

Lound Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting
Friday 20th May 2016 at LOUND VILLAGE HALL
Commencing at 7.30 p.m.

(Subject to amendment until signed by the Chairman at the next meeting)

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence

No apologies were received from Parish Councillors as all were present. Also attending were two Suffolk County Councillors, one Waveney District Councillor and ten members of the public. Apologies were received from Sally Popham, Chair of Lound Village Hall and Mike Williard, Chair of Lounds Bowls Club.

2. Confirm Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 1st June 2015.

The minutes were agreed. Proposed by Miles and seconded by Judith.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

Chairman's Report 2016

I would like to start by thanking Parish Councillors and Parishioners for their support over the last year. We are very fortunate to live in a rural village like Lound, and I know a lot of you work hard to make Lound the pleasant village it is.

Early next month the official 20mph speed limit signs will be installed in Back Lane. A former Parish Councilor, Derek Bessey, championed this project and lobbied hard for it to be included in Suffolk Highways' plans. I am very sorry that he is not here to see the project come to fruition.

Waveney's new Local Plan.

As you know, Waveney District Council is preparing a new Local Plan. This will replace the existing Local Development Framework, and will set planning policies which will be used to determine future planning applications. It will estimate how many new houses are needed across Waveney, and where those houses should be built. They aim to have this plan complete around the end of 2017.

Waveney have published a first consultation document showing some of the options they are considering, and asking for local residents' views on these options. Lound Parish Council have highlighted the key issues which will affect Lound, and would like to encourage all residents to send in their comments.

Neighbourhood Planning.

Lound Parish Council have agreed to collaborate with Somerleyton Parish Council to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. A neighbourhood plan is a community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is about the use and development of land. It will contain a vision, aims, planning policies, and possibly proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities. This is similar to the purposes of Waveney's Local Plan, but the Neighbourhood Plan will cover only the parishes of Lound and Somerleyton. The two processes will run in parallel, and both are expected to take around 18 months to complete.

16A/2

Lound and Somerleyton are currently very rural parishes, with comparatively little new housing development. Large new housing estates would overwhelm and change the character of the villages. While some new development is necessary to maintain the communities, I would like this to be small in scale, and to fit into the existing character of the villages. Expect to hear a lot more about Neighbourhood Planning over the next year!

Lothingland School Site.

The former Lothingland School was used last year by Lowestoft College, but they have now withdrawn from using the site. The future of this site is uncertain – it is currently being advertised for sale. Any change of use would of course be subject to gaining appropriate planning consent from Waveney District Council.

The Mardle.

The Mardle is an attractive feature of the village with many visitors every day. It is owned and managed by the Parish Council. We will continue to encourage the reeds and other marginal plants to grow around the edges of The Mardle, giving it a more natural appearance and providing shelter for the resident ducks and moorhens. We will also maintain the flower planters along the road, and plan to repaint the railings in the summer.

Community Activities.

Lound is fortunate in having a well-used village hall where a number of groups organize a wide range of community activities. We also have St John the Baptist Church, a Bowls Club, a village green, allotments, and The Heath. I will not speak in detail about these items as someone else is here tonight to talk about each of them, but I will just say that these are the things that hold our community together, and make Lound such an enjoyable place to live.

Louis Smith, Chair, Lound Parish Council

5. Police Report

Suffolk Constabulary has made significant changes over the past twelve months and 2016 is a hugely significant year for the Constabulary as we transform the way we police the county.

An extraordinary amount of work has gone into understanding how our communities need the police today and so that we can provide policing that is right for Suffolk we have analysed the type of calls we receive and the type of crimes being reported, along with when and how people are choosing to contact us. All of this information, along with the results of consultation with staff, partners and communities, has informed our review and has resulted in a re-design that will allow us to respond in the most effective way.

One of the changes is that the Safer Neighbourhood Teams have been reshaped and refocused and this means that individual police officers and PCSO's no longer have responsibility for a particular parish. This change makes sure we are making the best of our resources and crucially identifying the demand we face and responding in the most appropriate way so the team can concentrate on the areas where they are needed most.

So with that in mind, PCSO Kershaw (who retired at the start of this month) won't be replaced to have responsibility for the parish. All PCSO's have responsibility for specific areas of work such as Vulnerability, Anti-social Behaviour and Children and Young Persons, so they will all deal with specific incidents within your area in order to support the community.

We have had to make many choices but I can assure you these were not made lightly – and have all been made in the best interests of the people of Suffolk.

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Signed: Clerk: Date:

16A/3

Unfortunately due to the changes made with our police computer systems over the past 12 months, coupled with the boundary changes the constabulary has made, this has made providing the usual crime statistics prohibitively time consuming this year. However I have provided the call data for the parishes which will show what the demand has been for the constabulary over the past year.

In the period from 01/04/2015 to 13/05/2016 Suffolk Constabulary have logged 63 calls from the Parish of Lound.

The demand from these calls is as follows

5 calls reporting theft

3 calls reporting vehicle crime

1 call reporting a burglary to a dwelling

2 calls reporting fly tipping

15 calls reporting highway disruption/road traffic incidents and

37 calls reporting miscellaneous incidents. (These include calls about found property, neighbour disputes, calls to assist ambulance service, missing person enquiries, stray dogs, and domestic incidents).

I hope these figures are useful to the Parish Council at the AGM.

Kind regards

PC 720 Asker

6. **Lound Bowls Club**

During the 2015 season the club had a membership of 19 players who enjoyed playing in the lothingland League against 12 other local clubs. At the end of the season we finished 3rd, winning 14, losing 9 and drawing 1. The league winners were Oulton Broad.

We also entered into the Bob Whitley Memorial Shield only to lose to Oulton Broad in the first round, and in the Dorothy Stringfellow Memorial Shield we lost out to Waveney in the semi-final.

Members also competed in the leagues Triples, Pairs and Singles knockout where we had losing finalists in the Ladies singles and the triples.

After the season closed we once again set too to improve the green, scarifying, top dressing and reseeding, also cutting all the hedges. The village hall and recreation committee kindly aranged for the tree in the southeast corner to be lopped which has improved that area. They also donated the cost of the wood to replace the green surround, this has been put in place and the green is looking good for the coming season.

We have one ongoing problem with the green in that the area is plagued by moles, we had a mole catcher in who managed to rid us of 5 of them but I fear there are many more there.

We are now looking forward to a summer of enjoyable games of bowls.

Mike Willeard, Chairman, Lound Bowls Club

7. **Village Hall and Village Green**

Lound Village Hall has once again had a good year with income exceeding expenditure, mostly due to the continued regular bookings.

Further improvements to the hall have been made including new lighting and some replacement window units where needed.

Signed: Clerk: Date:

16A/4

The proposed extension to the hall has been deferred for now – it was felt that hiring a marquee when needed was preferable to a permanent structure at present.

This year's surplus is being put towards a community event marking the 20th anniversary of the hall opening. Preparations are well underway and it is hoped that the event will be well attended.

The Committee would like to thank our caretaker, Valarie Baker, for all her hard work in keeping the hall in excellent condition, as well as Peter Larcombe and Louis Smith for their work on the car park and the village green.

Sally Popham, Chair Lound Village Hall

8. Lound Church - St John the Baptist

The church has had another rather difficult year, and now finds itself once again in an interregnum. In September 2015 the Rev. David Boddy was offered early retirement on the grounds of ill health, and his incumbency came to an end on the 30th April this year. The process of preparing a new Parish Profile and seeking a new Rector is in hand.

In this connection, some of you will remember a village meeting held back in February, concerning the acceptance of the authority of women bishops, and by extension, women priests. The ramifications were explained and discussed and a poll taken. The result was neutral; villagers were not concerned either way as to what the PCC might decide. In the event the PCC passed, by a sizeable majority, a Resolution under the Declaration of the House of Bishops. This means that if in the future, a woman priest or woman bishop has authority over the Somerleyton Benefice, special arrangements will be made, in certain circumstances, for Lound church.

We very much hope that with a new beginning, the numbers in our congregation, which have dropped considerably, will recover, and that more of the people from the village will come to, and make use of, their church on a regular basis.

We continue our usual Sung Eucharist on the first three Sundays of each month, together with the Group Service for Candlemas in February, Evensongs for the Patronal Festival and Harvest, and one or two other services for special occasions through the year. There have been three funeral services, two weddings and one baptism. We also hosted the first of the group Lent Lunches at the end of February, which was a great success.

At the Patronal Festival in June, for a variety of unconnected reasons, the PCC found itself without the usual numbers of flower arrangers and other helpers, and suggested that it would not be practical to produce a full-scale Flower Festival. With the help of Hilary Baker and her friends, a festival did in the end go ahead, but visitor numbers and fund-raising were much lower than in previous years, such that there is a question as to whether, realistically, future such events are worth the very considerable effort that goes into them. This year the festival weekend is going to be a different kind of event in any case, centred on the village rather than the church, although the church will of course, be open as well.

Teams of cleaners and flower arrangers, and the paid employment of Danny Goldsmith, continue to keep the church and churchyard looking cared-for and beautiful, both for the benefit of the village and for visitors, of whom there are a good number. Many of these are people who have past connections with the village, and are often 'returning to their roots'. Comments in the Visitors' Book always emphasise the peacefulness and special atmosphere of the church, and are often surprised and pleased to find it open; we hope it will continue so.

Signed: Clerk: Date:

If you have noticed the absence of the bells on Sundays mornings recently, the reason is that the gale of Easter Monday rather dramatically blew in the louvered wooden window-frame on the south-west side of the belfry tower. It landed on top of the bell frame and as well as being itself damaged, also damaged one of the wheels which carry the bell-ropes, so for safety reasons there is a temporary ban on bell-ringing! An insurance claim is in hand and we are hopeful that the matter will be put right without any problems. It is a very difficult space in which to operate, and will require specialist repair work. What we don't know at this stage, is how long it might before all the bells will be heard once more.

Finally, on a rather distressing note, I report that sometime over the 6th/7th May, the church suffered the opportunist theft of one its silver ciboria, the vessels used to hold communion wafers, together, oddly, with the vacuum-cleaner. The police have been informed but I doubt we shall recover the ciborium. The items taken are a peculiar mix, but the thief presumably just took anything 'liftable'. If anyone gets to hear anything, however seemingly trivial or unrelated, please let us know, and please keep an eye on the church as you go about the village, and report anything strange or unusual. Despite the theft, we are determined that the church shall remain open, for any and all who may need it, or who may simply enjoy visiting.

JH -Vice Chair Lound PCC

9. Lound Lakes

The remaining members of the Friends of Lound Lakes (the original volunteer group started by the Broads Authority back in 2001) continue to hold a work party at the Essex & Suffolk Water Board site on the first Saturday of each month, in co-operation with and under the general instruction of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust warden, Carl Herrington. Some of the Friends also join him and the Suffolk Wildlife Trust Volunteer Group in the regular weekday work parties, which take place on the first and third Thursday of each month.

It has been an extremely busy year, and the site is continuing to improve, both from the point of view of conservation projects, and for use by local people. There are still ongoing problems with litter and dog-fouling, but unfortunately these are not specific to the water board site, but are these days a universal blight. The issues of vandalism which plagued the area at one time seem to have lessened, perhaps because of the Trust's 'open access' policy, but there were several incidents of fire-raising last summer, when the hay was cut and stacked.

The Trust continues to try and educate, and to invoke the help of the local people who use and enjoy the site, to try and prevent and discourage these problems. We ask walkers and visitors to keep their eyes open and report anything suspicious. The police have been very helpful as well, though of course their resources are stretched, and it is impossible for anyone to watch the whole site all the time.

There has been a massive programme of hedge-planting all over the site, to provide cover and habitat for all manner of wildlife species, and in particular this has encouraged the ground-nesting birds, where cover crops have been planted at the top of the 20-acre field. Cattle also now graze the site as they help improve the grassland by keeping vegetation under control and encouraging the growth of open wildflower meadows.

A major project this year has been the clearance and re-shaping of Hopton Run, in the south-east corner of the site. A very large area has been cleared of overgrown willow and scrub, to reveal an open space which none of us knew was there! The water-course has been dredged and landscaped, and the banks re-planted with reed, which will in time spread to provide a protection against erosion, and a natural filter for the water. The purpose of all this was primarily to improve the waterflow and water quality, but in a few years when it has settled and 're-greened', it will also look terrific!

16A/6

As part of this work, some of the footpaths have been closed temporarily, but will re-open in due course. The path has also been moved 'uphill' in one or two places, to avoid passing feet churning up what is already really boggy ground. We hope walkers will think it an improvement!

The circular walk through the birdhide is also closed at the moment, for safety reasons; in fact, the birdhide and the boardwalks on either side have now been demolished. They had been there for at least 30 years, and probably more, and were rotten through, and therefore unsafe. The boardwalk will be replaced in due course, but not the birdhide itself. Instead it is intended to erect hexagonal viewing platforms along either side of the boardwalk, with reed screens to shield birdwatchers. Apart from the structural deterioration, the hide has been little used of late for actual birdwatching, but has been attracting some assorted dubious visitors whose activities have been of interest to the police....! SWT therefore feel that the new proposals will be generally safer and pleasanter for users.

Finally, the wildflower garden itself, next to the field-centre in the barn, and which is mostly cared for by the Friends, is in good shape, rabbits notwithstanding. Hedges planted over some five or six years are maturing well, and in places are now having to be kept severely under control! There are newts and fish in the pond, flowers, birds, and a bee-home built by one of the school groups who come out to the site for 'field days'. The children love these visits and always have a wonderful time; we hope they also learn about how the countryside works, and how we have to look after it.

JH – Group Leader, Friends of Lound Lakes

10. Nomination of Parish Council, Village Hall representative

It does not have to be a member of the Parish Council

Peter Larcombe who presently holds this role agree to continue being the Village Hall Representative, an appointment supported by all.

11. Allotments and The Heath

The allotments continue to be kept in good order with only one rent outstanding for this year. In the summer of 2015 the pathways were cut back and again in the late summer. The grass is kept under control around the garages.

In November ivy was cut from the garage roof and a tree branch that was in danger of causing harm.

March 2016 found the Hawthorne tree blown down at the top of the Heath across a path, it was cleared.

3 weeks ago the heath gate was left open and 2 horses decided to have a look around the heath paths and damaged them slightly.

In May, the pathways were cut back again, dog fouling is still a problem.

On a lighter note, the snowdrops, bluebells and primroses have put on a lovely show this year.

Peter Larcombe.

12. Community Speed Watch

The Community Speed Watch scheme has continued to operate in the parishes of Blundeston, Corton, Oulton, Somerleyton, Flixton, and Lound. It was set up in 2010, and has now been running for over six years. Volunteers wear high visibility coats, and measure vehicle speeds at a number of locations in these villages using a hand-held radar gun.

16A/7

During 2015 we carried out 99 speed watch surveys across the six villages, and reported a total of 330 speeding vehicles. Most drivers slow down when they see their speed is being monitored, which achieves the objective of reducing speeds through our villages.

We also use a portable Vehicle Activated Sign. This is a sign which uses radar to measure the speed of passing vehicles and displays this speed in flashing numbers. The numbers are red if the speed is over 30mph, or green if the speed is 30mph or less. This serves as a reminder to drivers that they are driving in a 30mph zone.

The sign is shared with other speed watch groups, and so is not in this area every week.

This year four new volunteers joined the scheme, and are now valuable members of our team. If you would like further details about the Community Speed Watch scheme, or would like to join the volunteers, please contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team at Lowestoft Police Station by calling the police non-emergency number 101.

At the end of April PCSO Sue Kershaw retired from the Police. She set up our local scheme and has been our Police contact since we started. We wish her every happiness in her retirement.

Louis Smith, Community Speed Watch co-ordinator

13. County Councillor Report

County Council cuts are continuing with £35 million being cut this year. Buses are being cut back and services are being suspended without telling people. Locality budget reduced by a 1/3.

The devolution meeting which has to be agreed by Friday 27th May is causing chaos and mayhem. Proposals have to be sent to the Secretary of State with a consultation during July and August

There are proposals to merge Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Council to produce an East Suffolk Council.

The benefit of a neighbourhood plan and the possibility that County/District may be able to retain their business rates which are presently sent to the Treasury.

14. District Councillor Report

There could well be boundary changes under an East Suffolk Council resulting in fewer Councillors. Council tax was increased this year by 1.9% to pay for increasing demand for adult social care.

Approximately 10,000 opted for the green bin so services have not been affected.

The neighbourhood plan was discussed and that such a document would give the Parish access to the community infrastructure Levy.

Lowestoft parishing should not affect Lound but it would give Lowestoft the opportunity to raise precepts which does not happen at present. Due to its size, Lowestoft may have two town councils, one north and one south.

15. Parish Council Financial Report Lound Accounts for 20th May 2016

It can be seen from the documentation distributed that the balance at the end of March is:

Business Account	£4,277.10
Community Account	<u>£ 465.16</u>
Total	£4,742.26

There is £936.00 of 106 monies to spend with a deadline of 26th August 2016.

The development was Cartshed site, Hall Farm Cottage.

Signed: Clerk: Date:

16A/8

16. Any Other Business

There is a vacancy on the Parish Council. The council is able to co-opt a new councillor to fill this vacancy. Marina Patterson expressed an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor, and she was invited to attend the next meeting on 6th June to see how Parish Council business is conducted. Clerk to send her a set of documentation being sent to Councillors.

A discussion took place on the bric-a-brac which is being sold outside a property on The Street. The present owner of this house will shortly be moving away as the house has been sold, so no action is needed.

It was mentioned that Owls being kept in a garden aviary are causing some noise disturbance at night. This is not something that the Parish Council is able to deal with, and anyone disturbed by noise from a neighbour is advised to speak to the neighbour directly to seek a friendly resolution.

The meeting closed at 8:50pm

Signed: Clerk: Date: