

BIDFORD ON AVON PARISH COUNCIL

In the County of Warwickshire



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 19th April 2006 at 7.30 p.m. at The Parish Meeting Room, Bramley Way, Bidford-on-Avon

ATTENDANCE

Cllrs. Mrs. Keeley (Chairman), Gerrard, Langston, Sandle and Smith

Cllrs. Ms. Deacon, Hendey, Hiscocks, Spiers and Ms. Varga sent their apologies

District Cllr. Pemberton

County Cllr. Barnes sent his apologies

Also present : 13 residents , 8 of them representing the youth, and P.C. Doug Johnson

Guests : Tony Lambert, Community Safety Officer

Cllr. Mrs. Keeley, Chairman of the Parish Council, chaired the meeting.

She welcomed all, specially the youngsters.

1. Cllr. Keeley then read the Chairman's Report, which is attached hereto.
2. The Chairman then introduced Tony Lambert, Community Safety Officer, who had come to talk about improvements to the village for the youngsters.
 - Tony Lambert introduced himself as specializing in crime prevention and architect liaison. In this capacity he had been involved in the lay out of the open space planning of the new development at Friday Furlong
 - Following a meeting of the Police, Stratford District Council and Bidford-on-Avon parish Council about the increase in anti social behaviour in the village, he had carried out a full crime prevention survey of the village to locate the problem "hot" spots and what could be done about them. He found that, typically, the favoured areas for the youth to congregate were around the High Street, specially outside One Stop and the area around the public toilets.
Due to their numbers, even if they were doing nothing just hanging about

talking etc., it has given rise to intimidation to other residents who are then afraid to walk past them and hence stop doing their shopping along the High St.

- This issue had already been recognized back in April 2001 when the Parish Council carried out a survey amongst the youngsters which resulted in the basket ball pitch and the youth shelter on the Big Meadow being set up in November 2004.
However, due to its situation, it is recognized that there is only limited use of this facility – it can only be used during daylight, which restricts its use to the week ends during the winter months.
- It is also recognized that there is very little for youngsters between the ages of 11 and 18 to do safely within the village. The idea of Youth Shelters started in Oxford and has been hugely successful. Tony Lambert stated that he has had the opportunity of visiting a great number of them and has been impressed. Although they are not the be and end all of everything, they are certainly a place where youngsters feel safe to meet.
- Therefore a youth shelter project, to be sited at the top end of the Anglo Saxon Car Park is being advocated, and Tony Lambert hoped, and encouraged the youngsters to support it and pass the word along as:
 - i. It is close to where the young already congregate
 - ii. It has good natural surveillance as it is clearly visible by passers by
 - iii. It is in an area where the users of the shelter can feel safe and protected.
- However, in order for this site to be able to go ahead some problems need to be overcome, such as obtaining authorization from District and County Councils, as well as part filling the ditch, erecting safety barriers to fence off the youth shelter area, bins, etc.
- Tony Lambert also stressed the importance of participation by the youngsters as they will be the users of any facility and he encouraged them to become involved, attend meetings and give their opinion

3. Youth Forum was then opened for question:

- Can the youth shelter design be for older youngsters as the one on the Big Meadow was somewhat uncomfortable
The reply given is that they are built that way as they are to allow “perching” not for long time lying about!
- What had happened to the double decker bus organised by the Depot which had stopped coming to Bidford
The Depot depends on volunteers, which are not always available. Also it appears that Bidford was the only village where drugs were taken on board.
Tony Lambert added that he was trying to get POD involved, as he already has done in Studley, which works in a similar way and is more relaxed than a Youth Club. However, again this requires volunteers .
- Could something be done to the football pitch at The Leys, which is used by many of the youngsters after school etc.

- i. Could they have 2 goal posts
 - ii. Potholes need repairing
 - iii. Ground needs reseeding/returfing as it is quite sandy
 - iv. Netting required to stop the ball going over into the next field
- Could more be done to organize football for U16 as this was an age not catered for
- Could the council consider
 - i. Astraturf
 - ii. Floodlighting – this could be considered but would have to go off at a certain time so as not to cause disturbance to the neighbours
 - iii. Skateboard – they don't like going to the one at the Youth Club as they feel they are too strict. The same applied to canoeing which many also enjoy.
The Council suggested a meeting with the Youth Club where they could put forward their complaints and ideas. The problem often appeared to be that no one went – meetings have been arranged in the past, and no one attends. After this happening two/three times, the Youth Club clearly loses both patience and interest.
 - iv. A Leisure Centre with football, gym etc.
The Council replied that it would simply not be able to afford it. It would be looking at a minimum of £500,000 – as an example the refurbishment of the Grieg Hall at Alcester had, to date, cost £1.2 million. Also, the obvious site would be the Big Meadow, but this is not owned by the Council but leased from the Duchess of Dudley Trust, at a cost of approx. £9,000 per annum
 - v. Areas where they could camp out at night during the summer, which a lot of them like doing
Tony Lambert suggested the best for this would be to obtain permission from a local farmer to use a field.
 - vi. Social events – these had been organised in the past to raise funds and had been very successful with the youngsters
Cllr. Mrs. Keeley said the Council could look into this but it would require full participation at all levels from the youngsters as it costs time and money and a lot of work for the organizers.
 - vii. They requested notices addressed to the young to be put up at One Stop, Budgens and the Post Office and the council agreed to do this subject to authorization from the relevant parties.
- 4. Regrettably. Mrs. Heather Gerrard was unable to attend the meeting and had been invited to give her talk at the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 24th April.
- 5. Open Forum
 - Residents were pleased to hear from the Chairman's Report that Friday Furlong was going to be the last development.
The Chairman replied that this was the hope of the council but that all knew there were a number of back garden and infill development requests continuously coming in. The Council was aware of the antagonism in the village to these and it would continue, where possible, to oppose them.

The Chairman added that members of the Council always attended the Planning Committee meetings at which any application to which it had made any comments, and spoke either in support or against. However, it was again stressed that District Council is the planning authority and that only planning reasons could be put forward.

The Council also advised that the current plan is valid until 2011 when new plans will be put forward and requests to include certain areas will again be made, even if they had been unsuccessful in the past. In this respect, it was agreed that the Council should update the Parish Plan and carry out a Village Design and present it to District Council for adoption for 2011.

- Comments were also made regarding affordable housing and the Council was asked not to be taken in by this name as it anything but and not particularly helpful in assisting young couples to be able to remain in the village
- Grafton Lane – why had nothing been done. The Council replied that it was quite simply due to lack of finance at County Council and that residents would have to sell part of their gardens for anything to be done. However, the Council agreed to contact County Council again and see whether they could get an officer to make a further visit to see what the current state is and what could be done to improve it.

The Chairman thanked all who had come and closed the meeting at 9.15 pm