

# WELLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting held at the Community Centre  
at 7.30pm on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015

<u>Item</u>	<u>Minutes</u>
	<p><b>Present</b></p> <p>Parish: Mrs G Gowan (Chair), Mr S Crane, Mrs L Langford, Mr D Miller, Mr J Morrison and Mr D Wood, Mrs C Bucknell (Parish Clerk). Also in attendance: 41 members of the public</p>
1.0	<p><b>To Accept Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Mrs J Shoesmith</p>
2.0	<p><b>To Adopt Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting Thursday 29th May 2014</b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> The Minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chair.</p>
3.0	<p><b>To Receive the Chairman's Report</b></p> <p>The full report circulated is attached to these minutes. In brief: The Chair reported on the success of the Community Hub project and how it was being held up as an exemplar of good practice. She spoke about the forthcoming election and the fact that Cllr Jimmy Morrison would be standing down and Barrie Prince would be re-joining the Parish Council after a two year absence. The Chair also spoke about a criticism made by a Parishioner at the recent Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, who had said, incorrectly, that the Parish Council was not elected (in fact all but Cllr Miller were fully elected). The Chair voiced her disappointment at this, saying that the Parish Council could only be made up of those who came forward, encouraging anyone who felt they could make a positive contribution to the Parish Council to come forward. The Chair paid tribute to her fellow Councillors and the Clerk, thanking them for all their hard work and commitment over the last year, saying she felt they had bonded well as a team and had achieved much for the community of Wellington as a result. The Chair also spoke about Neighbourhood Planning and the hope that the Neighbourhood Plan would go to its first formal consultation, Regulation 14, in the near future, ending by saying she had enjoyed her term as Chair of the Parish Council and looked forward to continuing to work for the people of Wellington over the coming year.</p>
4.0	<p><b>To receive Brief Reports:</b></p> <p><b>4.1 Wellington Charities:</b></p> <p>The Chair read out a summary of the report which was also available to those present.</p>
5.0	<p><b>Presentation from Herefordshire Wildlife Trust/New Leaf on future plans for Queenswood County Park and Bodenham Lakes</b></p> <p>John Clark from Herefordshire Wildlife Trust gave a presentation on the proposals for the transfer of Queenswood Country Park and Bodenham Lakes from Herefordshire Council to a new Community Interest Company, made up of a partnership between Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and New Leaf. John spoke about the vision for the partnership, its funding plans and how it would manage the facilities. He reported that Queenswood was the most visited attraction in the county with an estimated 450,000 visitations per annum. It was the only designated country park in Herefordshire consisting of a 47 acre arboretum, with over 1,200 rare and exotic trees, and 123 acres of semi-natural ancient woodland. It was designated as a Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) and had Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation. Bodenham Lakes was the largest body of open</p>

water in Herefordshire and was designated as a Site of Local Importance under the current UDP; the HNT were working hard to ensure the site was designated in new LDP.

John outlined the priorities for the sites after the transfer which were to retain their character and function i.e. Queenswood as a popular woodland destination; Bodenham a locally valued nature reserve. A priority was to enhance the ecological value of the sites in line with their existing, and potential, designations (e.g. SSSI) and to enhance the social value of the sites for the benefit of local people and visitors to the county. John stressed that there would be no housing developments on either site.

John showed a diagram of how it was envisaged the management structure of the new organisation would work and how they would ensure representation from the local community. Financing the project was to be a challenge with the gap between costs and revenue currently around £100k. Suggestions currently being considered were a Supporters scheme, introduction of car parking charges, the development of retail, forest products, events etc.

The full presentation can be found on together with other information about Queenswood and Bodenham Lakes on <http://www.herefordshirewt.org/node/3040>

#### **6.0 Presentation from the Community Led Parish Plan Steering Group**

Jennifer Jarrett, Chair of the CLP Steering Group gave an excellent and very informative presentation on the work of the CLP Steering Group, saying that they would be standing down (as per their Terms of Reference) but that there would be a core group who would continue to work with volunteers to achieve the actions outlined in the plan. She outlined the difference between a Community Led Plan and a Neighbourhood Plan, detailing how the CLP had been developed. Jennifer was particularly pleased with the 75% response rate to the questionnaire which had helped to shape the actions coming out of the plan and paid tribute to the volunteers who had distributed and collected them from all households in the parish. The finalised plan was now available in the Library, the Shop and online and a summary leaflet had been distributed to every household. Boards showing the various actions being carried out by the volunteer groups had been set up in the Hall and residents were encouraged to go and view these and to ask questions after the meeting.

#### **7.0 Questions from the General Public**

There was a question about the total cost of running the HWT. John Clark did not know the exact figure but stated there were around 5,000 members. Car parking charges were mentioned and it was stated that supporters would get a free car parking permit and there were discussions about discounts in the retail and catering outlets. It was recognised that car parking charges were not a popular option but that there needed to be a regular income to ensure sustainability. A question was asked about New Leaf and whether it was the most appropriate organisation to partner with the Wildlife Trust. John briefly outlined New Leaf and the fact it had the support of Herefordshire Council and as such was ideally placed to be a key partner in any Community Asset Transfer.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed ..... Date  
Chairman of Wellington Parish Council