

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE  
VILLAGE HALL, WHITE STREET, MARTHAM ON  
WEDNESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2009 at 19.30 HOURS.**

**Present:**

**Mike Huke presiding as Chairman**

**Peter Dawson - Clerk**

**Together with 2 members of the public, six parish councillors, County Councillor M Carttiss and PC Cook.**

**Councillors Mary & Barry Coleman had sent their apologies for not being able to attend.**

1. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all those in attendance.

**2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2008.**

The minutes of the previous annual parish meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2008, having been circulated, were confirmed as a true record. The Chairman signed the minutes. Proposed Councillor T Brookman, seconded Councillor M Horrocks.

**3. Chairman's Annual Report**

The Chairman then gave his annual report highlighting a very successful year for the Parish Council and, in particular, placing on record his thanks to every councillor, Working Parties and the Clerk for their hard work and contributions during the year.

The Chairman put on record his thanks to the Police for their continued local support and welcomed Peter Williamson as the new village Police Community Support Officer.

The Chairman went on to remind everyone that all the existing councillors were re-elected last May unopposed and the year had been a busy one with many new initiatives taking place or starting.

The first May Fair and Scarecrow Festival took place in May 2008. It was a huge success with villagers producing over 90 scarecrows. £1,000 was raised and donated to Quidenham Children's Hospice. Julie Beales, Maggie Horrocks and Peter & Liz Carpenter worked tirelessly to make the festival the success it was and carried on to also make the second festival, held last weekend, even better than the first with the money raised going to the benefit of the Church Hall Restoration Fund.

The second major new event of the year was the Christmas Fayre. The Chairman felt it was very rewarding to see so many people joining together in a festive mood, helping to make the event into something that brought the whole community together. £664 had been raised for Radio Broadland Kids Appeal.

The Chairman suggested that the biggest success story of the year for the village was taking first place in the Green and Open Spaces category of the EDP Pride in Norfolk Community Awards. The village fended off stiff competition from across the whole of Norfolk to be awarded the John Hayden Shield for the way in which green open space is used throughout the village. The shield that had been awarded was on display in the Post Office.

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A derelict piece of former allotment land in Staithe Road had been cleared and a new access road provided by the Council who leased the land to the Scouts for them to build a new HQ there.

A public meeting was held to discuss continuing traffic problems in Black Street and a new working party had been set up to look at the issues in detail.

Recycling facilities had been extended to the Playing Field and a clothes recycling bank added in the village centre. Income raised had helped provide a new seat in Black Street, new planters in the village centre and new spring bulbs along roadside verges in Repps Road, Rollesby Road and at the corner of Staithe Road and Black Street.

Maintenance of the village greens took place and included tree maintenance and repainting of fences and benches. The Welcome Village Signs had also been refurbished. Footpath maintenance and signage was improved and a new guide had proved popular selling over 70 copies.

Public advice surgeries had become well established on the last Saturday of each month from 10am to 12 noon. Unfortunately the venue at the CLIP Office was about to close but surgeries would continue to be held at the Methodist Chapel a few doors away.

All the allotments were let. Allotment rents were frozen for the year at their existing level. A new water supply had been provided and a block of poorly kept allotments had been taken back, cleaned up and were in the process of being re-let. The Chairman recorded his particular thanks to Councillor Brian Wright for his exceptional hard work in providing the water supply and clearing the overgrown plots to make them ready for re-letting.

Working in partnership with the Playing Field Committee and the Borough Council the Council had provided a new tarmac path along the north side of the play area.

The Council had continued to be active when consulted on planning issues. A number of concerns were raised on behalf of parishioners including most notable ones concerning the proposal for a breeding centre for rats and mice in Staithe Road and proposals to develop the site at 10 Playing Field Lane. Sadly, despite representations by all parties a Planning Inspector gave permission for the demolition of Elmside House in White Street. The Council was trying to obtain some of the traditional Martham red bricks from the house in order to help build a new bus shelter in Repps Road.

Financial targets for the year had been met and the average charge for a band 'D' property for 2009-10 is £16.34 which is only 31p per week. Band 'B' properties represent the largest number in the village: their charge being £12.71 or 24p per week, which the Council believes is good value for money.

The Chairman then outlined the key objective for the Council for 2009 as being to:

- Secure a sound usage for the former youth club building on the Playing Field.
- Investigate the potential for setting up a Youth Council and a wider range of youth activities in the village.
- Expand the Scarecrow and Christmas Fairs with more activities.
- Build a new bus shelter in Repps Road.
- Produce a management plan aimed at improving traffic problems in Black Street.
- Continue verge-side planting.
- Start on work to provide a small conservation reserve in Common Road.

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Finally the Chairman congratulated the Clerk who in less than a year since joining the Council became fully qualified by passing the Certificate in Local Council Administration which sets the Council up to apply for Quality Council status.

**4. Public Question & Answer Session**

Councillor Carttiss asked about the current situation regarding public access to the passage/drive running from Rose Lawn, Black Street to Nursery Close. The Chairman explained that since the owner of Rose Lawn, Black Street had blocked the passage/drive by putting a gate across the top of his drive the Council had employed a solicitor to seek restitution of a grant given to him in 2004 which the Council understood was meant to ensure the path remained open to the public. There had been no response and having taken further legal advice the Council would be taking no further action and the matter was considered to be closed.

There being no further business the Chairman then closed the meeting at 19.50hours.

Signed.....

Dated.....