

STEEP ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 2024

CHAIRMAN: Jenny Martin

CLERK: Sandra Humphrey

MINUTES OF THE STEEP ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY **MONDAY 13th May 2024 AT 7pm HELD AT STEEP VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Jenny Martin (in the Chair) Terry Cook Shannon Askew
Freddie Holmes Alison Driver Robin Hollington
Charlotte Duthie Harriett Waley-Cohen Paul Garstin

IN ATTENDANCE: Nick Drew - District Councillor
Russell Oppenheimer – County Councillor
Sandra Humphrey - Clerk

There were 9 members of the public present

APM24/01 **Welcome and Apologies**
Apologies there were none.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APM24/02 **Minutes** – The Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 24th April 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were approved as an accurate record and were signed accordingly.

APM24/03 **Talk on 900 years history of Steep Village Church**
Fran Box delivered a very in-depth and extremely interesting history of Steep Parish Church along with support from Dr Rev Susie Colledge. The Council thanked them both for presenting this.

APM24/04 **Chairmans Annual Report**
The Chair read out her report (attached Appendix A)

APM24/05 **County Councillors Report**
Cllr Oppenheimer spoke about lobbying on byways, and he is getting somewhere with the policy going in the right direction. HCC are determined to stop the damage to these byways. He also informed that the Government have decided not to allow anything to happen on permitted development under The National Park. He was 99% confident that all our HWRC amenity dumps will stay open. Ashford Hangers middle path there will be a meetup to clear the ash on the path, Cllr Askew said there may be some volunteers who would be prepared to raise funds to help on the hanger's path.

APM24/06 **District Councillor's Report –**
Cllr Drew thanked all the Councillors for all the work they have done and are doing. And for the passion they have for Steep and Steep Marsh.

He spoke on the following topics: -

(a) *Flooding*

This is impacting on peoples home and sandbags are not the answer.

(b) *Planning*

Issues continue and a lot of time is spent ensuring work is carried out to planning conditions. The biggest issue is The Brickyards because of the different rules on each unit.

(c) *Speeding and noise*

Involved with the team on speeding and has supplied various grants for speed equipment. He is in contact with Police Crime Commissioner as to what is being done medium term, especially Lorry's and cars in Steep Marsh.

(d) *Grants*

There were £3,500 grants available over the entire ward and Steep has been very good at obtaining large amounts of these.

(e) *Refuse Collection*

Bins had been replaced where they had gone missing.

APM24/07 **Finance Report** – The finance report had previously been circulated and was read out by The Clerk. Please see attached for the report (Appendix B).

APM24/08 **Public Forum** – Members of the public were invited to raise any issues.

MOP1 expressed a personal interest in planning that went through and disappointment that no social housing was catered for.

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MOP2 raised an issue with the roads in Steep Marsh hamlet which is connected by 3 lanes, he reported that recently a pickup had overturned on Rockpitts Lane, the current speed limit is 60 mph, these lanes are used by walkers and horse riders. If highways do not address this there will be a serious accident.

There were no further comments or questions. Residents were invited to stay for refreshments.

The meeting closed at 8.52 p.m.

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Appendix A

Steep Parish Council Chair's Report 10/05/24

This past year as chair of the parish council has been the 'year of the new'. Starting with the elections in May 23, we had 5 new councillors, a relatively new clerk and a new chair so it has been a steep learning curve for us all. New people bring new ideas and with some difference of opinions amongst us we have had many lively and sometimes challenging meetings. I'd like to mention the positive contribution made by Councillor Harriet Waley-Cohen, as vice chair, before unfortunately, she needed to step back after a car accident has left her with long term concussion. We hope that she continues her recovery and can become a fully active member of the council as soon as her injuries allow. Thank you too, to our previous clerk, Dawn Rodgers, for the contribution she made to the smooth running of the council and her work with the council's new website, organizing our training, answering multiple questions and generally keeping us in order. Unfortunately, ill health required her to step aside at the end of December but we were fortunate to be able to appoint a new trainee clerk, Sandra Humphrey, who joined us in January. Parish Council matters this year have been dominated by the planning application for the development on the land in Church Road, next to the village hall. The previous council had worked hard to influence the developer to find a scheme that maximised the opportunities for the community and enhanced the centre of the village. Unfortunately, the proposed plan submitted by the developer did not meet with SDNP planning policy, the plan was revised and the Parish Council, along with some other residents, made objections. Thanks to our PC planning team, led by Councillor Alison Driver, the PC lodged a well thought out and clear objection. However, despite the objections, the planning application was approved recently by SDNPA. In light of this, the PC will now reconsider what is best for the community and the village hall in relation to the management of the open space associated with the development. Councillors have pursued projects to enhance our village where time has allowed and special thanks should go to the Roads and Traffic team, led by Councillor Freddie Holmes, for the huge amount of work undertaken in engaging with the County Council. The team has continued to chase HCC about the state of the roads and the flooding experienced this winter in several locations in the village as well as pursuing the traffic calming project which was started by the previous PC. It is hoped that the second village gate and line painting will be completed this summer. Although Steep Marsh is currently unrepresented on the council, I'd like to thank Councillors Shannon Askew and Charlotte Duthie for ensuring that the specific issues of the Marsh are not forgotten. An informal meeting with the residents of the Marsh was well attended and the council is pursuing some of their concerns, particularly those related to the Brickyards units. AND at last – Steep Marsh has a new notice board! Thank you to Simon Hawkes for erecting it. In addition to the duties as parish councillors, Steep Parish Council is also the sole managing trustee of the Steep War Memorial Village Club (SWMVC) more commonly referred to as the village hall and its land. This role takes an increasing proportion of councillors' time. So the newly elected parish council took the opportunity to change the structure of the management of the hall with the intention of spreading the responsibilities as trustees more equitably. More of this is reported in the Annual Report of SWMVC (attached). The parish council is very fortunate to be supported by our District (EHDC) and County (HCC) Councillors, Nick Drew and Russell Oppenheimer. Our thanks go them both. They have attended meetings regularly, keeping us informed of local and county matters as well as following up on parish issues with their relative councils and both have been generous with their grants to assist projects the PC is trying to progress. Parish councillors are always busy and give their time freely to carry out the council's business: to name but a few, they monitor and maintain the play equipment on the common, keep the common clear of debris, protect the newly planted trees, deal with ash die back on the tree behind the War Memorial, keep an eagle eye on the finances and ensure consistency in the PC's communication with the public. Thanks to all

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for their hard work. Our lovely village, situated in such a beautiful area, could not flourish on the work of the parish council alone. I would like to thank all those who have assisted during the past year. Special mention should go to Steve Cook who continues to do a fantastic job on the war memorial and Mike Robinson and his volunteers who carry out Speedwatch sessions up and down the C18. More recently we have had some assistance from the Monday Group who carry out various jobs in the hangers, the common and in the neighbouring village of Sheet. The latest project to get underway is for a working group to consider the many issues with the Church Road traffic. Very recently some 18 stakeholders (including the heads of both schools) met with 2 members of the PC to identify the issues and propose some solutions. It's very early days but there will be more of this in the coming months. The parish council welcomes all the help it can get and so I hope more of you will volunteer to help us continue our work on behalf of the whole village to make Steep be the best it can be. Jenny Martin

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Appendix B

FINANCE REPORT 2023-2024

- Precept for the year was set at £32,000
- The end of year accounts are currently with the internal auditor and will be presented at the June meeting for approval and then submitted to the external auditor. The annual return will be available on the website of the Parish Council in due course.
- The receipts for the year were £48,501.46 this is made up of precept, lengthsman income and various grants received during the year, which were for phase 2 traffic management, new notice board for Steep Marsh, and ad hoc grants. And recoverable vat.
- Payments for the year have amounted to £50,031.06
- Receipts vs payments show an overspend of £1,529.60 which is mainly due to election costs being above budget.
- Overall, we have managed to stay within budget in most areas.
- Funds as at 31/3/24 stood at

Current account £32,213.33

Deposit account £15,411.40

Balance £47,624.73