

# STEEP ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 2018

## DRAFT

**CHAIRMAN:** Jim MacDonald

**CLERK:** Jenny Hollington

## **MINUTES OF THE STEEP ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY – MONDAY, 21ST MAY 2018** **AT 7.00 P.M. AT STEEP SCHOOL**

**PRESENT:**

Peter Cruttenden (in the Chair)	Simon Bridger	Terry Cook
Nick Hurst	Chris Laycock	Kate Ashfield
Jeff Graham	Jenny Martin	

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Dr. Mark Broadmeadow – Forestry Commission  
John Payne – Community Police Support Officer  
Russell Oppenheimer – County Councillor  
Mike Robinson- Speedwatch Co-ordinator  
Jenny Hollington - Clerk

There were approximately 15 members of the public present throughout the meeting

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Jim MacDonald and District Councillor, Nick Drew

APM18/01 The Chairman welcomed Dr. Mark Broadmeadow from the Forestry Commission to talk about the effect of climate change on Ashford Hangers.

Dr. Broadmeadow began by hi-lighting recent and current changes, including the effect of Dutch Elm Disease, the impact of the droughts of 1976, 1983 and 1989 and the 1987 storm. In respect of Ash die-back he explained that the picture is not completely dire as natural tolerance does exist and there is plenty of research being done to identify resistant strains.

In respect of the future and likely outcome of the trees on the Hangers in years to come, he suggested that there will continue to be woods on the Hangers! However, he thought that the woods may retreat to the better soils and the north-facing slopes and that there would be some redistribution of species across the Hanger and minor species may come more to the fore. It is also possible that other tree species may appear - native and, potentially, non-native - and existing species are likely to evolve and adapt – possibly over a long period.

In conclusion he reminded those present that woods are dynamic and resilient but suggested that regeneration would be required to allow nature to respond to the effects of climate change.

In response to questions about management of the Hangers, Dr. Broadmeadow said that dead trees should always be removed where they are close to footpaths – which does appear to be the case in Ashford Hangers. Because the Hangers are a Nature Reserve, intervention may be required when/where necessary.

In response to a query about Sycamore, Dr. Broadmeadow said that Sycamore is one of the closest species to Ash and grows in the same locations. Natural England have suggested that the species should be embraced so long as it doesn't have a negative impact on the woods.

APM18/02 **Local Policing Up-date** – The Chairman introduced Community Police Support Officer, John Payne

PCSO John Payne explained the roles and responsibilities of the Neighbourhood Policing Team working out of Longmoor. John's remit covers Liss, Froxfield, Privett and Steep and residents with any concerns can contact him via e-mail on [john.payne@hampshire.pnn.police](mailto:john.payne@hampshire.pnn.police) or via 101.

John said that he works closely with communities and likes to get out and about as much as possible. Current Police priorities include residential burglaries and there have been 24 burglaries in Steep and Froxfield over the last 12 months. John set out some of the best ways of making it as difficult as possible for anyone to burgle a property – e.g. alarms, cctv, tracker fittings, timer lights, keeping ladders/tools locked away, locking gates, etc. Detailed crime prevention advice can also be found on the Hampshire Constabulary website [www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk).

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John also explained about the Bobby Scheme which is a free of charge service providing home safety and security for the vulnerable and elderly in communities. The Scheme is run via a registered charity and helps to make homes safe and secure by fitting door chains, door and window locks, spyholes for doors and smoke detectors – details of this scheme are available via [www.bluelamptrust.org.uk](http://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk) or telephone 0300 777 0157.

A member of the public queried the role of Neighbourhood Watch, which appears to have died out in Steep. John explained that residents should be encouraged to sign up to [www.hampshiralert.co.uk](http://www.hampshiralert.co.uk) - a community messaging scheme, which notifies users of current issues in the neighbourhood and which is a useful source of information.

APM18/03 **Speedwatch** – Mike Robinson, the Steep Speedwatch Co-ordinator, gave an overview of this Scheme which will very soon be running in Steep. He explained that Speedwatch is a national initiative where members of local communities join with the support of the Police to monitor speeds of vehicles using speed detection devices. Vehicles exceeding the speed limit are referred to the Police with the aim of educating drivers to reduce their speeds. In cases where speed restrictions are ignored, and evidence of repeat offences is collated, enforcement and prosecution follow.

It was pointed out that one of the main problems on Stoner Hill is motorbikes, but Mike confirmed that if the registration is obtained then the details of the offence can be logged. If speedwatch volunteers identify a problem, the Police will be able to support.

Currently there are 3 positions within the Village that will be monitored – Crees Corner, and adjacent to the footpath at Hayes Cottages on the C18, and next to the Village Hall in Church Road. These spots have been surveyed by the Police for safety but if these aren't quite right, then more sites can be considered. It is hoped that the group will be active from the beginning of July. More volunteers will always be needed, so please contact the Clerk, Jenny, if you can help.

APM18/04 **Minutes** – The Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 were approved as an accurate record and signed accordingly.

APM18/05 **Chairman's Report** – In Cllr. MacDonald's absence, Cllr. Cruttenden, Vice-Chairman of Steep Parish Council, gave an overview of the year's activities:

New Faces – Chris Laycock, Jeff Graham and Kate Ashfield have been appointed by co-option and Steep Parish Council are delighted to have 3 strong new candidates on board.

Council Business - It has been a busy year with 11 Parish Council Meetings (one of which was held in Steep Marsh) and 8 Planning Committee Meetings. The latter committee has considered 27 planning applications in total.

Traffic Management - A public meeting to discuss traffic management proved very useful in understanding current feelings and pressure and, as a result, the speedwatch project (as discussed above) has been initiated. Phase 1 of the Traffic Management Scheme (an increase in white lining on the C18 to create a narrowing effect in key spots, as well as extending the give way lines from Ridge Common Lane to improve visibility for emerging traffic) is expected to be executed in the coming weeks. Phase 2 is currently under consideration.

The Lengthsman Scheme - Steep Parish Council administers the Lengthsman Scheme on behalf of a cluster of 7 local parishes. This initiative is funded by Hampshire County Council and provides a sum of money to each parish to be used for local small-scale maintenance jobs as identified by the Parish Council and carried out by the Lengthsman, e.g. footpath clearance, clearing ditches, cleaning of road signs and cutting back of vegetation. If you spot a roads/footpath related problem that you think the Lengthsman could resolve, please get in touch with the Clerk – [clerk@steep-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@steep-pc.gov.uk)

SDNPA Local Plan – The Local Plan seeks to bring together all the policies and plans of the areas it covers and attempts to make a coherent whole. As part of this process, the Authority has reviewed all settlement boundaries for towns and parishes within the Park and recommended various changes. As you will have seen in the parish newsletter, for Steep, this means excluding some areas which were previously inside the boundary and the inclusion of the land next to the Village Hall (now in the trust of the Steep in Need Charity) inside the boundary. In general, the Parish Council welcomes these changes as it opens up the possibility of making progress on implementing some of the priorities of the Parish Plan. The draft Local Plan has now been submitted to the

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Inspector who will consider the plan and decide whether to agree or modify the proposals. It is hoped the plan will be adopted sometime next year.

Footpaths – Steep P.C. continues to take its responsibilities for the footpath network around the parish very seriously. Thanks to the efforts of Cllr. Jenny Martin and the Clerk, the Council has been very successful in accessing grant funding for surfacing improvements from various places which lightens the load on Parish funds.

Ashford Hangers – On-going liaison takes place with Hampshire Countryside Service regarding work in the Ashford Hangers. Two volunteer work mornings have been held during the year, both of which had a good turn out with satisfying results. However, concern over the condition of Lutcombe Pond remains an issue which needs to be addressed in liaison with HCC and SDNPA in the coming months.

In conclusion, Cllr. Cruttenden thanked fellow councillors on behalf of both Jim and himself for their hard work over the year and Jenny, the Parish Clerk for her support.

### APM18/06 **County Councillor's Report**

Russell Oppenheimer introduced himself to members of the public who had not yet met him and explained that his remit covers a large division and includes 10 Parish Councils. Russell's full report is appended to the minutes but items hi-lighted at the meeting are as follows:

- Funding cuts – County Councils across the UK are facing financial challenges and Hampshire is no exception and has had to find £140m of annual savings - a rise in Council tax was unavoidable. However, the increase will ensure that vulnerable people (both elderly and young) are looked after and local services protected.
- Roads – Community Funded Initiative – Russell was very pleased to be able to support the Steep Traffic Calming project with a grant from his County Councillor allocation
- BOATS (Byways Open to All Traffic) – Russell is pushing the National Park to use its powers and influence to ensure better protection for BOATS. A meeting is scheduled for the end of May to discuss making this a greater priority.

APM18/07 **District Councillor's Report -** Nick Drew was unable to attend the meeting and no report was available.

APM17/08 **Finance Report** - A summary of the accounts for the year ended 31.3.17 was circulated at the meeting and is appended to the minutes. There were no questions.

APM17/09 **Public Forum** – Members of the public were invited to raise any issues:

- Communication – The P.C. intends to set up a face book page to make information more readily available to residents.
- Cycle Routes – Mill Lane is now a designated cycle route and speed of cyclists is becoming an issue for horse riders and pedestrians. It was queried whether cyclists can be slowed down? It was agreed that if the P.C. is made aware of any major cycling events through the village, they will contact the organisers to remind them of their countryside responsibilities. However, in general, cycling should be encouraged as an alternative form of transport.

Following the public forum, members of the public were offered refreshments before the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.