

## BERGH APTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2003 at 7.30pm at the  
Village Hall

Present: Alison Freeman (Chairman,) John Ling, Chris Johnson , Jean Bobbin, Derek Blake, David Skedge and Sally Leigh

Also present the Clerk (Lorie Lain-Rogers) and eleven members of the public. John Fuller (District Councillor) and Adrian Gunson (County Councillor) sent their apologies.

1. **Apologies:** none
2. **Declaration of Interest:** both John Ling and Sally Leigh declared a personal interest in item 8 the planning application for White House Barns as they are friends of Mr. and Mrs. P. Hemmant
3. **Minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> October 2003** were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
4. **Matters arising:**
  - a) 7.2 The Countryside Agency – Rights of Way Act 2000 - John Ling asked that this item in the previous minutes be clarified to make clear that the “right to roam” did not simply refer to common land but also to uncultivated land such as upland and moorland.
  - b) 4a. Flare of methane gas on Closed Landfill: the clerk had received the following information from Joel Hull, the flaring of methane gas is planned to take place this week. A new chimney, round instead of square, which is more efficient will be fitted shortly. The site of the new flaring station will be positioned more in line with the present station. Engineers are drilling more wells on the western side of the bridleway and these will be linked up with the flare station. After trials at Strumpshaw in burying the overland piping, it is planned to do the same on the Bergh Apton site. The grass will receive one more cut in November but two acres are to be left to grow on to encourage suitable habitat for butterflies. These two acres will be cut on an annual rotational basis. The planned hedges around the western perimeter of the site will be planted this season and Mr. Hull is in discussion with Mr. Holl with regard to planting additional trees on the western edge to provide additional screening. Further hedging is planned on the boundaries of the site as finance becomes available. Also planned for this winter is the clearing out of much of the reed mace in the pond adjacent to the gate. Bat boxes will be erected on the site.
  - c) 4b. Bus Shelters – the clerk has spoken to Peter Cudby and the following information is now needed by him to complete the award of the grant which is for £250 less than the total amount, i.e. the Parish Council contribution, a copy of the letter from Highways giving permission, a sketch plan of the site, a photocopy of the bus shelter itself, a copy of the quotation from the supply company, and a letter from Bergh Apton Parish Council accepting responsibility for the maintenance of the shelter. The grant will then be paid on receipt of the invoice.
  - d) 4d. Overhanging oak tree in Lion Copse, Loddon Road: Adrian Gunson has spoken to Highways and they have been in contact with Mr. Hemmant. The clerk has also spoken to the Hemmants.
  - e) 4f. Footpath and Bridleway signs still to be replaced – keep on agenda until done.

- f) 4g. Tree for Village Hall: a black poplar has been offered but acceptance will be dependent upon the space needed for the size of tree.
  - g) Web pages: Sally Leigh has spoken to Paul Braybrooke and his licence for [www.berghapton.co.uk](http://www.berghapton.co.uk) runs until March 2004. In consultation with John Fuller she has been looking into the costs of [www.berghapton.org.uk](http://www.berghapton.org.uk) this will cost £55.00 with a licence for £12.00 a year. The site includes 5 email addresses at no further charge. In principle the Parish Council agreed to support the application. Derek Blake queried the cost as there were sites that cost £10 to obtain and still had five email addresses. He will obtain details. Sally Leigh will start the web site, but is keen to learn of any in the village who would have an interest in developing it and helping her with it.
  - h) 10 Dodgers Lane: Frances Hubbard confirmed that the County Council had cut this shortly after the Parish Council meeting and it was now passable.
5. **Public consultation** including reports from County and District Councillors: this item was deferred to later in the meeting
6. **Finance:**
- a) Statement of accounts: this will be done fully for the December meeting, and will include the projected costs of the village sign.  
The following cheques were then approved for payment proposed by Sally Leigh seconded by Jean Bobbin and agreed unanimously.
  - b) L. Lain-Rogers clerk's salary and expenses 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> October £231.66 and £16.96 total £248.62 cheque no. 000357
  - c) Bergh Apton Conservation Trust £100 (EDP Village of the Year award for the Environment) cheque no.000358
  - d) D. Blake expenses in attending NCAPTC Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> October £23.98 and in inspection of foundry facilities and discussion of submitted bids mileage expenses of £31.92. Total £56.10 cheque no. 000359
  - e) NCAPTC Risk Assessment seminar on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November £15.00 cheque no. 000360
- Consideration was then given to:
- f) Donation to Christmas Lunch on Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> December, one proposal was for the purchase of equipment by the Parish Council which would provide long term facility for all catering events at the Village Hall. The Parish Council would retain ownership and provide storage. Sally Leigh demonstrated a bain-marie in stainless steel which will cost £39.99 + VAT. Derek Blake thought a different supplier might improve on the cost. Councillors decided to investigate the matter further but a donation of £50.00 to the Christmas Lunch was proposed by David Skedge, seconded by John Ling and agreed unanimously. Cheque made payable to "Bergh Apton Village Account" cheque no. 000362
  - g) Donation to Mothers and Toddlers play group – the Council wished in principle to be supportive of this new venture but will need more information on the type and cost of equipment that is needed and where it will be stored before approving a donation.
  - h) Budget 2004/05: the accounts for the past 3 years were examined and there was a further discussion on setting the budget but it was agreed to defer the decision until the next meeting when a full set of figures would be available including the costs of the village sign
  - i) Parish Plan finance: the new No. 2 account has been opened and it was therefore proposed that the balance of the Countryside Agency grant be transferred to that

account by Sally Leigh seconded by Jean Bobbin and agreed unanimously (cheque no. 000361)

## 7. Correspondence:

1. Copy of letter from Peter Tatman to Adrian Gunson dated 31<sup>st</sup> August relating to highways and hedges on Birchway.
2. SNC Environmental Liaison Group agenda 2.9.03 and minutes 11.2.03
3. SNC Planning Services Consultation slip etc.
4. SNC Planning listed building consent for 14 Church Road – replacement windows
5. Hags products
6. SNC Parish Remuneration Panel – details of new rates allowable to Parish Councillors in discharge of their duties.
7. Minutes from Clerks and Officers meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June and agenda for 20<sup>th</sup> October (clerk attended)
8. Community Transport
9. Norwich Transport survey to return by 13<sup>th</sup> December also includes dates of public meetings – this to be compiled by Alison Freeman. Other copies available for individual Councillors to complete.
10. NCAPTC Risky Business – a seminar on aspects of risk assessment for parishes, Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November at Morley Village Hall 9.30am to 3.30pm cost £15 - Sally Leigh to attend. A place has been booked.
11. Norfolk Matters copy for each Councillor
12. NCC Fire Service information available on website: [www.norfolkfireservice.co.uk](http://www.norfolkfireservice.co.uk) it was noted that more fire engines were being purchased.
13. The Local Channel website
14. NCC Planning and Transportation partnership Annual Report 2002-03
15. South Norfolk Alliance Up 2 U 2 poster – important to return survey forms
16. Gravity skateboard services
17. SNC Small Community grants – contact Rachel Gadbury
18. Zurich Municipal – CIC News July 2003
19. Zurich Municipal – Terrorism exclusion clauses to add to insurance
20. Be a voice for health – opportunity to join a health panel
21. CPRE leaflets on hedgerows, meadows and quiet lanes
22. CPRE Countryside Voice autumn 2003
23. DEFRA Quality Parish Council scheme – the latest draft. It is important for all Councillors to read this as it explains the scheme. Agenda item for next meeting.
24. NCC Street Lighting – response sought – returned questionnaire as no street lights in village
25. NPFA newsletter The Playing Field autumn 2003
26. Glasdon products
27. SNC Vehicle crime leaflets

8. **Planning applications:** a) The Old Barns, White House Farm, School Road, Bergh Apton Ref: E07/03/1998/F proposed conversion of 2no existing barns to residential units and remaining barn into associated garages and store. The Parish Council's response was as follows:

**B. We consider the application should be approved for the following reasons:**

The barns are no longer needed for current agricultural practice and use. The Parish Council hoped that by reluctantly accepting the change of use that some control might be given over the future development of the site with regard to restricting or removing planning development rights. These barns when converted can provide very large living accommodation and the council would not wish to see further developments allowed, i.e. pressure in due course for the garages/store to become an additional dwelling

area, or pressure to extend the barns to include utilities rooms, store rooms, offices etc., or further garages.

**If permission is granted we suggest the following conditions of approval should be considered:**

All brick work that is visible from the road should be of reclaimed or good modern/antique substitute to provide variation in brick colour. Roof tiles particularly those visible from the road to be reclaimed mainly using those currently on the present buildings this should also apply to the garages/store currently roofed with cement asbestos sheets. New red clay pantiles if used, to be on the north sides of roofs. Concern was expressed about the full length window in Barn B which gives light to the dining area. This completely changes the character of that building and is not very practical with stones and dirt thrown up from the road 18" away. The suggestion was to continue the flint wall at its present height all along that front wall, thus reducing the height of that window. Comment was made that the other windows on that wall do look very small to allow adequate light into very large rooms. Concern was expressed with regard to light pollution, both that coming from external security lighting and the velux roof windows. At present this is a quiet dark area of the village can planning guidelines give advice as to what will best limit this impact?

**The following comments are also relevant to the consideration of the application:**

The design of conversion is somewhat unusual. There are what might appear in both sets of plans an excessive number of bathrooms/en suite. There are however no utility rooms or cloak room areas (bear in mind this is in the country where muddy rubber boots might be expected.) Is this because commercial use is planned i.e. bed and breakfast with additional car movements along narrow roads? One councillor queried the retention of the small tank wall on Barn B?

Historically this is one of the few remaining places in the village where house sparrows still have a colony. Although they have declined in the last two years (for reasons other than planning development) swallows continue to nest in these barns. Bats also roost here. There is no recent record of Barn Owls nesting here.

Derek Blake who had attended the East Area Planning meeting said that the development had been approved but planning development rights had been removed and the design was subject to a number of modifications. English Nature will be called in to consider the bat situation.

b) Questionnaire on additional planning responsibilities to be undertaken by clerk or Council representative: this was looked at in detail and whilst there are many good points in the proposal concern was expressed that any response did not lead to double taxation in the long run, even if this would be covered in the present proposals. Derek Blake explained that the proposed changes were part of a government strategy to remove one level of local government and enable 90% of decisions to be made by officers. The plan is to end the current practice of the East Area Planning meeting taking place in Loddon and for this to be extended to cover an area from Trowse to Diss and meet in Long Stratton. The Council felt this was a retrograde move and took away local democracy in which those involved in the planning process had an opportunity for their voice to be heard. There would be a need for considerable additional training to be undertaken by Councillors and the Clerk. One advantage of the present scheme is that the District Council solicitor is present to advise on legalities. There can be conflict of interest with neighbours where it is helpful for the planning process to be one step removed from the Parish Council. The clerk to return the form and include the above points.

9. **Parish Plan:** Derek Blake said that this was progressing well, with a "road map" of planned stages to August next year with completion in September. The software to compile the questionnaire was being used and a sample of questionnaires from other areas obtained. Map of the village in A0 size has been purchased, John Ling has offered to bring this up to date. A copy will be offered to the Village Hall and a letter sent requesting that a space be allocated proposed by Derek Blake, seconded by Chris Johnson and agreed. Other village organisations will benefit from copies of the map such as hedge survey team and Local History Group.

10. **Village Sign:** the clerk read out the voting figures which were as follows: site no. 1 grass triangle between Dodgers Lane and The Street 16 votes; site no. 2 Cookes Road, adjacent to the Village Hall – 35 votes; and site no. 3 junction of Church Road and The Street – 41 votes, therefore the chosen site will be site no. 3. Derek Blake issued a report on his visits to local foundries and the confusion over methods and materials. The question of who was to paint the sign was also considered. John Ling and Derek Blake will visit Mr. Soanes to collect the pattern and clarify outstanding details. It was agreed that this should be done as soon as possible and the order placed with East Coast Castings whose price even with the additional work of joining the two halves of the sign together will still be very competitive. It was agreed that a full break down of all the figures be given to John and Derek before they visit Mr. Soanes. It was thought he had not been paid for making the pattern

**Public consultation:** the proposal to close the meeting to allow members of the public to speak was made by John Ling and seconded by Sally Leigh. The question of the red telephone box on Mill Lane (which is sorely in need of paint) was raised as was the need to improve, repair and repaint or replace the notice board at Mill Road. Jill Harvey asked which way the Village Sign would be erected i.e. with the current name of the village being the most visible. The meeting was re-opened by a proposal from John Ling and seconded by Sally Leigh.

11. **Appointment of two Trustees to Tenwinter Trust:** the clerk explained the history and purposes of the trust and the need to appoint two new trustees from November 2004 as Jill Harvey and Peter Annis did not wish to be re-appointed. Trustees need to have good local knowledge of the community. It was agreed to defer this item to 2004.

12. **Other matters for consideration** for future agendas and items for information: Sally Leigh asked about the blue sign in Welbeck Road. Mr. A. Scales to be asked. John Ling said there had been no sightings or information on the missing planet Pluto stolen from Bungay Lane. Publicity had been given to this in newspapers and TV. Sewerage problems with Anglian Water pumping station in Loddon Road continue and the clerk is endeavouring to obtain a solution.

13. **Date of next meeting** Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2003 It was also agreed to look at 26<sup>th</sup> April as a possible date for the AGM. Councillors asked to bring diaries to next meeting.