

# The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Wednesday 15 April 2015 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

**Apologies:** Cllr Kindersley - election business.

**Present:** Mr Martin, Mr Wheeler, Mr Sole, Mrs Slator, Cllr Smith (following another meeting), six members of the public and the Clerk.

The Chairman, Mr Wheeler welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Police Report:** The new PCSO John Coppard was invited to attend and report, or send a report to be read to the meeting. Unfortunately no report was received.

**District Councillor:** Not present at this point.

**County Councillor:** Sent apologies.

## Report from Petersfield School - Chair of Governors and Head Teacher

**Introduction:** The past year has been one of change for the Diocese of Ely with its "People Fully Alive" review and there have been many changes in national education such as the introduction of a new National Curriculum in September 2014. This, and other changes, which seem endemic in education, have meant proportionately larger challenges to small school communities like ours.

This summer I will retire from headship here in Petersfield school. After eight years it seemed for me personally to be the right decision. The school is doing well, the school community and extended community seem to be in good heart and numbers and our good reputation are growing steadily - 142 pupils at the last count. Nothing stays the same forever, and there is a possibility of an alliance, a collaboration with another local Church school, Barnabus Oley, in Great Gransden in the offing. In that way there would be many alliances and support networks behind the scenes, but the essential characteristics of our schools would remain unchanged, with a head of school working here and at Barnabus, and an executive head working between the two schools.

We cordially invite you to visit our assemblies and to be part of our sports days and other events which are published in our weekly newsletter which can be seen on our school website: [www.petersfield.sch.uk](http://www.petersfield.sch.uk) If you would like to share our Acts of Worship on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays (usually Felicity's Act of Worship) at 1.10pm in the school hall, you would be very welcome. On some Fridays we celebrate pupil - led class assemblies at 9.10am. Details can be found in the weekly newsletters. These important collective and collaborative events are an aspect of our community church mission, and you would be very welcome to join us.

**School Roll and Attainment:** Petersfield School currently has 142 pupils from 4-11 years in total and we expect this number to rise further when people move into the newly built houses opposite very soon. We now run mixed age classes throughout school, as this is the best way to organise our current school structure. Children do not arrive in neatly numbered packages, and there can be dramatic variations in sizes between cohorts!

At Petersfield we care passionately about teaching standards and are constantly looking for ways to improve. We can report good achievement at the end of both key stages in summer 2014, the small number of pupils scoring above or well above national averages. Our results in key Stage 2 were influenced by factors such as a small cohort, and by a larger than usual proportion of pupils from other schools who had special educational needs, or English as a second language. Those who had been with us the whole journey from reception to Year 6 did impressively well, many achieving well above the national expectations.

Staff is busy implementing the new curriculum, the new SEN code of practice, and coping with legislation that all pupils in year R, 1&2 are offered Free School Meals each day. Three major changes for us all from September 2014. Such initiatives require a great deal of careful organisation at the sharp end, as numbers of school meals at Petersfield were doubled at a stroke. We have worked with Cambridge Catering to organise a family type no choice all age single sitting,

including packed lunch pupils too, and inevitably this has had mixed reviews! Some prefer the new arrangements as it encourages good manners and so on; others resent the curbing of free rein as those with packed lunches, eat with others under direct supervision! The discussion and reorganisation continues.

**Staffing - Changes:** During the last year we have welcomed new staff, and returning staff onto the team. Mrs Peachey and Mrs Robinson have joined us in reception and year one and, Mrs Reid and Ms Catchpole in years 5 & 6. Due to Mrs Gwynn's sudden illness Mrs Cart has agreed to work in years 2 & 3 until the end of the summer term. Mrs Penrose has been on maternity leave. We all acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all the teaching, support and administrative staff who put in long hours to ensure that the school is functioning well for our pupils. The governing body would like to extend sincere thanks to everyone who contributes to such remarkable and positive changes within school. We also appreciate so many people who keep on volunteering to help us with so many necessary things, from joining the governing body to working with the probationary service at weekends to tidy up the grounds. We are a great team and between us we really do achieve much more.

**Parental and extended support:** We continue to value huge support from our small but committed PTA and parent body as they work to raise increasingly necessary funds to promote the life and work of our school. They have not only agreed to help fund exciting visits and visitors for our Creative Curriculum Work, but also join us on our termly visits for whole school themed outings.

Our PTA summer fair is not to be missed and we would like to encourage all our local village communities to support these exciting and well-run school events.

**And finally .....**

We would like to thank parishioners in all our local villages, in our all -age communities for their continued interest and support of our work here. We very much welcome this opportunity to share news of Petersfield School with you all in various forms. Thank you, Rev Felicity, for the many recent opportunities we have had to share our work in local parishes in all age services, and especially for all the Religious Education we have enjoyed at St Andrew's in Orwell for the recent **RE-active Church**. Our Easter preparation with local parishioners and our Easter tide Eucharist was excellent. Thank you so much to all for your time and trouble.

If you should wish to be kept up to date weekly with all that we do perhaps you could visit our website to catch up with it all as it unfolds throughout the coming year.

[www.petersfield.cambs.sch.uk](http://www.petersfield.cambs.sch.uk)

Colin Wilson- Chair of Governors

Amanda Tuck- Headteacher

### **Reading Room - Mrs Di Walters**

The Reading Room has had one of its busiest years yet, with a full calendar, a major makeover with a reduced committee, and a new Chairman. The Reading Room severed its links to Downing College in October 2014 and the Property Agent, Nick Hood, transferred the Deeds over after signing by the Trustees.

There were around 112 bookings and 22 e-mail enquiries per month to Malcolm Kennerley, and his has helped to keep the Reading Room on a sound financial footing. With increased use and wear and tear, repairs and improvements were planned and implemented as follows:

- Landscaping outside with a patio area
- New non-slip tiled floor in the kitchen, toilets and hall
- New security lights and a replacement heater
- Repairs and repainting inside; extractor fan fitted in the kitchen
- New curtains and poles
- Speaker stands
- Repaired and replaced equipment

Quotes are being obtaining for fencing at the rear of the Reading Room.

The Committee is hoping for increased local interest in the Reading Room, hopefully attracting new Trustees and support. The "Friends of Croydon Reading Room" initiative will kick off at out Cheese and Wine on Friday 17th April so that e-mail correspondence can keep the Reading Room alive and well.

Obviously a lot of money has been (well) spent this year, so we are now working with a much reduced bank balance, but we hope that bookings will now increase, making 2015/16 a successful year. My thanks to all the Trustees.

#### **Trustees**

Chair and Caretaker	Di Walters
Secretary	Janet Wheeler
Treasurer	Chris Elsley
Frank Sole	
Rev. Couch	
Janice Horsford	
Valerie Barnes	

Malcolm Kennerley - Bookings Manager

#### **Community Led Parish Plan Steering Group – Mr Malcolm Ralph**

If a very short two-word summary was required then it would be "Job done"!

The work of the Steering Group is all but completed. It is just over one year since the Questionnaire was distributed and this day has been a long time coming. The process has proved to be quite a tough job to see through to completion and the Steering Group has found that it had to overcome more difficulties than was envisaged at the outset, at least by the volunteers – though SCDC advice on likely timescales has been proved to be pretty accurate. There have been 16 full meetings of the Steering Group and many smaller team meetings of various kinds. The Steering Group started with a total membership of 10 at its first meeting but this had reduced to 7 at the finish.

As Co-Chairs, Cathy and I wish publicly to thank all members of the Steering Group who have served, no matter for how long; that this work is now completed is testament to their hard work and dedication to the task. We wish also to thank the Parish Council for its steadfast support and the people of Croydon for responding so well to, what must have seemed, our frustratingly slow progress. Thank you. Thank you also to personnel in SCDC, and to Councillors Sebastian Kindersley and Bridget Smith for their support.

The Final Report and Action Plan have been completed save for stitching in a map or two and the addition of letters of support from District Councillors and our (former) MP. SCDC will again be approached for printing and then all that will remain will be distribution to every household in the Parish plus copies for the Parish Council and other individuals and organisations such as SCDC and CCC. It is anticipated that distribution will take place within two weeks of printing, most likely in early May.

A great deal of effort has been expended in trying to ensure that the Report and findings are fair, balanced, and critically, are evidence-based and accurately reflect the spread of views expressed by respondents to the Questionnaire and the two public consultation events. 61% of Questionnaires were completed and returned and this figure rises to 67% of the total population with the inclusion of under-age children living in responding households.

The body of the Report contains what are considered to be the key findings flowing from the analysis of all the responses received, factual, subjective and written comments. Key results and graphs have also been included to support the main findings and a full aggregated data set is to be made available on request – (to keep printing costs to a minimum).

The Action Plan contains 23 Action items reflecting those areas and topics about which parishioners were either most concerned or where improvements were most desired. Given the very small parish population, the SG kept very much in mind the need to keep the total number of actions to manageable proportions, as to do otherwise risks deterring potential future volunteers. As a result, this First Issue of the Action Plan contains only those areas/actions where the strongest feelings were expressed by respondents. Other lower priority items may well be included in future re-issues of the Plan. Obviously, some action items are much more difficult than others to achieve, and some will have much longer timescales. Some will be of a routine nature, whereas others relate to long-term improvements and vision.

The Action Plan has been colour coded to ease identification and use:

10 Priority Actions have been highlighted in red with 2 of these (de-briefings) being amongst the last duties of the present Steering Group before its disbandment.

5 Actions in blue text are considered to be more routine Parish Council matters (e.g. overhanging branches, dog fouling) but have been included because of the strength of feeling and to provide feedback and support to the Parish Council.

The remaining 8 Actions in black text are all ranked Medium priority but nonetheless received significant support.

Recently, representatives of the Parish Council and the Steering Group met to discuss how the Action Plan might best be implemented. This was an excellent meeting which readily reached a common view on how best to turn the Action Plan in to real progress. It is proposed that an Implementation Group (IG) be formed to help coordinate, encourage and assist any individuals or groups of parishioners wishing to work on any Actions in the Plan. It is thought the new IG will be a key element if significant progress is to be made. An event is to be hosted jointly by the Parish Council and the Steering Group to launch the Plan and the IG. It is proposed that the IG will then report three times a year to the Parish Council on progress or difficulties encountered. Working closely with the IG, the Parish Council and District Councillors will assist, encourage and advise the Implementation Group.

It is clear that this initiative offers a once in a generation opportunity for the residents of Croydon to come together to better protect what is good about living in Croydon and to address concerns and improve village life in areas where this is desired. For this to happen will require residents to respond and contribute in areas which interest them, whether by joining the new Implementation Group, or by joining teams to work on some of the action items.

The Steering Group is looking forward very much to this launch event co-hosted with the Parish Council and then, at last, the real work can begin.

Malcolm Ralph & Cathy Brant, Co-Chairs Croydon CLP.

### **Chairman's Report – Mr Garth Wheeler**

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen – welcome to this year's Annual Parish Meeting. 2014 - 2015 has been an interesting year with continued focus on the Village Plan, which is in the final phase with just the finishing touches to go.

We had our fifth Car show last year which as always was a great success and I hope that this year's event continues in the same way albeit without the rain.

There continues to be a number of issues that we are working on as a Parish Council:-

**Planning:** There have been a number of plans submitted in Croydon which have come to the attention of the Parish Council and we have fed back our views on the merits or otherwise.

There is news of further Solar Farms being proposed in Tadlow.

**Dog Fouling:** We have been getting an increased number of complaints about dog fouling this year and we are in the process of obtaining our second Dog bin.

**Queen Adelaide:** As you know, the Village Pub is still closed. However there are signs of refurbishment taking place and there is talk of it re-opening this year.

**Speeding:** We have been campaigning for the 50mph speed limit at Tadlow and at the bottom of Larkin's Road to be joined so that the limit runs from Tadlow to the Arrington Roundabout. This has been approved and hopefully will be in place this summer.

**Thanks:** I would like to thank Colin Friend and Di Walters, the Chairmen of the Reading Rooms, and the Trustees for their efforts in ensuring the Reading Rooms are continually maintained. The makeover is looking really good and I hope that I will see you all there at the opening Wine and Cheese event on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April.

I would also like to thank the members of the Croydon Community Plan Steering Group for their work in developing the Village Plan. I know that this has taken far more effort than was originally thought.

Finally I would like to thank everyone who has helped with village matters over the past year, the councillors who give up their spare time and patience and especially to Marian for her unfailing enthusiasm and dedication that she puts into her position as Clerk.

### Parish Council Finance - The Clerk and RFO

The Clerk gave a brief report on the state of the Parish Council finances. There were no questions arising from these.

Receipts			Payments		
Precept		£2,850.00	Insurance		£407.44
Insurance Claim		£416.00	Reading Room		£117.00
NHS (no stamps)		£9.92	Churchyard Maintenance		£250.00
VAT reclaimed		£228.03	Subs to Associations		£143.73
			CLPP		£330.65
Interest			RBL wreath		£17.00
	Stocks	£6.41	Website		£39.99
	NSI	£13.02	Auditor		£20.00
			Glasdon		£173.32
<b>Total receipts</b>		<b>£3,523.38</b>	Clerk (including petty cash)		£1,188.38
			<b>Total payments</b>		<b>£2,687.51</b>
<b>Balances at 31 March 2015</b>			<b>Balance at 31 March 2014</b>		
					<b>£4,338.54</b>
Investment Account		£1,749.50		add receipts	£3,523.38
Bank Account		£3,598.23		less payments	-£2,687.51
less unrepresented cheques		-£173.32			

<b>Total</b>		<b>£5,174.41</b>		<b>Total</b>		<b>£5,174.41</b>
<b>Long term investments</b>						
Stocks		£181.57				

There were no questions arising from the accounts. The Clerk gave a brief outline of the new Code of Transparency for smaller Councils. It appears that In Croydon there will still be a need for paper copies of notices etc to go into the notice board, as not everyone has access to the internet.

### **Village Matters:**

#### **Church Restoration – Mr Malcolm Ralph Summary**

A year of considerable effort spent on grant applications but nothing concrete, as yet, to show for it. An application was made at very short notice to The Department of Culture Media & Sport for a grant towards urgent roof repairs, unfortunately this was unsuccessful. An application for HLF grant assistance towards works costing between £150k-£200k is still to be submitted. It is felt this application has perhaps no more than a moderate chance of success at first attempt. The Roof repairs will now be included in the HLF application but, if again unsuccessful, we may have to consider holding repairs rather than risk another winter with tiles missing.

#### **Full Report**

For most of the past year the Fabric Committee of the PCC has been working towards submitting a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund under the Grants for Places of Worship scheme. This “work in progress” was the main feature of the corresponding report last year. The diversion towards Culture Media & Sport for the roof repairs came along at very short notice in December last year and was solely for urgent roof repairs. As there are ridge tiles missing, and many others loose, it was thought worth a try even though it was known to be very competitive and something of a long-shot. Disappointingly, we heard just a few days ago that the bid was unsuccessful and, even though in the most recent budget more money was promised, nonetheless, it is felt that we cannot wait for this so we must now resume working on the application to HLF.

Last year’s report noted that this Parish has had lots of past success with grants previously administered by English Heritage but unfortunately the world has completely changed because the EH system has been replaced by a very different HLF led system and this has meant we have needed to do a lot of learning about very different criteria.

The key elements of the package of works to be put to HLF have not substantially changed over the past year. Included are investigations of cracks at the Tower base, cracks in the Chancel Floor which covers the Downing vault, repairs to the stonework of several fragile windows, various external wall and internal plaster repairs and repairs to the Roof ridges with some tiles having already fallen. We know already that competition for HLF funds is intense and, in some ways, the above works do not match exactly the scope described in the guidance for applicants and this presents an additional challenge.

The total cost of the package of works has yet to be fully finalised but seems likely to fall between £150k to £200k so grant assistance is absolutely essential and the Parish would again be required to fund a proportion itself. Last year’s report noted that one favourable aspect of the new grant arrangements is that up to 15% of the total project cost is permitted to be spent on improvements (rather than purely fabric) that will benefit the community by making the building more attractive and so encourage additional uses. These community improvements could, for example, include improved heating, additional power sockets, water supply, display boards etc and, therefore, a selection of these is to be included in the application.

Any community involvement in conservation projects scores heavily with HLF and currently we have two thoughts along these lines:

Community monitoring of Tower and Wall movements including crack monitoring.

A "Downing Project" to form an integral part of any investigation of the Chancel Floor and Vault beneath including with media and schools/colleges involvement. It is anticipated that the application will be submitted this summer and, if successful, then other grant bodies will be approached as well. What is certain is that no matter how well we do with grant bodies a significant local contribution will be required.

At this point I want publicly to thank all members of the Fabric Committee and especially Zoe Martin and Percy Mark for their invaluable contributions.

Turning now to Churchyard maintenance, I would again like to thank Keith Fowler for his dedication in keeping the churchyard(s) in such good condition – a frequently overheard comment at last summer's two weddings! Thanks must also go to the Parish Council for the financial support given towards the upkeep of the churchyard, support which is very much appreciated by the PCC and many visitors. An inspection has been made of the very tall trees on the north western boundary and some action remains outstanding; also along the west boundary with the Rectory.

Finally, a huge thank you must go once again to all in the parish who contribute financially in any way whether by regular giving or indirectly by helping to organise, or support, fund-raising events and notably the summer Vehicle Show and the Christmas Bazaar. Over recent times, by working together, this community has managed, not just to keep our beautiful 800 year old church open, but to very gradually make repairs to assure it remains so for future generations and if you ever want to see how much this is appreciated then you have only to glance through some entries in the visitors' book.

Thank you.

Malcolm Ralph - Chair of Fabric Committee

**Churchyard Maintenance:** Mr Ralph emphasised the importance of the Parish Council's contribution to the churchyard maintenance, especially since the churchyard extension has come into use. The contribution will be discussed at the May Council meeting.

**Dog Bin:** Council is pleased to note that the dog bin at the Reading Room has been well used by the local dog walkers. Council has asked SCDC to site another bin at the footpath entrance by Bedlam Cottages, as this has been reported as another "trouble" spot. No timescale for implementation of Council's request has been received yet.

**Lower Road Speed Limit:** After being turned down again last year and advised to try again this year. Thanks to Cllr Smith's presentation on Croydon's behalf at the Local Highways Improvement Panel meeting, Council has been successful in obtaining an extension of the 50mph speed limit on Lower Road. This requires a contribution of 10% of the cost from the Parish (in the region of £500), and the signage should be in place by the summer.

**Gliding Club:** Is holding a Consultative meeting on Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss a number of minor changes that they want to request to their planning consents that were put in place back in the 1980's. These are to request more flexibility to aerotow in the evenings, given that overall aerotow numbers are less than they used to be, and to operate self launching gliders. At the time of the initial planning application self launching gliders were relatively noisy but they have become much quieter in the intervening quarter of a century. Since one launch by a self launching glider replaces two tug movements and the self launching glider returns engine-off, this change should not have any significant effect on neighbouring properties. It is also proposed to simplify the process by which CGC applies for permission to exceed the daily aerotow limit during competitions. As it was Croydon Parish Council's AGM, the minutes of the CGC will be sent to Council for circulation.

**Broadband Speeds:** Mr James Brown suggested that Croydon might be interested in the faster fibre broadband connection that operates at Valley Court. Apparently this would have to be a wireless connection and offers speeds of up to 100 Mbps sec.

**Solar Farm:** It appears that the access road to the solar farm was granted planning permission accidentally when an amendment to the plans was submitted. Apart from the actual amendment, the access road was also on the plan, which was stamped as approved. There is nothing that can

be done, but SCDC has apologised. Regarding the roadway, Victoria Keppey from CCC is waiting for information from Paul Sexton (SCDC) as she says the angle of access is incorrect and the drainage is inadequate. The road is required for 24 hour access to the solar farm.

There is much concern in the village about the lack of landscaping by Push Energy/Build around the installation. It was resolved that the Clerk should write and enquire when they are going to complete this and when the Community Benefit cheque will be received.

### **Report From Cllr Smith - SCDC**

**Grants:** Cllr Smith has a vast knowledge of how to apply for (and get) grant funding and has offered to help the Fabric Committee with its Heritage Lottery Grant for the Parish Church.

**Community Chest:** The Community Chest grants are again available, up to £1500. Council was fortunate to obtain one recently in order to purchase the new notice board.

**Street Cleaners:** There is a shortage of cleaners as they are being diverted to other tasks. Whilst Croydon does not have the traditional "man pushing a barrow" street cleaner, there has been a left hand drive vehicle with a rotating brush come through the village, but no-one could remember when.

**Rouses Wood:** The recent appeal has been upheld and a barn has to be removed, but there is still an application for educational use at the site in progress.

**City Deal:** £500,000,000 has been given to the Greater Cambridge Partnership to support the infrastructure of the Local Plan. There are 15 people who make up the Assembly and there are 5 leaders above them, to whom recommendations are made, which are, apparently, mostly ignored. The Assembly is looking at long distance cycle routes for the area - the Leaders are creating 400 apprenticeships, 17 Civil servants and encouraging people worldwide to come to Cambridge

**Local Development Plan:** This is progressing slowly through the inspection stage. This is good, as slow progress indicates that nothing catastrophic has been found. There is still a 1500 house shortfall and the only grounds on which the planners can reject an application is sustainability. A development of 11 houses does not have to contain any affordable homes or offer any green space. This is very shortsighted as developers will only build 10 houses at a time! The Local Development Plan will not be ready before next spring.

**Self-Build:** All Councils must now hold a Self Build register, of people wanting to build their own homes.

**Refuse Collections:** SCDC has received complaints about assisted bin collections being missed. The monthly green bin collection during the winter was unpopular in the village, and Cllr Smith was asked for feedback from the experiment.

**Northstowe:** Is destined to be the first town in Cambridgeshire. Cllr Smith went to the planning application meeting and reported that it may not receive approval - there ought to be 20% of affordable housing but there may only be 5/10%.

**Carers Act:** This came into force on 1 April 2015 and aims to give carers as much prominence as those they care for. The Carers' Trust is there to support the carers.

**Hedges:** The floor asked about the possibility of getting the overhanging hedges in the village cut back. Council has already contacted CCC on several occasions about this and their last response (in September 2014) was *We are aware of the issue and are giving it our consideration*. Council understands that due to budget restraints, there is a lot less CCC is able to do, but Cllr Smith suggested they might still be able to cut the hedge, and to contact them again for help and advice.

**Public Session:** The meeting felt that earlier discussions had covered everything required.

### **Items requiring Council attention before the next meeting:**

**CAPALC:** The recent invoice received for Council's membership to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) has risen from £78-73 in 2014 to £139-04 in 2015. Clerk was instructed to write and ask for justification for this rise in Council's subscription.

**ACRE:** Is holding a Community Fair on Tuesday 2 June 2015 from 3pm - 9pm at The Burgess Hall, Westwood Road, St Ives, PE27 6WU. The Fair is aimed at anyone involved in community projects in their town or village and at anyone who'd like to be more involved or who has a project in mind, but doesn't know where to start. The information was passed to the CLP.

**Rouses Wood:** The appeal was upheld and the report, with the excellent and points it raised, might be useful in any further planning applications.

**Clopton Farm:** S/0719/15/FL - application for residential gardens at the live/work units. Council discussed the plans and saw a third unit on the plan. There were no objections to the removal of a disused barn to create the gardens, but, following the recent hiccup with the planning department, Councillors asked Clerk to enquire about the third unit shown on the plan. Proposed - Chair; all in favour.

**Items for the next agenda:** None put forward.

**Date of next meeting** - Wednesday 20 May 2015 at 8.00pm - Annual Parish Council Meeting

**Date of next Annual Meeting** - Wednesday 20 April 2016 at 7.30pm.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their input to the meeting, and as there was no further business, he declared the meeting formally closed at 9.10pm.

Signed .....

Date .....

Draft

Copy