

HEYSHOTT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

MINUTES: Annual Parish Meeting of Heyshott
Held on: Wednesday 17 April 2024 beginning at 7.00 pm
At: Cobden Hall

Present: Robert Harris, Chairman of the Parish Council, was Chairman of the meeting
Jane Crawford, Parish Clerk, took the minutes

In attendance: District Councillor Francis Hobbs, Parish Councillors Bridget Adler, Jane Constanduros, Anthea Philip, Simon Hook and Chris Weeks, Nick Sherwin, Laura Parry, Penny Masterton, Jane Riley and 10 other parishioners.

Tom Davey, the Location Manager of the Production Company working on a Netflix film that was being filmed in the area including Heyshott.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** County Councillor Tom Richardson, Parish Councillor Fiona Mackay and Father Jonathan Jong.
2. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL 2023:** The Minutes had been previously agreed by HPC and it was agreed that the RH should sign them.
3. **NETFLIX FILMING in HEYSHOTT:** The Chairman introduced Tom Davey and invited him to speak.
Tom Davey explained that filming was due to take place at the Cowdray Barn in Sunwool Lane. They had paid for the road to it to be repaired and a field off Hoyle Lane was being prepared as a vehicle park with a one-way system to get to it. He could not confirm the exact dates for the filming, but when it was happening they would be asking for restrictions on physical movements which would include riding and dog walking.
TD was asked many questions and was able to answer most of them satisfactorily. It was pointed out that Cowdray would be remunerated, but village would suffer.
TD: Any damage would be repaired and he was grateful for the village's co-operation.
The Chairman said a letter with TD's mobile and email had been delivered to all houses so everyone could get in touch with him if there were any problems. Any feedback after the event should be directed to the Cowdray Estate.
4. **THE PARISH COUNCIL**
 - a. **Chairman's report** (published in the Parish Magazine). Chris Cummins did not stand for re-election and the Chairman had thanked him for his service. HPC co-opted Simon Hook and welcomed him as the new member in May 2023.
 - b. **Finance: Budget 2024-25.** The precept is £9,000 (Band D £55.80). The Clerk/RFO briefly ran through the figures – there were no questions.
 - c. **HPC Open spaces plan**
The Chairman had organised a walk around with all members mainly to look at ditches and scrubland. There had been requests for the council to clear various ditches and verges, but with a limited amount of money, the land should be adjacent to the highways. BA would organise a work party with nearby neighbours to clear the land at the northern end of Hoyle Lane

CW reported that ditchwork of 4 days in the Autumn last year had alleviated some of the problems and it was planned to do another 4 days in the coming autumn when it should be possible to add a bit more.

He suggested starting a series of work parties to do some gentle work to be held between 10 and 12 noon on Wednesdays initially for 4 weeks. They could clear brambles and ivy, cut low branches and tidy up fallen trees.

The Chairman thanked CW for organising the ditch work.

d. **Bex Mill Bridge**

The Chairman reported that a Community Highway Scheme was under consideration which would include a reversal of priority and speed restrictions. It should be done by June.

5. **TO INVITE PARISHIONERS' SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS BY HPC**

The Chairman had been asked whether it would be possible to use any free space on HPC side of the notice board.

A parishioner had asked if the pavilion could become an artist's studio.

Jane Riley said the owner of the sheep on Canine Partners land would be prepared to put them on the cricket pitch area. CW would co-ordinate this. **Action: CW**

6. **REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS**

a. **St James Church:** Nick Sherwin, Churchwarden, reported

The Church was successful and running well with two services every Sunday, funerals, weddings, baptisms and an annual harvest supper.

Our vicar Jonathan was an extremely good preacher and did a great deal of pastoral care. The Church building was maintained with help from the Preservation Trust.

The heating and lighting had been improved using £25,000 they had received from the Diocese for the sale of the vicarage.

Fundraising with the cream teas and Christmas bazaar plus HPC's £500 for the churchyard maintenance was a great help and meant there have been small surpluses in recent years which have wiped out the deficit arising from the tower work.

One negative however was that congregation numbers were down owing to illnesses and death which was not being met by new members. It would help if everyone could double their attendance. No Church in the country was safe.

The PCC had reserves but was dependent upon the investment income from those reserves to meet its budget, which included an annual payment of £13,000 to the Diocese to cover costs of priests, pensions and running the Diocese, and all St James' building costs not met by the Preservation Trust.

b. **The Murray Downland Trust:** Nick Sherwin reported

The Trust's Annual Report was out of date as they had received a donation of 10 acres of land next to Pulborough Brooks. The land comprised woodland, common and water and had been offered to larger conservation bodies which would not take it on without an endowment. A legacy of £100,000 had also been received.

The 50 year term of the lease on the Heyshott reserves ends next year and MDT still had not heard further from the Cowdray Estate which has previously commented that it would only consider a 5 year lease renewal. MDT has security of tenure but is unwilling to fund new fencing at Heyshott Escarpment without agreement on a substantial extension to the

lease term. West Dean gave a 50 year lease extension to the two MDT reserves leased by it and the MDT ideally would like to agree something similar with Cowdray.

Heyshott Down had breeding pipits and woodlarks and was the only site on top of the Downs where this was the case.

At the moment Heyshott Escarpment (unlike Heyshott Down) was not properly fenced or grazed, nevertheless there was a thriving orchid population.

The MDT was very grateful for village support.

If Cowdray were to take back the Heyshott Reserves the stewardship payments from government would go to the Estate rather than to the MDT.

Parishioner's comment: If money for Heyshott, would it be used for Heyshott?

c. **The Cobden Hall Trust:** Penny Masterton reported

It had been a busy year for the Hall with the usual Church cream teas and Horticultural Summer Show, Harvest supper and Christmas Bazaar.

The winter talks were greatly enjoyed and included Chris Weeks on organising world aid, Tim West on photography and Martin West on how ENSA came about. There was also a special interview with Richard Comber about Heyshott harvesting.

The Cobden cinema had a successful season with its new projector and screen.

The bursary scheme was continuing.

The CHT contributed to the Coronation picnic which was a great success and was making plans for D-day 80.

2 Black Horse Cottage had been re-furbished and was much improved. They were proceeding with work on the other two cottages to bring them up to date.

They were putting up the price of hiring the Hall and reviewing the rent of the cottages.

There would be many activities at this year Summer Show on 10 August 2024.

They were looking forward to receiving a donation from Netflix.

d. **The Playground:** Jane Riley reported

The safagrass matting had been installed and the grass was growing through it.

The late Mary West had acquired the playground land for the village and the Playground Committee (PGC) planned to build a brick bar-b-cue area in her memory. This would be for everyone to use.

The main fundraiser in July had realised £1,857 and a further event a few weeks ago had raised a further £345.

e. **The Bonfire:** Laura Parry reported

The 2023 Bonfire was again in soggy weather which meant less money but they still had enough to run this year's event which would be on Saturday 9 November 2024.

They were looking forward to May Day this year - Monday 6 May featuring fancy dress with dogs.

7. **District Councillor:** Francis Hobbs reported

Dunford House: Nothing had changed. It was difficult to keep up with the volume of applications and paperwork and understand what the current position. There were also some appeals being made. There needed to be a balance between the community and the need to have a commercially viable business.

Canine Partners site sale: The Chief Executive had said there were a number of different options which included giving the local community the opportunity to put

Minutes agreed by HPC, but will be confirmed at next APM on 25 April 2025

something forward before he felt it necessary to put the site on the open market.

Parishioners should make sure they put forward any ideas as soon as possible.

Cycling routes: Centurion Way extension West Dean to South Downs Way: Midhurst Area Cycling had forwarded an update on the route along the railway line where work had started on Singleton station and also at Cucumber farm. At the moment none of the 3 tunnels was included in the plans, but assessments were being undertaken to see if it would be possible to use at least one of them.

Great Sussex Way: Wine and cycling route brings more money into the area.

The Chairman thanked FH for his time and support during the past year.

8. **Date of next Annual Parish Meeting: Wednesday 10 April 2025**

CONCLUSION: 8.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

Date.....