

# Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th April 2017

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The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7.00pm on 20th April 2017 @ the Meeting Rooms, Baptist Church, Derby Road.

**APM/1/2017 Appointment of a clerk to the meeting**

G Soudah was appointed to take notes of the proceedings.

**APM/2/2017 Apologies received**

Apologies Cllr B Adams, Wendy Butt, Rosemarie Wood (Baptist Church), Dorothy & Peter Whittaker (Valley CiDs), Pam Hall/ Lynda Hewett (WI)

**APM/3/2017 Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st April 2016 were received.**

**APM/4/2017 Chair's Report was received (page 2)**

**APM/5/2017 Matters for the attention of the Police**

There was no Police representation at the meeting; this is in line with the reduced attendance at Parish Council meetings. Parking, speeding and antisocial behaviour continue to be the main cause for concern. Matter will be reported to the Safer Neighbourhood Panel at its next meeting.

**APM/6/2017 Reports on activities, achievements and aspirations from the community**

A copy of each of the reports is appended:

1. Swanwick Baptist Church (page 7)
2. Valley CiDS (page 8)
3. Swanwick Women's Institute (page 10)
4. Swanwick Residents Association [John Briggs] (page 11)

**APM/7/2017 Open forum - question and answer session**

Due to the late hour, discussion was brief.

Meeting closed at 7.35pm

# Annual Parish Meeting

## Chair's Report - 20th April 2017

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Chair's Report is to the Annual Parish Meeting of the Swanwick Electorate held on 20th April 2017.

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 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 Parish Council website. It also featured on the Parish Council's social media pages on Facebook and 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, businesses and organisations 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. If we are not able to answer questions at the meeting, 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 past 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 21 st May 2016. 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 Saturday 13th May and as in previous years Wells will be in place throughout the village for visitors to enjoy for the week following. A lot of work has already taken place in co-ordinating all the activities necessary to make the event another success.

### **Swanwick Neighbourhood Plan Working Group**

The working group completed its task and the Parish Council submitted the Swanwick Parish Neighbourhood Plan to Amber Valley Borough Council in the previous year, on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015. AVBC administered the further public consultation in early 2016 and eventually contracted with an Independent Examiner to undertake the independent examination of the plan. The report of the Independent Examiner was delivered to the Parish Council on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

Although AVBC were not legally obliged to consult with the Parish Council on any suggested modifications that the Independent examiner recommended, it was disappointing that this did not happen before AV Cabinet considered a report on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Despite representations at the meeting, AVBC decided to accept the modifications en bloc without offering to consider any alternative courses of action.

The Parish Council and Swanwick Neighbourhood Working Group were of the opinion that the modifications were so drastic that the plan no longer reflected the aspirations of Swanwick and that the plan was not likely to receive support at referendum. The campaign mounted by the Swanwick Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to 'Vote NO' was appropriate and well received by the community.

The referendum was held on 20th October 2016. The turnout was 26%. The NO Vote was overwhelming at 85.5% of the votes cast. The description that 'the neighbourhood plan failed at referendum' does not do justice to the exercise of democracy. The Swanwick Community was the first in the country to reject their modified neighbourhood plan. Congratulations!

It is highly unlikely that the Parish Council will try again; the time and effort is not worth the return. The Parish Council will concentrate its efforts on scrutinising the Local Plan during the consultation phase and submitting relevant comments that reflect the interests of the community.

### **Village Hall Working Group**

The intention is to build a village hall' community building and ancillary units with car parking. A Village Hall Working Group was set up and is working to prepare outline plans. We still welcoming residents with a range of skills, to join the Working Group, even if it is for particular phases of the development.

The outline planning application was submitted in March/April to AVBC, the Local Planning Authority. The Parish Council will be inviting residents, businesses and organisations to take part in a survey to identify the range of facilities that are needed and that will enhance community activities available within the village.

A survey questionnaire will be included in the May Newsletter and delivered to every house within Swanwick. In addition there will be a series of exhibitions starting with an exhibition at the Well Dressing on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and then at different times and a number of other venues for residents to visit.

### **Queen Elizabeth 11 (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 11 Park was awarded Green Flag Status

The Park is widely used and valued by the community but still attracts unsocial behaviour by a small minority. The Police have intervened on a number of occasions and issued caution letters to those identified.

The Community Group are trying to improve the facilities at the Park such as providing adult outdoor exercise machines and planting a wide meadow border around the perimeter.

### **Civic Service**

My personal thanks to Councillor Brenda Payne and her team for the work in preparing and organising the Civic Service held on 12th December 2016 at St Andrew's Church. Thanks also go to the Church Wardens and the Vicar for the support on the day. Crich Brass Band supported the service and Amber Valley Voices added to the choral offering. As usual the service was well attended and the refreshments, supplied by The Salt Pot at the Old School House, were soon consumed.

The Parish Council had a new supplier for the Christmas lights last December and this added a new fresh look to the lights. The Christmas tree was donated to the Parish and was probably one of the best trees for years. Anyone else with a tree to offer, please contact the Clerk.

### **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. The Parish Council has stopped supplying free poo bags and will be concentrating on promoting responsible dog ownership in conjunction with Amber Valley's Community Wardens.

Please make your friends, relatives, neighbours and anyone else that you see walking a dog aware of their responsibilities to clean after their dogs.

## **Planning Issues**

I do not 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.

I have previously reported that INEOS Shale has acquired the licences for shale exploration within a number of areas including the East Midlands. Swanwick Parish Council, in common with other Town and Parish Councils, was invited to attend a presentation by INEOS. A Parish Councillor and a resident of Swanwick attended the presentation on 9th May 2016 to understand the processes that INEOS intended to use during the exploratory stages leading to shale gas extraction.

The Parish Council has not at any time been in any talks with INEOS or FGP (Fisher German Priestner). As a Parish Council we do not have any powers to enter into talks about or negotiate any aspect of mineral or gas extraction. Such responsibility lies with Derbyshire County Council, the minerals planning authority, and will be subject to planning regulations. The Parish Council will represent the community views when and if any planning applications are submitted for developments within Swanwick Parish.

## **Mine Cars at Butterley**

As part of the improvements, the mine cars have been refurbished and re-set on new Sleepers. The floral baskets, removed from the railings on Derby Road, have been re-located to the front of the mine cars to provide a striking feature to the entrance to the village.

## **Swanwick's Allotments**

The Swanwick Allotment Association has entered into a new tenancy agreement with the Parish Council for a period of five years until 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022, to manage the allotments at Shirley Road. The Association will be issuing individual tenancy agreements to plot holders on similar terms.

The Nether Close Garden Allotments have been let on new tenancy agreements for a period of three years until 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

## **What about for the Future**

We have our usual calendar of events starting with

- Annual Parish Meeting in April,
- Well Dressing in May, through to
- Remembrance Sunday Parade in November and
- Christmas lights and the Civic Carol Service in December

Our focus will be on developing the Village Hall site, the ancillary units and the car park. We are sending out a survey questionnaire to all residents with the newsletter at the end of April and will be having an exhibition at the Well Dressing to

encourage feedback.

The Parish Council is keen on maintaining the village environment. We will be reviewing the notice boards, bus shelters and planting containers throughout the village. Some of the planters have come to the end of their natural days and replacements will be purchased over the coming season. The seats and benches also need attention, and will receive a lick of paint.

Communication with Swanwick residents has been mainly by means of the newsletter and the hope that people will attend the monthly parish council meetings. We will try to make better use of social media to explain what we do and encourage greater social interaction and cohesion. The Swanwick parish Council website is due for a revamp and we will try to make this more interactive.

### **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 try 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

## SWANWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

We are a small church with a big heart.

We hold a monthly prayer breakfast on the first Saturday of each month. We support the Christians Together in Swanwick and attend joint meetings along with regular joint prayer breakfasts.

We hosted the Summer CTS messy church which was attended by 40 children and parents using a theme of the sea side bringing the stories of the bible to the children by playing games, craft work and also singing and acting. This included lunch which was a picnic with hot dogs, enjoyed by all.

Our church anniversary was October and we held a concert in the church with The Alfreton Male voice Choir supported by the Ladies Torkard Ensemble. This was enjoyed and attended by all three churches and the wider community. We are planning to host another concert before the end of this year.

We hold a weekly drop in coffee morning each Tuesday morning from 10am-12pm which includes crafts and prayer. We also have a Scrabble afternoon the third Thursday of each month where all abilities are welcomed.

We continue to support Derby City Mission and we donate to their food bank on a regular basis along with our harvest gifts. We hold a Toy Service during November when we were able to give new toys to supply deprived families with Christmas gifts. We support The Baptist Union of Great Britain and also East Midlands Baptist Association. We have been visited by Ashlee Gibb a young lady who we are supporting from Baptist Mission as she is now working overseas.

Three of us have attended Safeguarding Training levels 2 and 3. This is important for us as a church to be aware of the dangers to both vulnerable children and adults.

The Church has had many setbacks during the year in regard to the roof both on the school room and the main church building. We are presently working on our office as the floor has become rotten and needs new floor boards and floor covering. We are having a working day next week when all are able to help with general clearing of the office and the store room.

Although we are a small church we support and encourage the community to follow God and strengthen their faith.

We hold a family service each Sunday morning from 10.45 until 12.00 and the second and third Sunday of the month in the evening at 6.00pm which includes a discovery club.

## VALLEY CiDS - REPORT FOR YEAR 2016-17

Overall the year was a time of many blessings, with a few challenges along the way.

Recently we opened two more Lighthouse Charity shops in Swadlincote and Arnold, with one at Eastwood due to open in the next week or so.

We *now* operate thirty two shops throughout Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and the income generated is vital to the on-going work of Valley CiDS amongst children, young people and families. To many, the Lighthouse shop offers a sense of family and community which is a true testimony to the Valley CiDS mission.

Purple Robes, our specialist bridal and occasion wear shop in Alfreton, is a true gem on the High Street and we are working hard to further market and promote the wonderful outfits we have to sell.

Valley CiDS Blend Youth Project is held in high regard and is widely acknowledged as a model of excellent practice in youth work, with our youth teams working closely with the police and other services to address the needs of young people. A wide range of projects are delivered in local secondary schools as well as from the two Blend Centres in Ripley and Heanor. Our aim is to 'raise the aspirations and release the potential' of our young people and projects include healthy eating, job seeking, personal development and self esteem to name but a few. Our Youth Enterprise Scheme is based in Jacksdale where young people marginalised from main stream school, are trained in furniture restoration and business skills. This scheme continues to give hope to many young people struggling with the burden of difficult life issues.

The holiday activity programmes and the annual residential weekends at the Peak Centre, Edale offer opportunities to build sound relationships and to address the challenges facing young people today.

The Valley CIOS Children's Team are always in demand working a very full timetable. Christian assemblies, themed workshops, follow-up RE lessons and clubs are offered in over 80 primary schools. Other activities include workshops, special services and church fun days. The Valley CiOS Children's Team is in contact with over thirteen thousand children throughout each term.

Valley CiDS Zest Breakfast Clubs operate at primary schools in Swanwick, Riddings, Ripley and Alfreton. The Swanwick club is especially popular and offers a valuable service to working parents.

A fairly new operation to Valley CiDS is the Promises day nursery in Chesterfield.

The Saltpot on the Green in Swanwick continues to offer a friendly service and good wholesome food, with special lunches provided for senior citizens

Many exciting developments have taken place at Turner Farm throughout this last year, and the educational project is now up and running delivering courses in animal care to individual young people and school groups. One of the barns has been converted to a teaching room, outside toilets are now provided, and we have resident sheep, pigs, goats, giant rabbits, ducks, geese and hens. The farm is developing into a fantastic alternative education facility.

A further more recent development is the Swanwick Men in Sheds project about to be launched at the farm.

The Valley CiDS mission is to build and strengthen community through serving, inspiring and equipping children and families to develop their full potential in life. In a challenging and rapidly changing society, the emotional and spiritual needs of our children and young people are enormous. Through the work of Valley CiDS, we feel privileged to be able to address such needs and so make a positive impact in the lives of thousands of people.

An enormous thank you to all who give generously to our Lighthouse shops to support this vital work in our local area.

Dorothy Whitaker

## **Swanwick WI Report to Annual Parish Meeting 20th April 2017**

Submitted by Pam Hall (President) & Lynda Hewett (Secretary)

Swanwick WI has now been running for 8 years, we are a group of 60plus women spanning all age groups and interests.

Last year we raised money for the local air ambulance and sent a delegate to the National WI AGM in Brighton. We also participate in the Well Dressing & Gala, compete in the WI county quiz and help out in the WI marquee at the Bakewell Show.

Our meetings include speakers, physical games and activities, crafts, cookery, dining out and visits.

Our aim is enjoyment, inspiration and education - with the emphasis on having fun.

## **Swanwick Residents' Association**

Report to the Swanwick Annual Parish Meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2017.

The Swanwick Resident's Association Constitution has four main Objectives:

1. To protect and enhance the environment and the quality of life for all residents of Swanwick.
2. To uphold and encourage high standards of planning and architecture in Swanwick.
3. To prevent the spread of industrial development within Swanwick.
4. To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in Swanwick.

In pursuit of the above, the Association has kept informed of the progress of the Amber Valley Local Plan - 2016 since it was launched in January 2016, following the withdrawal by Amber Valley Borough Council- Core Strategy following an imposed, prolonged 20 month suspension period, before the Council withdrew shortly before the Public Examination was due to reconvene in December, 2015. The Association has therefore been extremely vigilant in observing the progress of the 2016 - local Plan, particularly with a view to see if it contained any further proposed developments within the village, whether they be residential housing or industrial. The local Plan process has now reached a public consultation stage, which the Association will be responding to on matters concerning Swanwick and also neighbouring areas. It is also hoped that, as previously, the Association will register as a public participant in the Public Examination stage process.

Many Swanwick residents became involved and engaged in the Neighbourhood Plan process and expressed their views on how they wished the village to develop in the future, a few gave of their valuable time to serve on the Swanwick Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, together with Parish Councillors. This process was undertaken in the absence of an up to date Amber Valley Local Plan and because of constant ongoing changes in the Local Plan process, which the Working Group tried to reflect, it took nearly three years prepare and present to the Local Authority. Because of issues raised by the independent Planning Inspector who examined the Neighbourhood Plan and proposed changes that were recommended, together with a lack of communication from the Local Authority to the Parish Council on options available to take, it was recommended that the Plan go forward to a Referendum to be held on 20th October, 2016. With the changes that were recommended to be made, which the Local Authority accepted in their entirety, it was felt that the modified plan now being presented to the public of Swanwick to vote on did not represent the aspirations of the Swanwick Community.

As the Parish Council could give only information on the process and not influence residents on how to vote, the Resident's Association, through its Vice-Chairman, registered a 'NO Campaign'. The results of the poll saw 85 per cent (964) of residents vote NO, compared to 14.5 per cent (164) voting YES with 3 ballot papers rejected. The total number of votes cast was 1,131, representing 26% of the total electorate (4315). As the number of votes cast in favour 'YES' did not constitute more than half of those voting (i.e. 50% plus 1), the Swanwick Neighbourhood Plan

was not 'made'. Since 2012, when Neighbourhood Plans were introduced through the Localism Act, there have been 238 referendums held, all of which have been successful with a 'YES' vote, with an average turnout of 32%. It is hoped that from this result that both Local and Central Government had learned lessons from events in Swanwick and indeed this has been reflected in a recent

Government White Paper on Neighbourhood Planning proposes changes to the existing framework and process in future.

Constant changes by Central Government to planning policies, even from 2012 when the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced, will necessitate local communities like ourselves having to protect and defend the countryside that surrounds our village, even those that should have protection through the planning process like the Greenbelt or Protected Open Land status. It will be a continuing war in which there will be a need to fight local battles along the way, but we will not surrender our responsibility in doing so.

Last year and previously the Association has come together with the Parish Council to establish a united front on a number of issues which impact on the village. This has been important on a number of occasions, as individual members of the public, contrary to what might be perceived and publicised, have little or no influence to change or even make an impact on Borough or County Council matters, as does a representative group or body of people. For the amount of time, hard work, research and effort that has and continues to be devoted to ongoing issues, maybe positive results have not been commensurate, but this will not distract in continuing the fight to retain 'village life - a wonderful thing and something to be preserved'.

In conclusion, I would like to put on record our and my personal thanks to the Chairman of the Parish Council, without whose knowledge, help and advice on a number of matters, certain issues could not have been progressed as far as they were. Also, my thanks go to all residents of Swanwick who have supported and helped our Organisation, however small or large their contribution may have been.

John G. Briggs.

Vice-Chairman. 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2017.