

PARISH OF SPALDWICK

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held at 8 pm Thursday 9 May 2013 at Spaldwick Primary School

Present: Councillors B F Plummer (Chairman), S Jackson-Rimmer, G Rice, S Wakefield, the Clerk (Mr D Stowell), and 4 members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr G Leach, Mr & Mrs Dearman, M Ager
2. **Minutes of Meeting** held 31st May 2012 were approved and signed
3. **Matters arising** - none
4. **Annual Report by Chairman of Parish Council, Cllr B F Plummer**

The past year has been a busy one for the village and has entailed a heavy workload for the Parish Council. In addition to twelve ordinary general meetings the Council's work has been complicated this year by the advent of the localism policy and associated new planning initiatives and regulations. In the process, Councillors have attended numerous external meetings and consultations relating to such topics as wind power, flood forums, neighbourhood planning, and training sessions. More than a dozen new planning applications have been assessed to provide advice to the District Council which has approved seven, all of which have been for home extensions or small scale infill developments. The Council has as usual distributed the annual Christmas charity money to selected residents.

Again a particular focus has been on continuing to improve the village environment by better grass cutting, flower planting, extra dog rubbish bins, tree pruning and reducing speeding through the village. Special thanks to Councillors Leach and Johnson for setting up and maintaining the flower displays. Thanks also to Mr and Mrs W. Smith for refurbishing the historic funeral bier which has become a parish asset and to Ed Roughsedge for refurbishing the old notice board which is yet to be erected. Much more still needs to be done including improving the war memorial, the village sign and resolving the fate of the chestnut trees on the green which are suffering from disease and one or more may have to be removed when this becomes absolutely necessary.

2012 has been very active for the community at large. Highlights have been the Jubilee celebrations and the village fete; both highly successful and very well supported by everyone. Special congratulations and thanks go, not only to Gavin Lessing Caller and his Social Events team for organising and implementing them, but also to the whole community for their wonderful support despite the adverse weather on both occasions.

Apart from these highlights there have been a wealth of other village activities including those of the various clubs, which will report separately, but also the church fayre, the scarecrow competition, Christmas Carols, Valentines Ball etc. Particularly welcome is the progress being made by the %Escape Group+ for the youth of the village and by the newly formed gardening club. Thanks to %he George+ and to the village shop - %No 12+ for their whole hearted support and contributions throughout.

The Parish Council have done their best to give help and support and wish to record their appreciation of all the voluntary groups and individuals who have contributed so fully to making ours a friendly and vibrant community. Long may it thrive!

Finally my thanks go to all of the Parish Councillors for their support and hard work throughout the year and to the Clerk, David Stowell, for his unstinting dedication.

5. Parish Council Financial Report

The Clerk presented the accounts for the year 2012/2013, summarised as follows:

	Parish Council Fund	Charity Fund
Balance brought forward at 1/4/12	£58806.97	£120.00
Receipts	£10824.16	£120.00
Payments	£ 9158.20	£120.00
Balance carried forward at 31/3/13	£60472.93	£120.00

The Parish Council balance at 31 March 2013 is allocated as follows:-

Village Hall & Playing Field project	£34000.00
Ferriman Road Grounds Maintenance Fund	£16784.09
Parish Plan Grant	£ 176.36
War Memorial renovation	£ 1500.00
General Reserve	£ 8012.48

6. Other reports

Spaldwick Welcome Club . Sylvia Black presented Maureen Vickers's report

The Welcome Club has 50 full members. We meet on the first Friday of each month in term time in the community room. A two course meal (main / dessert) is provided by volunteers (committee members) for a nominal fee. A brief business meeting is held followed by a short talk given by a guest speaker. Each week we have a club competition relating to the subject of the talk or some other topical issue. Prizes are awarded to those members who make the most successful contributions to these competitions.

Our August meeting is replaced by a day trip. In the past it has usually been a day out at the seaside. We also have numerous other outings throughout the year. December's meeting is a two course Christmas lunch usually held at a local establishment. This is paid for out of club funds or from funds raised through the year. We have a committee that meets once a month and, from the matters raised and issues discussed, there is a monthly newsletter produced and delivered to members. Over the year we collect loose change (coppers) which is given to the club's nominated charity of that year.

Village Hall - Greg Rice, Chair

The last 12 months have been relatively quiet for the Management Committee.

Our main activity has been pursuing the one active project, namely the completion of a new Community Hall within Spaldwick. Although there are no firm plans, progress is being made on a couple of options and the Committee hope to present to the village in the not too distant future.

In this time we have had a number of changes within the Committee; the Chairman, Eddie Roughsedge, tendered his resignation and the Committee would like to note their thanks for the time and effort he has put in to the project.

Greg Rice has taken over the role of Chair and Raine Thompson has joined the Committee as Treasurer. We are also pleased to have Ian Campbell and Bill McCue join the Committee as ordinary members to work alongside Grahame Leach who is the Parish Council Representative.

The Committee is looking forward to a productive summer.

Escape Youth Group - Kit Lee presented Mark Sturdy's report

After almost 3 years, Escape Youth Group has gone from strength to strength. Our small team of dedicated committee members and youth committee are providing a great service to the youth of Spaldwick and surrounding villages. We continue to attract people from Spaldwick, Easton, Ellington, Barham, Buckworth and Grafham. Numbers have continued to grow beyond our expectations, with recent sessions

seeing an average of 46 people attending, with record attendance at our last session of 52 youngsters.

Our revised strategy to integrate year 6 children in to the youth group has worked well this year, ensuring that numbers have grown at a manageable pace, and that we have been able to cope with the gradual introduction of a new batch of 11 year olds across the academic year instead of en-masse in September. This has resulted in improved retention of members across all age ranges.

The successful growth in attendance is not only a reflection on the hard work of the team involved and the service they provide, but also on the fact that there is little else for our members to do, especially in Spaldwick. The provision of a Multi Use Games Area has been discussed in the past, but support to bring this to fruition has been poor, with no response from the village to appeals published in the Spaldwick News. A facility similar to those found in Molesworth, Catworth, Grafham, Ellington, and Brampton would be a real asset to the village as a whole, not just the youth.

Over the last six months we have recruited a professional youth worker supplied through Huntingdon Youth Services, part funded by a donation of £900 from The Hinchingsbrooke Foundation, funding which we are required to match. Our first youth worker, Trish Finnimore, joined us for 6 sessions from the end of 2012 through to February 2013 but left due to full time employment elsewhere. However from this brief period the benefit not only to running the youth club, but also to the additional support a youth worker could provide to our members, was clear. We had no hesitations in recruiting a replacement, Tony Evans joined us after the Easter break, bringing a wealth of experience in Youth Services.

We will be supporting the Ellington Gala and Spaldwick Fete in 2013, with plans for a daytime event in the summer holiday similar to our Spider Mountain day in 2011. Details will be announced shortly.

I would like to thank the Parish Council for their support over the last three years.

Spaldwick Out of School Club - S. Jackson-Rimmer, Chair

In case you aren't aware of what Spaldwick Out of School Club, or S-Club as it's known, does: we are based in the Playtimes building next to Spaldwick School. We provide working parents with a high quality, properly supervised, affordable childcare facility for children aged 4-11 years, after the normal school day has ended and a full day childcare facility during most of the major school holidays. The organisation is overseen by a committee of parent volunteers which employs highly qualified staff to carry out the day to day running.

Since May 2012 we have had a very mixed year, with some highs and some lows and some very challenging situations.

We finished off the school year July 2012 with some very good attendance figures, however this did not continue and we've seen a sharp drop since the beginning of the year. This has largely been due to the recession and parents making alternative childcare arrangements as finances and/or work situations change.

This has forced the committee to make some difficult financial decisions which included the withdrawal of half term holiday club and our reduction in staffing levels to the maximum legal limits.

The staff and committee have worked hard together to reduce our outgoings and to improve our profile within the local area with the aim of improving our attendance figures. We have also, for the first time, applied to local Parish Councils and funding organisations for assistance. We became a registered charity in September and this will help us as we will be able to apply for a wider range of funds.

In addition to these challenges the staff have had to deal with the loss of two members of the team. Due to personal circumstances Daniel Bruce resigned from his position in January. And Sophie Clark, our manager, has been on maternity leave since December so all the remaining staff have taken on new exciting roles within the organisation to cover for their absences. However, even with all these challenges our

excellent team of highly motivated staff have provided a high level of childcare to the community.

We would like to thank the Spaldwick Parish Council for funding the hire of two bouncy castles for the children during the August holidays. We look forward to a better new year.

Footpaths . The Chairman presented Mick Ager's report

Mick Ager took over from John Saynor as Parish Paths Coordinator for Spaldwick in June 2012

Footpath right of way maps on village notice boards for Spaldwick have been displayed and these will be updated during 2013 (made clearer and more durable) . The majority of footpaths have been no issue except Footpath 12 (field opposite the garage). Continued interaction and support from Simeon Carroll, newly appointed Rights of Way Officer (ROWO) of CCC, has resulted in the path being cleared late summer 2012. The issue has re arisen in April 2013 and Mr Carroll has been in dialogue with the farmer responsible, resolution expected soon.

The 3 kissing gates on the perimeter of the field due south of the church have had the ground made more durable and level with road scrapings, thereby eliminating mud and puddles. This approach of using road scrapings is also being used on roadside verges when appropriate, an example of this can be seen on exiting Spaldwick in a westerly direction just after the river bridge on the right hand side.

A new bridge over the river on footpath 15 is now open May 2013 (location - North of the A14, due north of Spaldwick Church - 200 metres to the East of Belton Hill)

The condition of Long Lane (due south off Spaldwick High Street) has been raised to the CCC ROWO. Long Lane is registered as an adopted road rather than a public right of way, however the site has been viewed by the ROWO and possible solutions to the mud and drainage issues (about 100 metres into the lane) are now being considered. No work or improvement is likely to be started until the end of the bird nesting season (end of September). Any work or improvement is subject to CCC funding.

Spaldwick Carpet Bowls Club – verbal report by B Plummer.

The club meets in the School Hall and Community Room every Tuesday evening at 7pm during term time. It has a full programme of internal competitions and matches with teams from local villages in which Spaldwick is the majority winner. Several social events were held during the year including a visit to 10 pin bowling, a barbeque and a very successful Annual Dinner at The George.

7. Open Forum

Footpath 12 . Theresa Dearman emailed to say she is extremely concerned that, despite assurances, no remedial action has been taken by the owner/tenant of the field to provide a footpath to the stile. Whilst agreeing with these comments the consensus of the meeting was that the approach being taken by Mick Ager and the ROWO to resolve the problem should be supported.

Dogs on Leads . it was pointed out that some dog owners are not complying with the dogs on leads order. It was suggested that an item be published in Spaldwick News and on the website to draw attention to this matter.

In the absence of any other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 pm