

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Tuesday 9th November 2010 at The White Horse Inn

Present:

Chairman	Mr J Smith
Clerk	Mrs N Campling
Ranger, National Trust	Mr A Foley
County Councillor	Mrs Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor

and 35 parishioners

Mrs L Walker, Lt Col H Rogers & Mrs U Rogers, Mrs A Hollingworth, Mr & Mrs J Twynam, Mr & Mrs C Avenell, Mr & Mrs N Shorten, Mr & Mrs D Campbell, Mrs L Irwin, Mr & Mrs A Coulson, Mr H Smith, Mrs C Lawrence, Mr T Clifford, Miss B Lawrence, Mr N Harrison, Mr & Mrs S Searis, Mr & Mrs R Salmon, Mr Q Finnegan, Mrs T West, Mr & Mrs R Avery, Mr C Ryan, Mrs J Nelson, Prof W Davies, Mr & Mrs T McAuliffe, Mrs K Godfrey, Mrs Marcella Seymour.

Report on The White Horse Hill: Mr Andy Foley, Ranger, National Trust

Management: Mr A Foley proposed that a different management of the Hill would be instigated given the issues of antisocial behaviour that he has observed since coming into post.

Antisocial behaviour: There have been a series of recent incidents on the Hill.

These include - vandalism of one of the ticket machines (which has subsequently had to be removed), high speed driving by youths (the Trust has now positioned large sarsen stones in an attempt to prevent this), letting off of fireworks, littering, a sheep attack by a dog leading to the loss of stock, and fencing removal. If any antisocial activity is noted please could these be reported to the Trust (in addition to the police). Mr A Foley telephone number is 07721 671 024.

Report from Mrs A Fitzgerald O'Connor, County Councillor

Finance: OCC are awaiting notice of the funds they are to receive from central government, this is due mid December. Millions are to be saved and it is thought that the county division boundaries are to be equalised in an ongoing process over a number of years.

Grit bins: It was queried whether Parish Meeting funds should be used to purchase grit bins for the village. These cost approximately £145 each and would require securing following theft of bins in surrounding villages. The bins would be filled by OCC.

Road Maintenance: A list of all village potholes will be compiled by the Chairman and sent to Mrs A Fitzgerald O'Connor who agreed to lobby OCC on our behalf.

Agenda

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr & Mrs A Spink, Mr & Mrs G Jones, Mr R Godfrey, Mr & Mrs D Blount, Mr & Mrs T Swash, Mr & Mrs B Campbell, Mr & Mrs J Golec, Mr D Irwin.

2. Adopt minutes of last meeting

Copies of the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 11th May 2010 were circulated and read by Meeting attendees. The Minutes were unanimously agreed by the Meeting.

3. Matters arising from the previous meeting

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

4. Precept

The Clerk reported that as of the Meeting date, there was a balance of £493.82 in the Parish Account. The annual contribution of £50 towards the annual running costs of THMH was discussed and the meeting concluded that this should remain unchanged for this year. The size of the precept for next year was also discussed which in previous years has been £150. Following discussion, the Chairman proposed that it should remain at £150 per annum, which was agreed without dissent by the Meeting.

5. Election of officers

Chairman: It was proposed by Lt Col H Rogers, seconded by Mrs A Hollingworth and unanimously agreed by the Meeting that Mr J Smith should be re-elected as Chairman.

Vice-Chairman: It was proposed by Mrs J Twynam, seconded by Mrs P Coulson and unanimously agreed by the Meeting that Mr A Spink should be re-elected as Vice-Chairman.

Clerk: It was proposed by Mr C Ryan, seconded by Mrs J Nelson and unanimously agreed by the Meeting that Mrs N Campling should be re-elected as Clerk.

6. Planning

Mrs J Twynam of the Planning Sub-Committee, reported that the following planning applications have been processed:

Woolstone Farm – Proposed conversion of existing barn to provide first floor one bedroom flat.

Beech Tree Cottage – Amendment to reposition conservatory on the rear elevation and associated basement below.

7. Planning application for photovoltaic arrays, Westmill Farm, Watchfield

The Chairman informed the Meeting of the intended submission of a planning application for photovoltaic arrays at Westmill Farm. The arrays will cover between 10-25 acres and stand at a height of 2.5m. Photographs of array sites in Germany were distributed and Mr A Coulson highlighted a recent article in the Telegraph on photovoltaics, which has appended to these Minutes. It is understood that subsidies of £1500 per acre per year for a period of 25 years can be obtained. The planning applicant will be providing an exhibition on 16th November at Watchfield Hall between 3-7pm. It was agreed by the Meeting that this application should be observed. Mrs A Fitzgerald O'Connor will inform the Chairman and Clerk if she is informed of anything further, and she agreed to contact Mrs Y Constance on this matter.

8. Neighbourhood watch

Mr A Coulson, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator for Lower Woolstone, stated that since Col P Rosser had resigned as Neighbourhood Watch coordinator in Uffington he had not heard anything on such issues for months. Mr & Mrs C Avenell experienced a recent attempted break in, which the police attended.

9. Woolstone water

Mr J Tywnam, Chairman of Woolstone Water, informed the Meeting that on the 30th November there will be a meeting for users. The quality of the water has been tested this year but as yet there are no results. There are 14 houses using the water, of which 6 are on full domestic supply. All users are responsible for purifying their own water.

10. Village party

It was agreed by the Meeting that a village party will be organised for Summer 2011. Mr C Ryan, Mr & Mrs C Avenell, Mrs J Salmon and Miss B Lawrence agreed to form an organising committee.

11. Roads

Issues covered in Mrs A Fitzgerald O'Connor's report (see above). In addition, the disrepair of the finger sign opposite the pub was reported prior to the Meeting by the Chairman. A replacement sign is on order and should be positioned in 3-4 weeks time.

12. Ditch and pond clearance

Mrs J Twynam noted that the ditches on Marsh Way had been cleared by Mr R Salmon and thanked him for it.

13. Thatched properties and fireworks

Miss B Lawrence asked for account to be taken of thatched cottages when lighting fireworks.

14. Friends of Woolstone Church

Mr J Smith, Treasurer for the Friends of Woolstone Church, stated that the account balance is £2195.02. The friends need to make a contribution towards the new path up to the Church (the full cost being £2000) and they need to purchase some Christmas lights.

15. Any other business

Mrs K Godfrey highlighted the following diary dates:

18th December - There will be a concert in the Church at 5pm

19th December - Nativity Service at 9.45 for which young participants would be most welcome.

23rd December - Carol singing will take place at 5.30pm starting at Mill House.

Friday 4th February 2011 there will be a Safari Supper with hosts around the village to raise money for Church funds.

Lt Col H Rogers raised the following:

How to dispense with litter which has been picked up from around the village now that the new rubbish system is in place. It was agreed that grey bins should be used until further notice. Litter on our roads from McDonald's was noted but it was confirmed by Mr A Foley that McDonald's only send out cleaning services within a 3 mile radius of their premises.

Whether a litter pick was to be organised for the spring, and if so, could it be before the grass started to grow. The Chairman confirmed that there would be a litter pick.

Lt Col Rogers wished to thank all those who had thought of and prayed for him during his recent illness.

Miss B Lawrence: Agreed to shoot rooks if required.

Mrs L Irwin: A meeting for Woolstone Open Gardens Day will be held early next year for views to be discussed on the matter.

Mr A Coulson: Noted the dumping of tyres and further fly-tipping on Claypit Lane.

16. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the date of the next Meeting be Tuesday 10th May at 8pm in The White Horse Inn.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 9.20pm.

SIGNED (Chairman) _____

DATED _____

Solar mania will cast a shadow over Britain

The Telegraph, James Delingpole 8:13AM GMT 08 Nov 2010

One of the things for which Britain is justly famous is its lush, green, spectacularly beautiful countryside. One of the things for which Britain is not at all famous is its endless sunshine. Put these two basic facts together and you might reach one obvious conclusion: that any taxpayer-funded scheme to carpet that unspoilt landscape in solar panels in order to generate electricity at nearly three times the market cost is bound to end in disaster.

You know this. I know this. Maybe one of us should have a word with Chris Huhne. In a scheme so bizarre and suicidally destructive you'd think it could only be the work of a devilish Britainophobic double-agent, our Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change is planning to bribe farmers with billions of pounds of our money to turn their land into solar electricity plants.

The incentives are amazingly powerful. Under the "feed-in tariff" scheme launched in April as part of an attempt to meet EU targets on renewable energy, farmers are being offered subsidies as high as £1,500 an acre to cover their green fields with shiny, black and silver solar arrays. This means that a farmer with 35 acres to spare stands to make £52,500 a year. What's more, this has been guaranteed, tax-free, by the Government for the next 25 years.

You can hardly blame farmers in favourable areas (Devon and Cornwall, especially: in south-west England the "sun rush" has already attracted 70 planning applications to local authorities) for scurrying in to take advantage of this money-for-old-rope scheme before the payment structure is reviewed in 2012. Nor is it surprising that canny foreign investors, led by German and Chinese solar manufacturers (the most obvious beneficiaries of David Cameron's vaunted drive for "green jobs"), have been hurrying to cash in, too.

What almost defies belief, though, is that a Coalition Government supposedly dedicated to cutting costs and boosting economic growth should have fallen for this energy chimera. There is a very good reason why Britain has not heretofore relied overmuch on solar energy: as a northern European country that doesn't get that much sun even in the height of summer, we are simply not designed for it.

Already, several hundred million pounds have been squandered through government subsidy to build up a solar power network around Britain. How much energy does this entire network produce? A total of 2.3 megawatts (MW). To put that into perspective, a medium-sized gas-fired power station produces an annual 800 MW. And a medium-sized coal-fired station between 1,500 and 2,000 MW. In other words, we would need to build nearly 1,000 times more solar panels than we already have in order to equal the power generated by just one conventional power station.

Even the most fervent believer in the perils of "Anthropogenic Global Warming" ought surely to be able to appreciate that this makes no sense whatsoever. Such benefits as may accrue from CO₂ reduction will be vastly outweighed by the damage done to our beautiful countryside. And the financial havoc it will wreak – not least in the £8.6 billion it will add to our energy bills – is almost too horrible to contemplate.

But contemplate it we must – and can, by observing the recent experience of

(much sunnier) Spain. Three years ago, its socialist Zapatero government launched a massive wind and solar energy programme, underpinned by generous "feed-in tariffs" on the Huhne model. Alternative energy investors flooded in. Some poor families even took out loans to install solar panels to take advantage of the generous returns promised by the government. Much was made of all the green jobs which would accrue as result.

Three years on, however, Spain's bright solar future has burned to ashes. The Zapatero government – near-bankrupted by the 126 billion euros of obligations it already owes to renewable energy investors – has had to renege on its subsidies promises. Countless small investors have been ruined. And according to the Spanish economist Dr Gabriel Calzada, the effects of all this wasted spending have been ruinous: through every "green job" created as a result of government subsidy, another 2.2 jobs have been lost in the real economy. Welcome to Chris Huhne's green future: so bright perhaps we should wear shades.

Unapproved