that due to unforeseen circumstances Queen's College were not going to proceed with the proposed extension to the allotments. No reason was given. The Chairman will reply requesting that the college reconsider as there has been a great deal of interest in the additional plots and materials have already been purchased.

The Chairman reported that he has discussed the poor condition of some of the existing plots with Mr David Marks and suggested that a visit is made to review the plots with a view to writing to plot holders reminding them of the need to keep the plots in good condition or relinquish them. As the waiting list is now very long he suggested that any available plots could be halved. Mr French and The Clerk offered to carry out this review.

Mr Parris informed the Council that the 3' gate purchased for the allotments had now been installed in Poke Lane therefore the 4' gate and posts is available and he asked for any ideas for a site for it.

The Chairman reported that the 'No Parking' sign for the entrance to the allotments has been obtained by The Clerk and Mr Marks will erect it along with two 'dog fouling' notices .

172/09 **Trull Village Memorial Halls**

Mrs Wooldridge informed The Council that the Memorial Halls had purchased new chairs for use in the halls only. The old chairs may be used outside for the Party in the Park and other functions. The Memorial Halls are requesting permission to store the old chairs in the pavilion and The Chairman replied that there would be no objection to this arrangement.

173/09 **Trull School**

Mrs Woodridge informed the Parish Council that with the need for additional space the school has closed the swimming pool, which was constructed in 1968, to make room for a classroom.

The Chairman reported that he and Mr French had visited Mr Maunder who owned the field adjacent to the Playing Field to again request that he lease the field to provide additional play areas. Mr Maunder is still not willing to agree to this.

174/9 **Blagdon, Corfe, Trull and Staplehay Almshouses**

Mr Hudson delivered a report on the meeting of the Blagdon, Corfe, Trull and Staplehay Almshouses Committee which took place on 17th February. A new treasurer, Mrs Heather Jennings, was appointed. The chimney of No 1 and the roof valley have been repointed but the replastering of the front wall is to be put on hold until sufficient funds are available. The electrics in all properties are to be checked at a cost of £2,500 + VAT. All chimneys will be swept in the summer.

The possibility of grants and VAT refunds is to be investigated. The next meeting will be held on 7th July.

175/09 **Correspondence**

The clerk advised of correspondence that was of interest to the Council:

- Notification of SALC Chairmanship training sessions on 19th and 22nd April.
- Copy of Thatch magazine.
- Sunday and Public Holiday Bus Services 2010.
- Leaflet advertising Digital Switchover help scheme.

176/09 **Accounts for Payment**

Resolved: That the following accounts be authorised: -

Mrs J Wooldridge – January newsletter delivery	£12.00
Mr Wooldridge – administration for TAP review	£40.00
Mr R Taylor – administration for TAP review	£40.00
Mrs R Howat – administration for TAP review	£40.00
Mr R Shattock – lawnmower maintenance	£50.00
Mrs A Harding – newsletter printing, book token, photocopying	£77.16
Signal Signs – No Parking sign for allotments	£25.16
Somerset Association of Local Councils – affiliation fee	£472.95
Trull Village Memorial Halls – hall hire	£45.00
Somerset Playing Fields Association – annual play equipment inspection	£75.00
Arboricare Ltd – inspection report on Trull Green trees	£199.75
Express Print – printing of TAP review	£980.00

177/09 **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

178/09 **Items for the Next Agenda**

- Adoption of the BT telephone box at Staplehay.

179/09 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held at 7.15pm on 19th April 2010 in the Memorial Hall, Trull.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.45 pm.

Signed.....

Chairman of Trull Parish Council

Date.....