

BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk:
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MINUTES


of a meeting of Blisworth Parish Council held at 7.30pm on
Monday 6th February 2012
in the upstairs room of Blisworth Village Hall.

084	PRESENT	
	Chairman:	Cllr Mrs P Masterman
	Vice- Chairman:	Cllr C Jeffery
	Councillors:	Cllr Mrs D Burgoyne, Cllr Mrs J Hawkins, Cllr S Billing, Cllr Mrs M Field, Cllr C Gardner, Cllr D Dalton, Cllr T Bartlett
	By Invitation:	Cllr S Clark (SNC)
	In Attendance:	Mrs A Bartlett (Clerk)
	Members of the Public:	10
085	APOLOGIES	
	Cllr Mrs K Gray – Family commitments	
	Cllr Mrs M McKeown – Medical reasons	
086	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:	
	None	
087	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:	
	<p>Cllr D Dalton requested that minute 077(iv) is amended to read Cllr D Dalton - community bus</p> <p>Cllr Mrs D Burgoyne advised that she is a member of the Planning Sub-group and asked for it to be recorded.</p> <p>The Minutes of the previous two meetings, having been circulated, were approved by the Council as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr Mrs J Hawkins</p> <p>Seconded: Cllr D Dalton</p>	
088	ONGOING MATTERS	
<i>i</i>	CHURCHYARD WALL – The Parish Clerk has received the faculty for the work on the Churchyard wall.	
<i>ii</i>	BLISWORTH PLAYING FIELD DRIVE DAMAGE –The Parish Clerk has written to the Leadbitter Group and is awaiting a response. Cllr S Clark advised that has not received a response either. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would pursue the matter with the company.	PC
<i>iii</i>	ROUND AND ABOUT – The Parish Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council will be using Shire Lumsden to print Round and About and the information has been passed to the editors. Cllr Mrs P Masterman agreed to contact Anne Eggleton about the delivery of the magazine.	PM
<i>iv</i>	BLISWORTH ARM PLANTERS – It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would write to the householders requesting assurances that they would maintain the planters and remove	PC



	them if they move house. On receipt of this agreement the Parish Clerk will contact NCC and apply for a Licence.	
089	BUSINESS ITEMS	
<i>i</i>	ACRE – Beth Milne from ACRE spoke to the Parish Council about the Parish Plan and Neighbourhood Plans. Further details of the discussion are reproduced at Appendix 4 of these Minutes.	
<i>ii</i>	Planning Sub-group Terms of Reference – A meeting was held on 2 nd February 2012 to discuss Terms of Reference and to discuss the current planning applications. Cllr Mrs P Masterman has stepped down from the group and Cllr C Jeffery has taken the position of chairman. Terms of Reference for the Sub-group were approved. A copy of the Terms of Reference is reproduced at Appendix 5 of these Minutes. Proposed: Cllr Mrs D Burgoyne Seconded: Cllr Mrs P Masterman	
<i>iii</i>	Standing Orders – Following information received from Kevin Lane, Head of Legal, SNC, it was agreed that a review of the Standing Orders be deferred until at least 1 July 2012 when new guidance is due to be published.	
<i>iv</i>	Training – It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would enquire about the cost of training for groups from NCALC.	PC
<i>v</i>	Blisworth Housing – It was agreed that the Planning Sub-group would look at the Neighbourhood Plan, local plans, and the letter from Mr T Marsh and give a considered report at the next Parish Council Meeting.	
<i>vi</i>	Chapel Lane Lighting – It was agreed that the Parish Council would contact E-ON regarding the light on Chapel Lane requesting that they pay for the installation of the shield to deflect the light away from Mr Thornton’s premises as they had advised during the on-site meeting that it would not cause a problem. The Parish Clerk will also request details of the proposed shield to enable consultation with Mr Thornton. In the event that E-ON refuse to pay it was proposed that the Chairman Cllr Mrs P Masterman, should make the decision of whether to pay for the shield.	PC
<i>vii</i>	Gayton and Tiffield Bus – Cllr T Bartlett confirmed that he had spoken to Ray Spencer and had been advised that in order to change the routes of the bus it would have to be approved by the committee and have to be reregistered as an official route since it is a scheduled service. They would need certainty that they have both customers in and drivers from Blisworth. Cllr Bartlett has also spoke to Nick King of Village Networks and it was suggested that it may be possible use their minibus for example for a monthly trip to the Farmers Market in Towcester. The Gayton and Tiffield Bus goes once a month to Milton Keynes and as it is not a scheduled service could be used. In either case there may be a need to form a travel club and a lot more details are required. It was suggested that a sub-group should be set up and invite Mrs Beryl Andrews as the Age UK representative. Cllr T Bartlett and Cllr D Dalton would also be in the group.	TB/ DD
<i>viii</i>	Supporting Communities in Neighbourhood Planning – Cllr Mrs M Field, Cllr Mrs J Hawkins and Cllr C Jeffery requested that they are booked on the course on 1 st March 2012.	PC
090	PLANNING:	
091	APPLICATIONS	
<i>i</i>	S/2012/0029/FUL Gayton Marina Blisworth Arm Blisworth New building to accommodate chandlery, laundry, wetdocks, admin & stores. New vehicular access, hardstandings and replacement jetties.	



	<p>meeting to look at the ash tree and the condition of the closed Church yard wall.</p> <p>Cllr Mrs M Field - Advised that the drain cover outside 50 High Street has still not been repaired, the lay-by outside the Church has a number of pot holes and the manhole cover on Towcester Road lifts when it rains and the water has eroded the footpath around it. These items will be reported to Street Doctor. Cllr Mrs Field will be attending the Mid-Parishes meeting and will raise the issue of bulk buying of electricity.</p> <p>Cllr C Gardner – Requested that the 30 mile an hour sign is moved back to the junction on Chapel Lane. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would speak to NCC Highways. It was also suggested that Orbit Housing should be contacted and asked to put signage up directing HGVs down Northampton Road prior to the commencement of the development. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would contact Orbit Housing.</p> <p>Cllr D Dalton – Enquired about the pontoon moored outside the mill. Mr A Andrews advised that British Waterways have removed permission to moor it unless the owner fits the pontoon with a rudder, tiller and bow fitted. This will not guarantee that the owner will receive planning permission from SNC.</p> <p>Cllr Mrs P Masterman – High Street and Pond Bank have a problem with rats and residents have been advised to contact SNC Environmental Health but that there will be a cost. Cllr S Clark agreed to make enquiries at SNC about the treatments available. Cllr Mrs Masterman raised concerns about dog mess in the village. The Parish Clerk is to contact Environmental Health regarding posters and to update the Parish Council on Dog Control Orders at the next meeting. An invitation to all Parish Councillors to attend the opening of the new Scout Hall on 25th February 2012. Cllrs Mrs D Burgoyne, Mrs J Hawkins, Mrs K Gray and Mrs M Field are intending to attend.</p>	<p>PC</p> <p>SC/ PC</p>
097	GROUP REPORTS FOR INFORMATION	
<i>i</i>	Parish Plan Progress Team: An update on the work of the Team is at Appendix 3 of this Agenda.	
<i>ii</i>	Neighbourhood Watch – A report from the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators is reproduced at Appendix 4 of these minutes.	
098	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<p>The date of the next meeting is MONDAY 5th MARCH 2012 at 7.30PM in the upstairs room of BLISWORTH VILLAGE HALL.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 21.45.</p> <p>Signed:  Signed:</p> <p>Alison Bartlett Cllr Mrs P Masterman Clerk to Blisworth Parish Council Chairman</p>	

PUBLIC QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR REPRESENTATIONS:

None

APPENDIX 1a

To Blisworth Parish Council

Arising from the December council meeting, at which nothing could be done because of insufficient attendance of members, I would like to respectfully suggest an urgent action as soon as you have a quorum and the Budget and Precept discussion is out of the way:

Subject, Blisworth Housing

At the December meeting you were informed that it is not mandatory to formulate and apply for a Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore, if without a Plan or while such Plan is subject to completion, the village is "protected" from development applications according to the existing Confines Boundaries.

Also mentioned at the same meeting is the fact that re-alignment of the Confines by the SNC will be carried out consultatively (with Blisworth Parish Council). We also know that it is scheduled for 2011/2012.

You have a mandate from the results of the Community Survey in which a majority of villagers favour either no housing development at all or some development but only in terms of small clusters of houses.

Therefore you should write a strongly worded letter to "Strategic Planning", ie. Mr A. Darcy or Mr A. Preston and copy to Mr S. Clarke, expressing the wish that the existing Confines not be extended. You should also point out that Exception Cases justifying development outside the Confines be not encouraged unless it can be shown by the proposer that the plan will benefit the village.

Three exception cases have been passed in recent years - please permit me to remind you:

1. **Ladyfield** - now comprising a total of about 34 social houses which brings the total number of social houses in Blisworth (incl. the 11 expected in the Chapel Hill Farm development) to **well over 100**. Given that all these houses are supposed to be managed by Northamptonshire Homes with a favour to Blisworth families, then surely this number is already enough and no further social-housing-needs surveys need be encouraged.
2. **Agricultural Dwelling** - which is perfectly reasonable.
3. **Chapel Hill Farm development** - we were railroaded into accepting a notional 5% housing increase on the basis that the village infrastructure could bear it. In fact a serious shortfall in housing planned for 2009 by the SNC was the reason for the imposition. That "notional 5%" can now be safely disposed of, completely, because with our 27 houses, other south Northamptonshire developments (eg. at Roade) totalled a sufficient number of new houses to satisfy the central government requirement.

Remember too that quite detailed outline plans hit the Parish nearly a year after Mr A. Darcy happened to mention to one of us that there was a development in the wings with a considerable "planning gain". **Whether the Parish Council expedite the Neighbourhood Plan or not, they should seek an assurance that the Parish Council must be involved in discussions on any new significant project at a far earlier stage than in the above example, this being part of the "Localism" provisions.** This point could perhaps be a secondary one in the letter that I sincerely hope you will write soon.

Yours Tony Marsh

APPENDIX 1b

BLISWORTH VILLAGE CONFINES

I am offering here a possible draft of a Parish Council letter to the planning community at SNC.
A. Marsh 20/01/2012.

Quote:

The village has not completed a neighbourhood Plan but has carried out a Parish opinion survey, Community Survey, in which questions were included on villagers' views on the subject of any enlargement of the village. As it is intended by the SNC to review village confines in 2012 it is appropriate to state our opinions and, indeed, in view of the Localism Bill we wish to state our requirements.

The "Confines" operates with the current Regional Local Plan as a significant negative against any housing development outside its boundary. Our Community Survey indicates that a majority of villagers do not wish to see any substantial village expansion. Development of small numbers of houses, however, would not be considered disadvantageous.

For this reason, there should **be no extension of the Confines at all**. The two exceptions that lie outside the Confines (namely Ladyfield and Chapel Hill Farm) should remain as just that – exceptions. The first of these exceptions was to provide an increase in social housing. The second was to alleviate an embarrassment for SNC regarding their 2009/10 housing allocation. If Chapel Hill farm goes ahead it will offer a slim advantage to the village in the form of 10% more social housing and perhaps an increased stabilisation for our County bus services.

Development of small numbers of houses may be continued via the process of in-fill and by operating the "Rule of Confines" in a manner that may be *slightly* less strict. We can envisage locations where an in-fill or a mirrored fill of a few houses on the opposite side of a road would probably be acceptable even though they would lie outside the Confines.

The justification of our Confines may be expressed in another way. Most villagers know there are fields or woods, canal etc. no further away from their house than just one garden. Blisworth is large but because of this fact – it feels somewhat rural. Many of us can actually view fields from an upstairs window. Blisworth does not want to lose this visual amenity and its rural feel. These are key village characteristics that must not be destroyed.

A revised Confines outline might circumscribe a field adjacent to Ladyfield, two fields next to Chapel Hill Farm, a field opposite houses along Towcester Road, a field "behind" Buttmead or perhaps a field due south of the Church (as we now note it has been placed outside the Conservation Area). This must not happen.

:Unquote

The eventual appearance of a Neighbourhood Plan could make the same points and, of course, go into detail on what would be acceptable types of housing, acceptable street and house design, etc. However, if we can get these points across in the short term, which suggests strongly that we rule against housing then there would be little point fussing over such details. "Localism" also furnishes us with an earlier warning of any developers intentions and that gives us the opportunity to deal with details.

APPENDIX 2
Monday 6th February 2012

1.	CPRE & NCALC - Planning explained, booklet received.
2.	CPRE & NCALC - How to shape where you live: a guide to neighbourhood planning, booklet received.
3.	E-mail – From SNC advising that has frozen its part of council tax at £170.37 for a Band D home which is equal to £3.27 per week.
4.	E-mail – From Cllr Ron Bailey of Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council requesting Cllrs support the proposal for Ministerial guidance that, in the case of LARGE planning applications containing numerous technical or consultants' reports, developers should be exhorted to attend a Local Council Meeting to answer questions on the application; and provide some funding to help the Local Council make an independent assessment of the application, by writing to or emailing local MPs
5.	Rural Services Network - Weekly Email News Digest - 23 January 2012
6.	NCALC – E-mail regarding the New Homes Bonus, an amount paid by central government to principal councils based on the number of new homes built and existing homes bought back in to habitation. The amount is roughly equivalent to 6 years' worth of Council Tax for the property.
7.	Highways Newsletter – January, about Transport, from the recent changes to the bus services to school and social care transport .
8.	Letter from SNC – Confirming there will be a by-election for a Northamptonshire County Councillor for the Towcester division, and a South Northamptonshire District Councillor for Towcester Brook ward on Thursday 9 February 2012.
9.	NCALC – E-mail with details of two forthcoming Neighbourhood Planning events, jointly organised by Northants CALC and CPRE Northamptonshire as part of the 'Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods in Planning' national project.
10.	E-mail from SNC – Advising that the Job Club will be at Towcester Town Hall Tuesday 7 th February from 11.30am to 1.30pm
11.	E-mail from SNC – Details of the 2012/13 South Northamptonshire Council calendar of meetings as agreed by Full Council.
12.	NCALC - Northants CALC eUpdate - January/February 2012 including the latest updates on the Code of Conduct, Neighbourhood Planning, and the Localism Act. There's news from around Northamptonshire on allotments, play areas, affordable housing and rural broadband.
13.	E-mail from SNC - South Northamptonshire Council will be hosting a 'Finds Surgery' on Wednesday, 8 February, where members of the public can have their archaeological finds identified and recorded.
14.	E-mails from Mr Thornton and Ms White – Regarding street lights in Chapel Lane. 25 th , 31 st January and 1 st February 2012.
15.	E-mail from SNC - South Northants Council are once again recruiting for Master Composters (MCs)
16.	SNVB – January/ February newsletter

17.	Letter from NCC – Advising of an opportunity for Local Lighting Authorities to take advantage of potential efficiencies through utilising Balfour Beatty as a street lighting service. Service options available will vary from bespoke maintenance regimes to specific replacement programmes. Expressions of interest are requested.
18.	Rural Services Network - Weekly Email News Digest - 30 January 2012
19.	Letter from E-ON – Regarding the cost of retro fitting new energy saving lights.
20.	Major Works Briefing Paper from SNH – Works being carried out in Connegar Leys and Courteenhall Road during February.
21.	Letter from Mr & Mrs Howard – Copy of letter sent to NCC regarding stones on the verge.
22.	Letter from Mid-Northants Parishes – Containing responses to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations Consultation
23.	E-mails from Mr T Marsh – Regarding Blisworth housing – 6 th December 2011 and 20 th January 2012.

APPENDIX 3

BLISWORTH PARISH PLAN PROGRESS TEAM

FIRST YEAR REPORT Jan 2012

The Blisworth Parish Plan 2011-2016 was finalised and distributed in January 2011. Since then two new members have joined the team making a team of eight. We meet monthly, to ensure ongoing progress of the action plan, developed from the results of the village questionnaire, and support any village organisations or individuals who are helping to achieve this. A report is presented at the monthly Parish Council meetings and we are grateful to them for their continued support and encouragement.

Improve your Patch Award

We entered for this in summer 2011, and were awarded a Certificate for our plans to provide torch/alarms to vulnerable villagers. The team gained useful experience in how applications for these awards should be submitted, and noted that many villages included all they had done in the past when submitting a plan for the future. We can do the same next time as this does seem to carry weight.

Police and Safety

We are in touch with the Police Community Support Officer. When a vacancy occurred for a replacement Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, we organised the delivery of two leaflets to every household in the village: a Police leaflet, "Your Home Security", and an advert for a volunteer to fill the vacancy. This resulted in two volunteers coming forward and the Parish Council has now asked them to work together with the team of street representatives. This excellent result means that we can continue to have improved security in our village. By maintaining Neighbourhood Watch status we may be able to keep Home Insurance premiums down.

Low-cost torch/personal alarms to villagers who requested them have been purchased and distributed. This was achieved through advertising in *Round & About* and distributing at various village events and venues.

Best Village Competition

The Parish Council has approved Blisworth's first entry for this competition this year, and will pay the £35 entry fee. A sub-group of two Parish Councillors and two Progress Team members is currently putting together our submission, which must be in by the end of March.

Churchyard Conservation Award Scheme

The Progress Team, together with the Rector and Pastor and interested villagers, is looking at other churchyards which have entered for this award, and will collect and present information to the village in about a year's time, for consultation. We intend to approach the Wildlife Trust for advice, take serial photographs throughout the year, list existing flora and fauna, and try to make plans of the graves more easily accessible to the public.

Secure Central Village Noticeboard

The village Art and Craft Group have been asked to submit designs for a central village feature, including a seat and secure noticeboard, by the end of February. Several designs are being produced, and the artists will meet with the Progress team in February. The Progress Team and Parish Councillors are looking at funding, and it is hoped we may be able to install this during the Jubilee Year of 2012.

Village Design Statement – Now Called Neighbourhood Plan

The Progress Team supports the Parish Council in its plans to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and applauds the setting up of a subgroup to address this vital issue.

Community Bus

The team has been concerned about the loss of the JASON bus service. We met with the Scout leader and the Tapestry group leader who are interested in a community bus for the village. We asked the Parish Council to talk to Gayton about their community bus and we are pleased to note that this has been done and that the Parish Council has set up a sub-group to look into possibilities.

Round and About

It is not possible to produce Round and About monthly at the moment, but the team has been active together with the Parish Council to ensure its continuance after we no longer have access to low rate printing from St John's Ambulance.

Sport and Leisure

One team member has produced and displayed a current list of all clubs and amenities in Blisworth with contact numbers on the new Parish Council secure noticeboard next to the Village Hall.

Businesses

Attempts are being made to work more with local businesses and this needs further development.

Blisworth Parish Council

APPENDIX 4 Monday 6th February 2012

Summary of Discussion with Beth Milne of ACRE

Beth is a Rural Officer at ACRE and has assisted with parish plans. With the introduction of neighbourhood plans there is some confusion about how it should all fit together. Blisworth Parish Plan Progress Team is taking forward Parish Plan very well but ACRE recommend no more than 3 Parish Councillors on the Team because it needs to be community led, but ACRE have no concerns as Blisworth has always been community led.

With regard to Neighbourhood Planning, it is an official planning document and has to be done in conjunction with SNC. SNC will help with costs and will foot the bill for a referendum. It is about looking at what is inevitable and how it can be introduced, how the village wants it to look, and the resources needed as a result. Blisworth Parish Council need to consider the cost which has been quoted as being between £17K and £63K. The Parish Plan forms the basis of the community consultation but may need to add to it. Consider very carefully before starting down that route. Speak to SNC. Keep advertising what doing with PPPT and keep going. It may be appropriate to just work on certain areas of the Neighbourhood Plan rather than aiming for a full blown plan. Beth is happy to try and arrange meeting with Yardley Gobion Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Government grant money will be available but there is no information on how much, when or where as yet. It should be in partnership between NCALC, CPRE and should filter down. Parish Councils will have to apply but the money will be held by the district. Costs are for legal fees and independent examination and to planners for their input. Any Neighbourhood Plan needs to be focussed and with an aim, a larger vision for the community. Development cannot be stopped but discussions can be had with the Council to influence and have a positive effect but no Neighbourhood Plan can go against set Council and national policies. It gives Parish Councils a legal voice in where it is happening, what is happening, money etc.

Cllr S Clark advised that all authorities have to show they have a 5 year land supply for housing. The 40 house policy set by SNC was an interim rural housing policy based on previous government requirement for 330 houses per year so targets were apportioned across district. The purpose was to prevent inappropriate developments being put forward for villages and being refused but the planning inspector then approving them because they had no 5 year policy. Consultations have been had with Parish Councils and that was turned into policy. The 5 year land supply is moveable feast and SNC still need to demonstrate have 5 years land supply or they will have to fall back on the interim policy again. Blisworth currently have surplus of 7 houses but that is only indicative. If developments are proposed in Towcester or Radstone then that will take pressure off the villages. Neighbourhood

Development Orders are for large developments and not appropriate for Blisworth. The next stage would be looking at needs in villages where developments are to be built. Village confines are important and the Parish Council and SNC would need to work together to discuss where current confines are and where they may need to be moved to if necessary. Once agreed then applications that are received and are not in line with the development plan they could potentially be refused on the grounds that they not in plan etc. It cannot be used to protect village from unwanted development.