

SWANWICK PARISH COUNCIL

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THE ELECTORS OF SWANWICK ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE

Annual Parish Meeting

THURSDAY 21st APRIL 2016

At 7.00pm

**Meeting Room at rear of Baptist Church,
Derby Road**

The Chair of the Parish Council invites you to attend the Annual Parish Meeting which is open to the public.

Order of Business

1. The appointment of a clerk to record the minutes of the proceedings (this does not have to be the Clerk to the Parish Council).
2. To receive the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting
3. To receive the Chair's Report
4. To address any matters for the attention of the Police
5. To receive reports on activities, achievements and aspirations from the community
6. Open forum - question and answer session
7. Closure

Annual Parish Meeting

Chair's Report – 21st April 2016

Chair's Report is to the Parish Meeting of the Swanwick Electorate held on 21st April 2016.

Just to remind ourselves, the Annual Parish Meeting is not a council meeting and tends to be more informal but we do have an Agenda to guide us through the meeting. It is a meeting of the parish electors and organisations and usually takes place between 1 March and 1 June but cannot be held before 6.00pm. Notice of the meeting was given on the Parish Notice Boards and on the website. This year it also featured on the Parish Council's Facebook page and on Twitter.

Electors can contribute to the agenda. As we have not received any specific requests for items to be added to the agenda before publication, I am quite happy to receive any suggestions at this late stage.

It is an opportunity for you the electorate to bring issues to the attention of the Parish Council at the beginning of the year so that we can consider these matters in preparing our future plans. There is no scope to vote on matters and the Parish Council will consider any response that is required and will either write or communicate directly with individuals as appropriate.

In practice these meetings often

- Celebrate local activities and aspirations for the forthcoming year
- Debate current issues in the community.

My report is intended to review the past year, celebrate our achievements and thank those who actively contributed whether by giving their time or in other ways.

In preparing this report to the Annual Parish Meeting, I have grown to realise the importance of keeping a running, contemporaneous record in preference to relying on memory. So if I miss anything or miss thanking anyone, I am sure you will bring it to my attention.

Well Dressing

One of the first events in the Parish Calendar was the Well Dressing week which started on 16th May 2015. Thanks all those who made that day a successful village event. In particular, thanks to Cllr Brenda Payne and her trusted team for the work that went into making sure that everything was once again delivered with precision.

I will not name everyone lest I offend by inadvertently missing anyone off the list. A general thanks to the various organisations, stall holders and entertainers that participated, not forgetting the Clerk and Village Caretaker. Thanks to the Parish Councillors who turned up on the day. It is one of the days when Councillors have an opportunity to be more visible to the community we serve.

This year's Well Dressing is planned for 21st May and as in previous years Wells will be in place for visitors for a week. A lot of work has already taken place in co-ordinating all the activities necessary to make the event another success.

Armed Forces Week

2014 was the first year the Parish participated in celebrating Armed Forces Week that ran from 23rd to 29th June 2014. In 2015 we lost the use of the flag pole in the centre of the village with the closure of Andrews the Builder; so as soon as we are able we will remedy that and once again participate in paying tribute to the Armed Forces by raising a flag.

Swanwick Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

The working group completed its task and with the approval of the Parish Council submitted the Swanwick Parish Neighbourhood Plan to Amber Valley Borough Council. AVBC administered the further public consultation and has eventually contracted with an Independent Examiner to undertake the independent examination of the plan.

At the time of writing this report, I am waiting to receive the initial findings of the independent examination. AVBC will consult with the Parish Council on any suggested modifications the Independent examiner may recommend; subject to the Independent Examination, the Plan will then progress to referendum.

I anticipate that the referendum will be at the same time as the EU referendum, 23 June 2016.

Village Hall Working Group

As announced in the March 2015 Newsletter, the Parish Council is still negotiating the acquisition of the old Andrew's Builder site on Derby Road. The delay in completing contracts is mainly due to unresolved Land Registry issues.

The intention is to build a community building and ancillary units with car parking. A list of people who are prepared to serve on a Working Group is being compiled and we still welcoming residents with a range of skills, to join the Working Group, even if it is for particular phases of the development.

Queen Elizabeth II (Crays Hill) Park Community Group Meeting

During the last year I attended a number of meetings of the Queen Elizabeth II (Crays Hill) Park Community Group and found a welcome in representing the wider community's interest. QE II Park was awarded Green Flag Status and it was a privilege for me to hoist the flag for the first time; mind you that after trying to get access to the rope. It is up to the community to maintain that high level of achievement by taking pride in the facility and ensuring that facilities are not wilfully vandalised. I attended the planting of a memorial tree just outside the entrance of the Park to commemorate the life of John Hollingsworth; this was in recognition of his unstinting work for the Community Group.

Civic Service

My personal thanks to Councillor Brenda Payne and her team for the work in preparing and organising the Civic Service held on 14th December at St Andrew's Church. Thanks also go

to the Church Wardens and the Vicar for the support on the day. As usual the service was well attended and the refreshments at the Old School House were soon consumed.

The Christmas lights displayed within the village keep improving year by year; however last year's tree can only be described euphemistically 'as a benchmark for significant improvement'.

Village Caretaking

I must mention Rob Castledine who most of you know is our Village Caretaker. Rob Has been performing an excellent job throughout the year, not only collecting the litter that gets dropped on our streets, but also in reporting fly tipping and dog fouling which seem to be still happening despite the facilities provided within the Parish. Rob has a ready supply of bags free to dog walkers to help eliminate the dangerous practice of not cleaning up after your pet. Please make your friends, relatives, neighbours and anyone else that you see walking a dog aware of their responsibilities and the provision of free bags.

Planning Issues

I do want to dwell on planning issues at this meeting; however I must mention the active involvement of the Swanwick Residents' Association in planning not only within Swanwick but also within Amber Valley. The sharing of information between the Residents' Association and the Parish Council has meant that we as a community have been active in planning matters.

On 31st March this year, I have received an email from INEOS Shale inviting Parish Council representation at a presentation by INEOS Shale who has acquired the licences for shale exploration within a number of areas including the East Midlands. There is a presentation on 9th May 2016 in Chesterfield.

What about for the Future

Among our priorities for the coming year I will list the following

- To recruit and appoint a new Clerk to the Parish Council
- To replace the Village caretaker's trolley
- To complete the purchase of the site previously used by Andrew's the Builder
- To start the preparatory work for the development

Public Participation

I have been encouraged by the level of public participation when big issues are being discussed. Occasionally we have visitors to the Parish Council Meetings, and I would like to convert these into repeat visits. We must still strive to encourage a wider level of participation and hope that the use of social media will bring in more reaction and interest.

George Soudah, Cllr
Chair Swanwick Parish Council