

## **STEEP PARISH COUNCIL**

**CHAIRMAN** Mr Richard Coles

**CLERK** Mrs Bridget MacMillan  
01730 261666

Minutes of the Steep Parish Annual Parish Assembly, held on Thursday 13th May, 2004 at Steep Village Hall

**Present:** Richard Coles (in the Chair) Terry Cook  
Peter Cruttenden Charles Gibson  
Sheila Fairley Sue Onslow  
Caro Robinson

In Attendance: John West (County Councillor)

0 Members of the Public

APM04/01 **APOLOGIES**

Jennifer Gray and Bridget MacMillan sent their apologies.

APM04/02 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on May 14<sup>TH</sup> 2003 were agreed as an accurate record.

APM04/03 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Richard Coles reported that this year had been even busier than last, with additional meetings being held to cover issues in greater detail.

He said that the new bus shelter was in place and looked a great deal better than the last one. He added that although it had already been vandalised it would be mended.

No major problems had arisen on the footpaths in the parish this year.

The Parish retained 3 allotments all used for pony grazing.

Roads and traffic continued to be a major problem for the council. Tony Struthers had worked and is still working very hard on Church Road issues and would report in the following Parish Council meeting.

Richard informed the meeting that a working group had been set up with Bedales calling itself 'Steep Community Liaison Group'

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The Steep website was proving a great success, Richard thanked Phil Morris for his work in its management. He added the following points regarding the use of the website as a communication tool:

- The Parish Council was committed to ensuring that as much information as possible was made available to everyone concerning parish business and other matters of community interest
- The Council contributed regularly to the production costs of the Steep and Stroud newsletter which had for so long been a major source of local information
- Everyone was grateful for the unstinting work done by the editorial team of the Newsletter and by their tireless team of deliverers....
- More recently, the Parish Council had sponsored a village web site ([www.SteepVillage.com](http://www.SteepVillage.com)) to provide another channel of communication
- He noted his gratitude to the work done by Celia Storey in maintaining the site for more than a year before handing over to Phil Morris.
- He told the meeting that information on the site was regularly refreshed and developed. It was possible to receive automatic email notification when the site was updated. It contained news of Parish Council events; it listed Steep parish planning applications in more detail than you would find in the local paper and had links to the EHDC system; it showed old and new pictures of Steep; and many other matters of interest
- One recent addition has been an informative, entertaining and topical feature by a character who calls himself or herself "Hanger Man". This would appeal to everyone of us who appreciated the attractions of our own corner of this AONB

The Parish Precept had been set at £7000.00 and this was still one of the lowest in East Hants.

One of the Council's main tasks throughout the year continued to be planning, taking up a lot of time especially when site meetings were needed. Richard reported that in the past 12 months there had been 33 planning applications, of those the Parish Council objected to 7. Of those 7, the applicants withdrew 3 and 4 were granted permission. Steep Parish Council made no objections to the remaining 24 applications, of which 19 have received planning permission, 4 were refused and one was withdrawn. A further 2 were awaiting a decision.

The village Hall continued to be run by the trustees (who are Parish Councillors) Bookings for the hall are very good, which means that the village hall was self supporting, new windows have been installed, and Richard added that he hoped they are not too different in appearance to the old ones.

The Chairman concluded his report by thanking the District Councillor, Jenny Gray and the County Councillor, John West, for their expertise and support during the year. He thanked all the Parish Councillors for their support throughout his year in office. Finally he thanked the clerk for her hard work and noted that her job would be easier if all the councillors had email!

APM04/04 FINANCE REPORT

The Clerk sent a report to the meeting as follows;

The figures as at March 31<sup>st</sup> 2004 were as follows:

Portman Building Society	£5,184.19
Hampshire County Council Investment	£15,434.99
Total cash and Investments	£20,619.18

Donations

Steep Parish Council made the following donations during the past year:

Citizens Advice Bureau	£120.00
All Saints Churchyard maintenance	£150.00
Steep and Stroud Newsletter	£220.00
Petersfield Neighbourhood Watch	£50.00

Receipts

The Parish Council received a precept of £7000.00 for the year 2003/2004

The Parish Council had received income from its allotments of £240.00

A question was raised about the donation to Petersfield Neighbourhood Watch. Terry explained that Petersfield Neighbourhood Watch was responsible for area co-ordination of village watch committees and the money was used for photocopying etc. As there were schemes in Steep and Steep Marsh this was deemed to be a laudable recipient.

APM04/05 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Mr J K West opened his remarks by saying that he was sorry that they had not managed to get the school hall built before the retirement of Helen Wilson. He praised her stewardship of the school and added that it had flourished under her leadership.

He referred to the recent calculations for Council Tax and noted that the portion for Hampshire appeared to have been reduced but in fact it resulted from a reallocation of Fire and rescue Service taxes and the sum total was similar to last year. Perhaps, he added, it was fortunate that the pressure group called "Is it fair?" was domiciled in this County since the Chancellor had allocated slightly higher than average sum of rate support grant to Hampshire.

The County was now producing the publication "Hampshire Now" three times a year to keep residents informed and he hoped that parishioners were receiving the booklet regularly. Distribution was with Royal Mail to ensure full coverage.

He spoke also about proposals not yet finalized for changing the division boundaries for County Councillors in the Petersfield area, adding that seven Councillors were likely to be elected for the whole of East Hampshire instead of the present six.

## Minutes of Steep Parish Assembly 2004

He noted that the speed of vehicles gave cause for concern and had he told the meeting that he had pressed the police to reintroduce speed checks at appropriate places, which they could only do at present where there was a record of serious accidents or a fatality.

His role with the County had caused him to be appointed "Green Energy Champion" and he recommend parishioners, if they were in the vicinity on holiday, etc to visit the wind turbines at Swaftham in Norfolk where a much-improved generator had been installed, with a quieter movement. He thought it was unlikely that these would appear in the Petersfield area for some time yet. The offshore generators were proving better for the moment. Even water mills could be adapted and the one at Whitchurch was earmarked for attention in this respect. Solar panels are very much in favour and possibly these could be used for heating Petersfield Open Area Swimming Pool in the near future. Wood chip burning was also on the agenda and locations at the old HMS Mercury site and the QECP were envisaged. Also, the Taro Centre and the Petersfield Rugby Club building were possibilities for this heating.

Mr West was thanked for his contribution.

### APM04/06 PUBLIC COMMENT

Tony Struthers told the meeting that a request for more comment from the parish council had been requested for the parish newsletter. He suggested a brief summary after every Steep Parish Council bimonthly meeting.

Peter Cruttenden raised the other parish council practice of an annual report, which was one of the requirements of quality parish status. He proposed that an annual council report should be produced as it was a form of good communication to the parish.