

CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON THURSDAY 26 APRIL 2007

Present: Cllr Saxon in the Chair
David Allison – Clerk to the Council
Helena Flynn – Minute Taker

Cllrs Bains, Bennett, Davis, Duffy, Englefield, Hearn, C Jefford, R Jefford, Munroe, Norman, Ridley, Seeley, Shafe, Vassiliou and Wynne-Jones

Cllr Hearn arrived 8.07pm. Cllr Duffy arrived 8.10pm.

Voting Members 16

Apologies: None.

In Attendance: In attendance Mr Ian Stewart on behalf of British Heart Foundation
Mr Smith and Mrs Martin on behalf of Welcome Club, Croxley Green

AP19/07 The Chairman welcomes members of the press and public

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all present to the Annual Parish Meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8.01 pm to allow presentations of cheques of monies raised for the nominated Chairman's charities. The meeting recommenced at 8.03 pm

AP20/07 Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 27 April 2006

Cllr Saxon advised the meeting that in accordance with good practice the minutes of the last Parish Meeting had already been signed off on 29 June 2006, that being the first full Council meeting after the 2006 Annual Parish Meeting.

AP21/07 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

AP22/07 To receive the Chairman's Report

Cllr Saxon delivered the Chairman's Report for the year, see attached.

AP23/07 To receive the following Committee Reports

AP23.1/07 Planning & Development Committee

Cllr Wynne-Jones, as Chairman of the Committee, delivered his report for the year, see attached.

AP23.2/07 Environment & Amenity Committee

Cllr C Jefford, as Chairman of the Committee, delivered her report for the year, see attached.

AP23.3/07 Finance & Administration Committee

Cllr Saxon delivered the report for the year, see attached.

AP24/07 To receive the Parish Council's Accounts for year ending 31 March 2006

The Clerk advised that the Annual Accounts for 31 March 2006 were signed off by the Parish Council at their meeting on 27 July 2006 (Agenda item CC280/06). The Clerk continued that the Annual Return Statement from the Internal Auditors was signed on 1 August 2006 and the external Auditors statement signed on 27 December 2006. The Clerk stated that the Audit Certificate was issued from Lubbock Fine (External

Auditors) on 2 January 2007 thus closing the Accounts for 2005/06.

The Clerk concluded that as at 31 March 2006 the General Reserve balance was £85,477 and the Earmarked Reserve balance was £90,300

No questions about the Accounts were raised.

AP25/07 To consider any other interest in the Parish

No items were raised.

AP26/07 Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.22 pm.



**Chairman's Report for the Annual Parish Meeting / Parish Pump
Thursday 26th April 2007.**

Fellow Councillors and members of the public.

It gives me great pleasure to present, what will be for me, my final report as Chairman of the Croxley Green Parish Council.

I would like to thank all my fellow Councillors who in their own way, and without accepting any remuneration, work hard to provide services for their fellow residents of Croxley.

I am pleased to report that during the last two years, the Council has found some stability after what had been quite difficult times.

I am aware that we as Councillors do not always see eye to eye with each other and some have played out their frustrations outside of the Council Chamber. As Chairman, I have deliberately kept out of these exchanges as I believe that the correct place to air ones views is within these walls and not within the pages of the Watford Observer or other magazines.

That being said however I must not forget that we, as a Council, have provided some excellent value for money to our residents.

The provision of two PCSO's, the weekly Community bus service, the youth basketball activities, garden competition, the excellent firework display on The Green, the scrutiny of all planning applications and the craft fair are just some of the examples of how we spend the money supplied to us via the Parish Council precept.

On the matter of the precept I have to report that this Council is the only Council in Three Rivers area that actually cut its precept for this year by a massive 7.7%. That means the households of Croxley get their Parish Council for a little under £40 per year.

If that's not value for money I don't know what is.

I would like to pay tribute to our previous Administration Assistant, Sylvia Stratford who left us at the beginning of the year for pastures new.

I would like to welcome our new Administration Assistant Helena Flynn. I hope you enjoy working with the Councillors and for the Council.

To those Councillors who are not standing for the forthcoming elections, Cllrs Hearn, Davis, Englefield, Ron Jefford and Duffy may I say a particular thank you. Our residents should be grateful that we still have people like yourselves willing to undertake the voluntary work that comes from being a Parish Councillor.

To those Councillors who are standing again and to those new members of the public putting themselves forward for the public vote. Good luck.

Finally may I take this opportunity to personally thank our Clerk. This has been an interesting year with some very lively and controversial debates and decisions. The Clerks position is a difficult role to fill. He serves The Council and not individual Councillors. He is sometime Chief Executive, sometime Senior Accountant, sometime staff manager, sometime Legal Officer, sometime office manager, problem solver, editor, project manager and sometimes people forget that we have one person doing this role, not a herd of staff in a large department.

Without The Clerks good humour and dedication to the job, a lot of what we've done this year would not have been achieved. My personal thanks go to you.

Finally This Council has a lot going for it. The volunteers who make up the Councillors plus The Clerk and the staff. We should accept constructive criticism and advice and admit when we have made mistakes. However we are an independent Council free of political ties or party whip and we have a right to disagree with others and go our own way if we believe it to be the correct thing to do.

Whoever becomes Chair of this Council in May will have an interesting course to steer over the next year and I genuinely wish whoever that may be the very best of luck.

Thank you.

*Councillor Mark Saxon
Chairman*



Environment and Amenity Committee Report
Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 26 April 2007

Once again this year promised to be both eventful and busy. However unfortunately we said goodbye to the Personal Assistant Sylvia Stratford who resigned in December 2006. We miss her enthusiasm and hard work. David Allison, the Clerk held the fort admirably until this month when Helena Flynn joined the staff of Croxley Green Parish Council and we all wish her well in her new job.

A stall was held at The Revels on the Green in 2006 and was ably manned by The Clerk, David Allison, together with various Councillors assistance. They were also supported by the two Parish Rangers Carl Batson and Andrew Goddard.

July brought the annual Best Kept Garden competition which is now in its 14th year. Once again this event proved to be very popular with a good number of entries being received. The gardens entered were of a very high standard which made the judging a very difficult job. A new category was added this year, i.e. hanging baskets and plant containers which proved to be a popular addition to the competition.

Mrs Kathleen Perry, Chairman of the Croxley Green Gardening Club, together with Dr Dave Cartwright of D&J Nurseries and Andrew Goddard, one of our Parish Rangers, kindly acted as judges. We were adjoined on judging day by John Pilgrim a well known author who is writing a modern history of Croxley Green, together with his photographer David Thrower. Mark Saxon the Chairman of the Parish Council presented the awards to the winners at a reception at the end of September 2006.

Christmas 2006 saw the illuminations being installed in Watford Road shopping area which gave a festive air to Croxley Green. Local private houses continued to be decorated for the Christmas season and so complemented the Council's contribution. The Parish Council again provided and decorated the annual christmas tree which was on display in the Library foyer. December also brought the annual Best Dressed Shop Window competition with the winner being "Bell a Beauty" in New Road.

March 2007 brought the 6th Parish Council Charity Quiz with The British Heart Foundation and The British Red Cross Welcome Club being the two nominated charities for this year. Some 95 people attended the quiz which raised a net profit of £893.10 and this will be divided equally between the two charities. It is hoped that a similar function will be held in early 2008.

It is pleasing to note that we have raised the sum of £5180.38 through the charity quizzes over the past 6 years.

The horse trough at All Saints Church is planted on a bi-annual basis, with appropriate displays of bulbs and bedding plants for spring and summer, and watered regularly.

The Council continues to look after the canine population by providing dog bags free of charge and the dog waste bins are emptied regularly this will be increased to twice a week during the summer months, commencing shortly. A water bowl has also been provided at the Council Offices for visiting thirsty dogs.

Two new projects were instigated during 2006 by Cllr Tony Munroe. Firstly a craft fayre which was held at Little Green School at the end of September. This proved to be most successful, with a good number of stall holders booking pitches in the school hall. Catering was also provided plus

entertainment for the children and “tasters” on the craft stalls. It is hoped a further event will be arranged in late 2007.

Secondly, Cllr Munroe organised Basket ball coaching sessions and practice for the youths in Croxley Green. This was held on Wednesday evenings during term time at Rickmansworth School, between 5.30pm and 9.00pm, which allows for two sessions, i.e. different age groups. This proved to be both popular and a big success with the youngsters.

A new project was also introduced by Cllr Wendy Shafe a school forum, A Junior Council, to which representatives of the local junior schools are to be invited. Meetings have taken place and all is proceeding well.

Lastly, a further new venture was introduced by Cllr Nick Bennett, in that the Parish Council staged a firework display on The Green to welcome in the new year on New Years Eve 2006. This proved to be a great success with a great turnout despite the weather conditions that evening. It is hoped that a further firework display will be held on New Years eve for 2007.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Environment & Amenity Committee, together with the members of the Planning & Development Committee who were involved with various events, and David Allison, Sylvia Stratford, Carl Batson and Andrew Goddard for all their hard work and support over the past 12 months, which is very much appreciated.

Cllr Christine Jefford
Chairman, Environment & Amenity Committee



**Chairman's Report for the Annual Parish Meeting
Finance and Administration Committee
Thursday 26th April 2007.**

Fellow Councillors and members of the public.

It gives me great pleasure to present, what will be for me, my final report as Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee of the Croxley Green Parish Council.

This Council is in a healthy financial position within the set guidelines and this has come about by the hard work and dedication of our Clerk and the members of this Council.

Our precept for the forthcoming year has decreased by 7.7% as I have already mentioned.

Accounts will be published in accordance with guidelines and are always open for inspection.

During the year we have made a number of grants available to local organisations but have always scrutinised each request on its merits and have not always made the popular or easy decision. I make no apologies for that because we have to take a balanced view when dealing with what is public money.

The Council will continue to spend money in accordance with statute, standing orders or on the recommendation of Committee or Council.

I believe that our purpose is to provide the services and benefits we say we are going to provide and not simply to look for the cheapest option.

Our accounts once again have been checked and audited in accordance with regulation.

I would like to thank the members of the F & A committee for their hard work and sometimes difficult decisions.

I would like to wish whoever takes over the reigns of this committee the best for the future,

Mark Saxon
Chairman, Finance and Administration Committee



**Planning & Development Committee Report
Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 26 April 2007**

Your Planning and Development committee had a very busy year.

First and foremost we met twice a month mainly to examine the planning proposals put forward by the public. The present system of “staying put” in property and enlarging it instead, meant that a lot of time was spent in vetting applications for planning permission to ensure that they were appropriate for the varied ambience of our village.

The number of applications has soared in the past year. A certain amount of opportunistic “backland” development applications were also considered. The large back gardens of many houses abutting The Green lend themselves to this type of development. I believe we “fine tuned” these appropriately. Eternal vigilance is necessary.

We have also considered the ever changing new business application profile of our village and attempted to ensure that retail outlets and restaurants/take aways are not permitted to intrude in areas where there is already adequate sufficiency. Our aim is to ensure all shopping areas provide a balanced service in each area of the village.

Street furniture, the bus shelters we are responsible for, highway work and the mobile phone transmitters on All Saints Church were all dealt with responsibly and satisfactorily during the year.

Finally, I would like to thank Cllr. David Bains and Cllr. Kathryn Duffy for standing in as chairman for me while I was away. Our multi-faceted committee has done sterling work and the state of the carefully thoughtout continuing development of our village reflects this.

David Wynne – Jones
Chairman