

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Beeston with Bittering Parish Council held on **MONDAY, 23RD APRIL 2001**, in Beeston Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. B. Potter.

Councillors Present: Mr. R. Sharpin, Mr. H. Scott.

Apologies for Absence: Mr. P. Burton. Mrs. A. Laws, Mr. P. Carter, Mrs. G. Fowler.

Members of the Public. Mr. R. Gussman, Mr. & Mrs. T. Scott, Mrs. W. Parnham.

The Chairman welcomed those who had come along but was disappointed at so few taking an interest in their parish.

MINUTES

The Minutes of 23rd April 2000 had been read and signed at the May A.G.M., but could be read out if requested. No request made.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman reported that the Conservation Project has gone very well indeed and the road frontage now looks tidy. The hedge has been layered and 200 hawthorn hedging plants filled in the gaps. Notice Board is ready and awaiting good conditions to position it. 100 common carp have been put in the Ponds courtesy of 3 days fishing at Mr. Payne's pit. The daffodils and bluebells are coming up and various marginal plants such as Gunera given by various villagers and Six nest boxes made by Mr. Parkes placed around the site. Field has been fenced off and the entrance needs shingle to help the drainage.

Normal amount of planning requests have been dealt with the usual expertise by Breckland Planning Committee, who do not seem to take notice of those who live in the area concerned. Village Green Pond cleared but weeds still a problem.

Flooding another problem. A notice put in Parish Magazine asking people to keep their ditches cleared and free running.

On Remembrance Day, Mr. Potter asked Mr. Burton's daughter to lay the wreath on behalf of the village at the American memorial, and felt that this was a way of involving the younger parishioners in these acts.

Chairman then thanked the council members for all their help and co-operation for all the tasks that they have undertaken in the past year, in particular in relation to the Conservation Project, and hope that the community appreciates their commitment.

Mr. And Mrs. T. Scott praised the Chairman for all the time and effort he has personally dedicated to the Project. Everyone wholeheartedly agreed and expressed their thanks.

FUEL CHARITY ACCOUNT

Chairman reported that for the first time the Christmas Coal payment has been delayed, because of the unsettled position of the ongoing land dispute with Mr. and Mrs. M. Rowland relating to the allotment land, off Dereham Road. This has gone on for over three years but there may soon be a ruling, as the matter is going to a Hearing. The Chairman, on behalf of his fellow Trustees thanked the Council for their support, in particular Mrs. G. Fowler who has helped with appropriate wording of some of the letters and the Parish Clerk, without whose perseverance this matter would not have got this far. All time is freely given.

A short discussion followed regarding this dispute.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

BEESTON VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

A written report from Mrs. Potter, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, said the committee has 8 good members, all interested in different things but working well together. A children's Play Area is planned for the summer and hope to start work after Easter, thanks to a grant from WREN. There will be new swings, an adventure play area, badminton court and basket ball.

There are now two football teams using the pitch from Dereham and Litcham, which will bring in £550. Due to the theft of the mower, a professional firm will be paid £600 to maintain the field in 2001, until another mower can be afforded.

Bookings are good, with the School using it regularly. Mother and Toddlers starting up, Discos, Elections and other meetings (sadly, mostly from outside the village).

Mr. Potter said that both he and his wife spent a lot of time toing and froing, setting out the hall for the School and cleaning up after football matches and other events

BITTERING PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Mrs. Parnham, churchwarden of Bittering Church reported that services are held on the last Sunday of each month at 10.15 a.m. Harvest Festival in September raised £21.80 from the sale of produce which was sent to the Tear Fund. 50 attended the Candlelight Carol Service on 19th December, the collection £58.48. In June Mr. Lawrance, a churchwarden for many years, sadly died and his funeral took place at the church. Sponsored Cycle Ride, during which 40 cyclists visited, raised £30, of which £15 went to Norfolk Churches Trust. The Christmas Cheese and Wine Evening in Longham Hall raised £600 despite not being well attended.

£400 of the £955 Parish Quota has been paid. Repair to some woodwork inside the Church and a bracket holding one of the bells will be taken care of shortly. The stolen Jacobean oak Chest has been returned to the church and bolted down.

The Church Council is grateful to the Parish Council for its support in donating towards the upkeep of the churchyard and requests that this may continue

Letters of objections sent regarding the long term working of the Tarmac gravel pits, and also the proposed NEWS application.

Mr. Potter thanked Mrs. Parnham for coming to Beeston to attend the meeting.

MOTHER AND TODDLERS GROUP

In a written report, Mrs. B. Smith says she has started up a Mother and Toddlers Group which meets every Tuesday in the Village Hall. So far, 6 mothers attend who are pleased with the opportunity to get together with others, one of whom travels from Tittleshall. Hoping to increase numbers and toys have been donated from the local community.

FRIENDS OF BEESTON SCHOOL

Mrs. A. Laws reported that the Friends of Beeston School continue to raise funds by holding a jumble sale, coffee morning, annual Christmas social for parents and a Bingo Night. The largest event was a Disco and Hog roast in the summer. She thanked the many members of the village that supported this event and made the evening more of a village knees-up rather than just a school social. With the money raised a new I Mac computer and a playhouse for the infants has been purchased, items to benefit the children at Beeston School.

BEESTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Mr. Scott said that the new organ fiasco continues with no official approval given as yet. Architect organised a Conservationist from Somerset to give a very detailed report on the Screen in the Church. The cost to repair them is estimate to be £60,000. Could only be done if funded by English Heritage as no means of raising such a sum locally.

Mr. T. Scott said that there were no churchwardens last year, but he had agreed to stand as Acting Churchwarden. There is a rota of sidemen to unlock the church and keep services going each Sunday and this works well. The Parish Share was £4,602 and may not be able to pay it all this year, also would not be able to fund any repairs.

An application has been put forward to be considered for an aerial mast on the tower, should one be required in the area, as this brings in an income. The altar brass candlesticks and a small brass lectern and key were stolen just before Christmas. These were replaced by wrought iron candlesticks and a wooden lectern, all made and donated from within the village. This was part of a spate of similar thefts in other churches on the same day. There was a tremendous response to the situation for which the Council is extremely grateful. Unfortunately, this theft has now made it difficult for visitors to gain access to the Church.

BEESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Mr. R. Gussman, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator said that there was not much to report. Only 2 people attended the AGM last year when PC Hudswell came. Three calls during last 12 months concerning, theft of the village playing field grass cutter, an alarm going off to private residence in Herne Lane and two transit vans seen discharging African people, some wearing

shorts, which was unusual at this time of year. No feedback received from the Police about these matters.

Mr. Gussman and Mr. Potter attended a meeting at Watton on 5th April 2001 on the formation of the Breckland Homewatch Association. It was reported that problems with the Ring Master system are being sorted out. Also told that gas oil has been stolen from a number of farms in the Breckland area. Hope to organise a meeting during the summer months in the Village Hall.

BEESTON SCHOOL GOVERNORS

No report received. However, the Headmistress, Mrs. Houston left at the end of the Easter term and a new Head appointed to start in the Autumn.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Household Rubbish Disposal

Mr. H. Scott thought the new restrictions on what household rubbish can be taken to tips, such as Beetley, and the further costs involved, were unreasonable and would increase fly tipping.

This is to be discussed at the next meeting.

Hedge, Back Lane.

Complaint that the hedge at 1, Back Lane on the corner of Mileham Road restricts the vision of drivers turning out of Mileham Road. This has been raised on previous occasions but the hedge is kept trimmed and cannot do much about it.

Village Hall Caretaking

Mr. H. Scott felt that some consideration should be given to employing a Caretaker in view of the amount of work and time this entails. This is to be brought up at the next Council meeting.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting then closed.