

**Minutes of the Stratton-on-the-Fosse Annual Parish Meeting
Held in the Village Hall
on Monday 26 April 2004 at 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Councillors Mr R F Jones (Vice Chairman), Mrs J Davies, Maj R Mellotte, Mr A Norris, Mr D J Stock, Mr W Quinn, Mrs Tonks, Mr L Silk, Mr S Thatcher, Mr Jeremy Padfield, Mr John Padfield (Chairman).

IN ATTENDANCE: Clerk, Ms Jaqui Warren (Cam Valley Wildlife Group).

At the start of the Meeting 16 members of the public were present.

1. APOLOGIES: Cllr Mrs A Chisholm, Dist Cllr Dr P Gait, County Cllr Mrs C Cawood.

The Vice-Chairman – Mr Richard Jones – chaired the meeting as the Chairman was recovering after his hip operation. He intended, however, to deliver his own Report.

2. MINUTES of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 28 April 2003 were approved and signed as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING:

There were none.

As Mr Dando had to attend another meeting he was invited by the Vice Chairman Richard Jones to address the meeting at this stage.

4. MIDSOMER NORTON RFC –Mr J Dando, Treasurer the Chairman read out the report.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

5.1 The Chairman reported that it had been a fairly uneventful year as far as council business has been concerned. The Parish Council had dealt with the usual business of planning applications, road maintenance, street cleaning etc. The Chairman highlighted a few matters that this council discussed during the past year: -

5.2 The formalities of the burial ground extension of St Vigors are nearing completion at long last and will be finalised this year.

5.3 The Speedwatch scheme has been running successfully for the past year. The Parish Council has now purchased its own speed gun which is far more convenient than sharing with other villages in the past. The volunteers can now plan the times more suitable to them, but more volunteers are needed to help a few hours a month. Although the operators do not have any legal powers they report speeding motorist to the police, who in turn send warning letters to the offenders.

5.4 The phrase Anti Social Behaviour is a word that is heard, unfortunately, more frequently. A S B is not new, but with recent legislation the law can now give greater protection to the victims. This Council has been involved in a few requests for help and has been able to advise parishioners to which authority to gain assistance.

5.5 The Parish Council is delighted that the Village Hall Committee has made resurgence in its activities and the Parish Council has been able to give them financial help for some essential maintenance work. The Parish Council will encourage and support it as far as possible in the future, as this will be a benefit to the entire village.

5.6 The Chairman thanked all the members of the Council for their support in the past year. A special thanks you was given to the clerk Valerie Attwood for her professionalism in dealing

with Council business. Finally, the Chairman gave his thanks to the District Councillor, Phillip Gait, for his support and advice.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk gave a detailed Financial Report of Income & Expenditure for the Financial Year 2003/2004. The Accounts were made available for inspection.

7. REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS AND SCHOOLS:

The following Organisations and Schools presented very detailed and in-depth reports to the Meeting. These will be available to any person wishing to study them more closely.

- 7.1 ST BENEDICT'S PRIMARY SCHOOL – In the absence of the headteacher, the acting Chairman read out.
- 7.1 ST VIGORS & ST JOHNS PRIMARY SCHOOL – Presented by the Tim Curtis.
- 7.1 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – Presented by Mr Bill James, Secretary.
- 7.1 THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION – Presented by Mrs Mary Jones, Secretary.
- 7.1 LITTLE ANGELS - TODDLER'S GROUP – Presented by Mr Jeremy Padfield in the absence of his wife Sue Padfield.
- 7.1 VILLAGE HALL TRUST – Presented by Mr Tony Price, Chairman.
- 7.1 THE KINGS ARMS - Presented by Mr Tuffs, Landlord. He thanked the parish for being friendly and welcoming.
- 7.1 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR – A Report from Dr P Gait was read by the acting Chairman, who remarked on this particular councillor's high attendance at Parish Council meetings.

Tim Curtis and Mr Tuffs left the meeting at this point.

As the speaker had not yet arrived, those present were invited to part-take in the cheese and wine.

The Speaker duly arrived and the meeting continued.

8. SPEAKER – CAM VALLEY WILDLIFE GROUP:

- 8.1 Jacqui Warren from the cam valley wildlife group proceeded with a most interesting talk, aided by slides, about bats.
- 8.2 She spoke of the different species and how lucky this region (South West England) was in having many species already extinct in the rest of Britain.
- 8.3 Bats conceive in the Autumn, but do not give birth until the Spring when there is a plentiful supply of insects. They are known to live for 30 years.
- 8.4 Now that technology had improved (although still not as advanced as bats radar), bats could be tagged and followed electronically. Therefore much more was being learnt that was not, until now, known about this creature. For instance, it was thought as they could not fly very far that they did not travel far. In fact they travel large distances by way of the hedgerows where they can rest, rather than across fields.

8.5 Also she reported on the most recent legislation regarding bats and how this meant that bats were better protected. This latest law could be used if anyone disturbed bats and their habitat, even if they were not aware of bats being there. The onus was now on the individual to establish if bats were present or not and not to be aware of their presence was no longer a defence. Therefore to remove or disturb bats, intentionally or even unintentionally, would result in a heavy fine.

9. MATTERS OF REPORT & ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:

9.1 Mr James asked whether anything could be done about the narrowing of road at a particular chicane? He had brought the matter up at the last APM but to date it had not been improved. The Vice-Chairman and the Chairman both reported that this had been looked into at the time and a site meeting had been held with Highways. The Parish Council views were strongly reported in which a wider pavement was proposed. Nothing materialised due to lack of funding at the time. This matter would be drawn to the attention of Highways again by the Parish Council.

9.2 The Vice-Chairman thanked all those present, with a special thank you to the ladies who had prepared the food, and invited them to attend the Cheese and Wine Party that followed. Those wishing to participate were reminded that the price was £1.50 but half price for senior citizens.

9.3 There being no other business the Meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____