

Minutes of the ASH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Held on Monday 19th April 2010, at 7.30pm
In the Ash Village Hall, Queen's Road, Ash

Chairman: Mr G Foat – Chairman of Ash Parish Council
Present: 43 parishioners, including seven parish councillors, plus County Councillor Ridings, PC Wright, District Councillors Bartlett, Chandler & Conolly, DDC Development Officer, Pitt, Mr Vennart, Chair of the Cartwright & Kelsey School Governors
Apologies: PCSO Pollard, Mr Cooper, Mr King, Mr Lambie, Prof Swingland

Mr Foat opened the meeting by speaking about the loss of Mr David Downes, Clerk to the Ash Parish Council from 1953 to 1984, who along with Mr Ogilvy revitalized the Parish Council. Mr Downes also held high office with the Kent Association of Local Councils. He wrote the excellent 'Ash – An East Kent Village' and 'Barns Ablaze'. Mr Downes made an invaluable contribution to the life of the parish through many different groups and it was sad that he was never recognised in the Honours' List.

10.01 Minutes

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held 20 April 2009 had been made available before the meeting. The minutes were agreed as a true record and were signed.

10.02 To receive reports and take questions

i) Parish Council Chairman, Mr G Foat

Mr Foat opened his report by explaining that planning and enforcement issues continued to be important matters for the Parish Council. Not being able to directly contact the PCSO had been taken up with the Chairman of the Police Authority. Costs to keep The Street DDC Toilets open had continued to rise from £2,500 last year to £9,500 for the current year and this had led to a 16% rise in the precept. Parishioners had strong views on the matter and it is important that all views are passed on to the Parish Council. The bulb planting at the entrances to the villages had been completed. Unfortunately there had been an increase of dog mess on the pavements and it is Dover District Council which is responsible for cleaning this up. Beating the Bounds will take place this year on Saturday 9th October leaving Pudding Lane at 7am, walking to Plucks Gutter, taking a boat from there to Richborough and completing the walk by returning to Ash.

Finally, there will be elections next May 2011 for all the parish councils in Dover District and parishioners are urged to consider volunteering to stand for the Council. This involves fourteen meetings a year plus the odd committee meeting.

There were no questions on the Chairman's Report

ii) Recreation Ground Committee Report, Mr G Foat

The Council still has a long waiting list for allotments and has been considering other possible sites. The Ground continues to be well used with 2 cricket teams, 2 football teams, senior and junior rugby teams and the tennis club.

Trying to deal with the problem of dog waste on the Ground has been difficult. Upto last September the Parish Council's Environment Assistant had to clear up between 80 – 100 times a week after dogs. For health and safety reasons, the Council took the strong measure of asking dog walkers to keep their dogs on leads and under control while on the Ground. This worked and it was only necessary to clear up between 10 -15 times a week. However since March 2010,

More walkers refused to keep their dogs on leads and the problem returned, including in and around the children's play area. For this reason, the Parish Council will be considering a complete ban on dogs on the Recreation Ground at their next meeting on 10th May. Dogs can be taken on the Jack Foat land but walkers are asked not to leave waste bags on the fences.

A parishioner asked why there were no bins on the Jack Foat Trust Land and Mrs Vallack, one of the trustees of the Jack Foat Trust, explained that dog bins can only be placed where Dover District Council contractors' vehicles can reach them by road. There was a discussion about placing a bin at Poulton Lane and at Pudding Lane if DDC were able to empty them. A weekly collection is needed for the existing rubbish bin at Pudding Lane.

Mr Foat returned to his report explaining that the Recreation Ground Committee has now been disbanded as the Sports Clubs did not feel it was necessary to attend. They will be able to raise any matters through the monthly Parish Council meeting. There will still be a summer inspection of the ground held in June.

M Foat expressed the Council's thanks to Mr Paul Dunn who had been the Parish Representative on the committee for the last 20 years.

There were no further questions on the Recreation Ground Report

iii) Footpaths' Committee Report, Mr G Foat

Mr Foat reported that there had been a meeting of the volunteers who had agreed to monitor most of the 100 miles of public rights of way in the Parish. In January 2010, monitoring forms had been completed for most of the paths and problems had been passed to the Kent County Council Rights of Way Officer. There would be another meeting July where the monitoring forms would be completed again.

There were no questions on the Footpaths' Report

iv) Finance Report on the Parish Council Accounts, Mrs C Haggart

The audited statement of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2009 was displayed along with the Auditor's Certificate. The un-audited summary of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 had been distributed to the meeting.

The estimated **Receipts** were £66,459. The current situation with the banks had meant that interest earned on the reserve account dropped from £728 to £22. There were no grants applied for, however, an application for traffic calming measures has been made to the County Councillor's Highway Fund.

Payments of £60,296 included the new contribution to DDC of £1,950 for The Street Public Conveniences and the bulb planting and environment works of £1,950 which had been grant funded from the previous year. The actual figure for the insurance costs was £3,260 which included a 2% increase on the valuations for the building cover. The PCSO costs covered January to December. The Parish Plan monies were re-imbursed from the grant they received. Repairs and renewals for the village were down as the only new item was the bin for Pound Corner. Tree surgery costs were higher as one of the ash trees had to be taken down on the Recreation Ground and work was carried out on Burford's Alley.

The **closing balances** included £12,544 allocated for new or existing projects including nearly £3,000 towards the Youth Project and a reserve towards the PCSO costs. The £20,000 general reserves or 28% of the precept would be kept as a contingency fund for the current financial year. The auditor allows a contingency fund of upto 40% of the precept.

The **current budget** set the precept at £71,000. Nearly £10,000 will go to DDC to cover the costs of keeping The Street Public Conveniences open. This covered cleaning, opening and shutting, insurance, utilities and actual prior year repairs. Without the payment to DDC, the increase from £60,240 to £61,145 was 1.5% or £903 over last year.

The **projected expenditure** is £25,000 less than last year as there were no new major projects planned. The Council, however, does want to complete the gateway entrances to the village in conjunction with having the speed limit on Sandwich Road lowered to 30mph.

Projected expenditure on administration increased from £3,000 to £3,300; employment costs increased by £1,100 to £24,000 and the contribution for a PCSO were now £13,500. Grants were allocated at £4,700 and the Dog Warden at £500. The on-going maintenance costs have not increased due to the skills and hard work of the Environment Assistant, Mr Wilkinson.

The Ash Parish Council had agreed a balanced budget for 2010 - 2011, with expenditure matching income and the contingency fund coming from reserves.

Questions on the Finance Report

- A parishioner asked why the reserves were still so high. It was explained that the Parish Council continued to keep its reserves at a high enough level to cover unexpected costs and against the possibility of having to meet new charges for maintaining local services.

10.03 Report from County Councillor - Mr L Ridings (Deputy Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education)

A written report had been distributed to the meeting covering:

Education – this has been another successful year for Kent’s students. In the summer of 2009, 52% of GCSE students achieved 5 A*-C grades including English and Maths, a 2% increase from the year before. Kent School Games were officially launched on 1st October 2009 by Dame Kelly Holmes and was a great success. There were 900 children and young people at the opening.

The Children, Families and Education directorate is being restructured with the loss of 200 posts to provide a slim strategic centre, improved frontline service delivery and increased efficiency.

Audit Commission Inspection – Kent County Council was joint top for performance of all local authorities in England and is "performing excellently". In the partnership assessment, Kent had two exceptional accreditations for improving young people’s education and skills and for providing job opportunities, and for the Gateways which brings a wide range of public, community and voluntary services under one roof.

Transport and Travel - the Kent Freedom Pass had been extended to those students who live in Kent but attend schools in other local authority areas, such as Medway. The Pass, which costs £50 currently, allows students to travel on any public bus at any time.

Road damage and potholes can be reported to Kent County Council by telephoning 08458 247 800. Central government had given £2.4 million towards the damage done by the snow and cold weather. The road repair crews working across the county fixed over 10,000 potholes in January 2010 alone. More permanent road repair work costing an extra £1million is planned.

A new initiative was to give each County Councillor £25,000 to spend on Highways work and Ash has applied for improvements to the village entrances to decrease speeding. There will also be a mobile Speed Indicator Device to be shared around the ward.

Adult Social Services and Community Safety - managed by Help the Aged/Age Concern and the Community Safety Units, KCC has provided five 'Handy Vans' to work across the county to provide advice and guidance and fit a range of safety and security products for people over the age of 60. Please email communitysafetyunit@kent.gov.uk or phone 0845 026 1055 for referrals.

Health - for those with health concerns, KCC in partnership with the NHS, has established 'Kent Health Watch', a service to help local residents express their views about health and social care.

Communities - KCC is building the new art gallery, the Turner Contemporary. The construction work is currently on budget and on schedule to be completed by the end of 2010.

Council Tax for 2010 – 2011 - KCC announced their lowest ever Council Tax increase (since Council Tax began 17 years ago) of 2.1%. This means that a Band D property will increase from £1,026.27 to £1,047.78, an extra payment of 41p a week.

Kent County Council will provide an additional £6.5million to support vulnerable adults, £5.3million to strengthen children's social services, mostly to meet the 21.2% increase in referrals in the wake of the tragic Baby Peter case, plus £10m to meet the additional costs in 2010/11 of supporting a £1.5 billion capital programme.

Member Community Grants have been awarded to local groups including £2,000 to Ash Village Hall Management Committee for the Ash Heritage Centre.

Questions on County Councillor Ridings' Report

- 10% of the investments in Icelandic banks had been returned and it was still expected to receive upto 80%.
- The request to rectify the double yellow lines at Sandwich Road junction with Cherry Tree Lane was made as the sight lines onto Sandwich Road were blocked by parked vehicles. Cllr Riding agreed to look into the problem.
- A request for a bus pass permit for working disabled people was made and Cllr Riding agreed to take this suggestion forward to KCC.
- There was a request for double yellow lines at Orchard View corner onto New Street and it was suggested that this should come to the Parish Council first.
- The proposal by KCC to put in a £1 million grant to the new waste collection system was queried.
- An extension of the Kent Freedom Pass for students was requested for those students over 17 and under 19. It was explained that next year when the statutory age was raised to 18 the scheme would be extended however for other students it was not felt that the financial cost could be justified as each extension by one year adds 1% to the council tax.

10.04 Reports from the Parochial Charities and Trusts

i) Ash United Charities Benevolent Fund

These are 8 small ancient charities for the relief of the poor in the parish. Mrs Fray reported that the income was £737 from land rents and a dividend plus income of £73 for the Thomas Coleman Fund. This part of the fund provides money held in trust to repair stained glass in St Nicholas Church and was last used 100 years ago. There was £1,502 held for this. It was usual for the benevolent fund to provide Christmas hampers for long standing residents and this year £556 was spent on them leaving a surplus of £58 on the year.

ii) Resthaven Almshouses

The trustees of the Ash United Charities are also trustees of this charity. These four dwellings are occupied by couples over 60 or resident spinsters or widows and are situated at 11-17 Queens Road. The residents make a contribution for maintenance, heating and heating. Mrs Fray

reported that there was an income of £21,216 less payments of £9,935 leaving a surplus of £11,281 of which £2,288 was transferred to the Maintenance Funds. There were renovations carried out on one dwelling while it was empty awaiting re-allocation. The Trustees are reviewing whether or not they will add two dwellings to the almshouses now that the loan from the Frank Kingsland Trust has been repaid.

iii) Frank Kingsland's Trust

The trustees of the Ash United Charities are also trustees of this charity. This Trust was established from a bequest in 1994 for such charitable purposes for the benefit of the parish and had provided the new hall in Westmarsh. The Trust owns two bungalows in Ash one at Chilton Field and one at Chequer Lane. The residents make contributions for maintenance and services including utilities which have had to be increased again this year due to the increase in fuel costs. After payments and contributions to the maintenance funds, the surplus for the year was £2,805.

iv) Jack Foat Trust

Mrs Vallack opened her report noting that for first time in its 20 year history the Trust had made no grants to any village organisations in the 2008-2009 financial year. This did not mean that the Trust had refused anyone; there had been no requests. Since the Trust was founded it had made grants to the total of £300,312.

The accounts upto the Year End 5 April 2009 had been audited and were available for public inspections. Total expenditure in the period was £35,208, with £2,000 taken up by regular maintenance costs of the land the Trust owns and manages. The remaining £43,000 was spent on major repairs and refurbishments to the cottages at 120-126 The Street. Work on three of these had been completed and contracts for work on the last one had been signed. It is hoped that this will solve the problems and the cottages will serve a useful purpose for many years to come.

The Trust's investments suffered from the Stock Market difficulties, losing approximately 25% of their book value. This meant that the total value of the Fund fell during the period by £96,000 and stood at £1,174,998. Of this £800,000 is represented by trust owned land and property.

Mrs Vallack ended with an acknowledgment of the vast amount of work put into the Trust, from its first days, by David Downes. This was not the only village charity which will miss his expertise and great knowledge of so many aspects of the Parish. Mr Ian Chandler and Mrs Vallack will be looking to appoint at least one, if not two new trustees, as they intend the Trust to continue to be a great village asset.

v) Ash Educational Charities – Cartwright, Kelsey & Godfrey Charities.

Mr I Chandler reported the opening balance for the trust was £78,759. Income from rental of the Old School buildings in The Street and re-imburement from insurance came to £10,9648 and interest on investments was £2,340.

Payments included the insurance premiums on both schools of £4,550 and £70 bank charges to Nat West. The Charity no longer banks with Nat West. There were nine individual grants, a sum for school trips, a grant to the Heritage Group for the performance of the Swing Riots in the summer and two other sums to parish youth groups giving an expenditure on educational grants of £6,046. This gave a closing balance for the Charity of almost £81,000.

The Charity encourages applications for grants and is able to award book grants to local students of upto £100 per person. The Trustees will consider applications for other educational purposes from students living in Ash. Applications should be sent in writing to Mr I Chandler. The Trust also pays an amount to the Cartwright & Kelsey Primary School. The Trust assessed its property in The Street and found that there would be no benefit to the Charities if this property was sold.

10.05 Reports from the Trustees of the Village Halls

Ash Village Hall

Mrs Ryan reported that the financial situation at the end of 2009 showed an improvement with income from lettings increasing by £3,802 to £15,074 due to increased charges as well as increased hirings. Insurance payments have been changed to monthly direct debits to help the cash flow situation and water and electricity bills have decreased. Costs for gas have doubled.

At the end of the financial year, there was £9,075 income over expenditure. Repairs and renewals were £14,054 including the work on the east external wall of re-pointing and replacement of the metal ties after nearly 100 years. The Jack Foat Trust paid for the extra work and the Parish Council released the annual grant early to help with the cash flow. Apart from the usual annual services and inspections, other work included painting and redecorating, electrical work, repairs to the car park and work on the stage curtains. There is the final stage of the re-pointing, replacement of window frames and a flat roof replacement still to be done.

At the end of 2009, Mrs Rita Greenfield, the Bookings and Accounts Officer, stepped down after 14 years. Mr Graham Ward took on the position on 1st January 2010. At the same time, the website went live at www.ashvillagehall.org.uk which includes information and an events calendar. Mr Dave Lawson was thanked for setting up the web-site.

In January, the Hall played host to the revived Ash Players and their village pantomime. It was very well received. The red velvet front of house curtains and the set of black stage drapes were refurbished for the panto and this was paid for by grants from the Jack Foat Trust and the Parish Council. Chalkfoot Theatre Company did not visit in the year but they will visit in Spring 2011.

Sadly the Management Committee lost two of their longest serving trustees, Mrs Jean Hands and Mr David Downes, the latter serving for over 50 years. They both, in their different ways, did so much for the hall and they will be missed.

Westmarsh Village Hall

Mr Barnes reported that there had been a difficult two years for the committee. There had been problems with changing the bank mandates and there was so much documentation for the new committee members and the treasurer to have to deal with. This had meant that there were no accounts ready for the last and current financial years. As a consequence the Management Committee will be moving their account from NatWest. There is £700 in the current account and £9,600 in the deposit account. The Hall continues to make a small profit but is now fifteen years old and it is necessary to carry out repairs and maintenance. The grant from the Parish Council covered the insurance costs. The accounts will be provided once the AGM has been held.

10.06 PC Wright's Report

Apologies were given from PCSO Pollard who was on leave. PC Wright spoke about the local priorities of reducing speeding in the village which was an issue for many local villages. Speed checks continue to be carried out with police enforcement and the use of S59 warnings for speeding drivers. These will follow the driver and the vehicle for 12 months and if there are any further infringements then the vehicle is confiscated. Members of the public can help with information on any vehicles seen speeding.

Dog fouling continues to be a problem and there are penalties that can be issued to dog owners by the Dog Warden. Dog bite incidents are taken very seriously and dog owners can be taken to court. All dogs must be kept under control and if being walked in the countryside must be kept under control and on the rights of way. Action can be taken against dogs that are worrying stock or causing a danger to the public.

Licensed premises have been checked and in one case conditions had been imposed which appears to have stopped the problems.

Young people continue to meet at The Street Bus Shelter. They can be moved on only if they are causing a public nuisance. If there is a problem with alcohol consumption, it can be seized and there is a £80 fine for being drunk and disorderly.

Parking infringements or dangerous parking have been acted upon as appropriate but continues in the centre of the village.

There had been successful operations with warrants issued on two properties in Ash, resulting in convictions and jail sentences for those who had been growing large quantities of cannabis.

The PCSO had visited local schools and groups. The Operation Rucksack in the schools had been supported by parents and children. Kent Police aims to give a county wide voice to communities to set their priorities and how best to stay in contact and work effectively with them. This can include using the Kent Police web-site where local crime statistics can be seen and Facebook and Twitter have been effective ways for the PCSO to stay in touch with young people.

The aim is for the neighbourhood police team including the PCSO to respond to community calls within 24 hours and to stay in touch through meeting local groups and giving monthly updates.

Questions on PC Wright's Report

- A parishioner raised a problem they had with anti-social behaviour when it snowed earlier in the year. They did not want to ring 999 but needed help. When they were able to report the incident they had been told that the police were unable to act as there had been no criminal damage. The person's home had been targeted on four consecutive nights and it was this sort of quality of life issue that had a significant impact on residents' lives. PC Wright explained that the 01622 690 690 number can be used and the Call Centre can send a patrol or inform the caller when one is available. If you are reporting an incident ask for a CAD or Storm number and then if you are not satisfied with the action that is taken, it can be followed up.
- Another parishioner explained that they had a more positive response and a patrol had been sent out when they had reported an incident at the local bus stop.
- A parishioner asked about adults riding bicycles on the pavement in a way that endangered pedestrians. PC Wright explained that a fixed penalty notice can be issued if the incident is witnessed. If details can be given to the PCSO and the person can be identified, then the PCSO can visit and speak to them.
- A parishioner asked about taking photographs to use as evidence of an incident. PC Wright clarified if an incident is taking place then it may be appropriate to take a photo but that members of the public must be careful. It can lead to the person taking the photos being verbally abused. It is a matter of judgement if the incident is sufficiently blatant.
- A parishioner asked how many S59s had been issued for speeding. PC Wright did not have the details on this but did ask for any details of speeding to be passed to him.
- A parishioner reported that they had informed the police when they saw people stealing copper wiring but had not had been told if their call had been acted upon.
- In response to a question about local policing, PC Wright explained that he had been working in the area for over seven years and knew many of the young people. When the power to stop and search had been used it had been based on local knowledge. Other times he had been able to identify the person and speak to them and their parents. Young people gathering in the centre of the village was due to a combination of factors – often the place was well lit with seating and had become a site where younger siblings followed on from older family

members. Sometimes working with the DDC Community Safety Unit, other agencies and the parents was the best way to resolve this sort of issue.

10.07 Parish Action Plan Update - Mr N Whitburn

Mr Whitburn reported the Parish Plan had been completed and published. The full action plan was on display and available on request. The summary had been delivered to every home in the parish. There were many groups working on it including the Parish Council which would help groups to deliver plans. The Plan and the updates would be put on the website.

Questions on Mr Whitburn's Report

- A parishioner asked about the facilities available for young people and the request for a skate park and would like to get involved in this project. The Parish Council had looked into this as it has been asked for but to date it had been impossible to find a suitable site.
- It was suggested that the Recreation Ground would be a suitable site and that it could be lit in the evenings. This also had been looked previously and found to be unsuitable.
- The Parish Plan was available for all to become involved in and that it was important that a variety of groups were formed to take the plan forward and to follow up progress each year.
- A parishioner said it was important that there were increased opportunities for young people and the youth club was a positive move. It would help reduce the levels of intimidation and to provide a meeting place for young people.
- The Welcome Pack would also be helpful and could be available from January 2011.

10.08 Report for the Cartwright and Kelsey School – Mr M Crick, Headmaster

Mr Crick opened by thanking Mrs Chandler in her capacity as Chairman of Governors for all that she had done on behalf of the school. Dr Bill Vennart is the new Chairman of Governors.

Last year the school was visited by OFSTED in the summer term. They said that:

- Effective steps had been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection in 2006.
- The quality of the personal development and well being of the children was good.
- Early Years' provision was good overall with elements that were outstanding.
- Work with others to promote children's well-being was good.
- Levels of achievements and standards were deemed to be satisfactory.

Less than 14 days later the results for the tests taken by the oldest children arrived and showed that they had performed very well. The results also confirmed the sustained improvement that had been made by the school since 2006.

The school offers a wide range of activities and the breakfast and after school clubs are popular and valued by parents. The schools in Deal and Sandwich were recently awarded established status for the extended services they offer. Jane Newing had represented the school in this project and done much to enhance the school's contribution to the village and wider community. The time put in by staff and parents means that the children have an enviable choice of extra-curricular clubs and activities. It was great to see the football team win the cup last season. The children have also undertaken a wide range of educational visits. Even in difficult financial times this has been something that the school had worked to maintain successfully, assisted by the efforts of the school's PTFA and the Trustees of Ash Education Charities.

Mr Crick also spoke about Mr Downes' contribution to the school and that with his passing the school had lost a very good friend.

The new project for this year was 'Stay and Play'. This is run in conjunction with the health visitor and Aylesham Community Project and parents bring their children to the school hall and stay and play. The health visitor runs a weekly clinic at the same time. Fledglings' Nursery

offers something unique amongst Kent's maintained nurseries. It is open to children from the age of two and childcare is offered. The nursery has grown greatly since 2005 both in numbers and in reputation. This year the outstanding quality of the early years' provision was recognised by Kent County Council by the award of the Kent Quality Mark. Sue Chandler did much to secure the nursery for the village. She can feel proud of what she has done in helping the school reach where it is now.

The future for the school is very busy. For the first time in many years the school has more parents expressing an interest in sending their child to the school than there are places. The reception class will be larger than anyone can recall and there is a waiting list for the nursery.

Mr Crick expressed his thanks to the dedicated and highly motivated staff and governing body and explained why he felt privileged to lead the school in the words of one pupil when asked what they liked about the school - "It's good here because learning is fun and everyone is friendly and we all care for each other."

Questions on Mr Crick's Report

- The selection criteria for the school was explained – firstly church affiliation (and all churches were accepted); secondly if there was a brother or sister already at the school and finally the distance from the school.

10.09 There were no resolutions for which written notice has been given.

10.10 Reports from District Councillors - Mrs S Chandler and Mr M Conolly

A written report had been distributed to the meeting covering:

Finance – 2010/2011 budget was set with a small deficit due to the expected lower income levels. There will be no reduction in from line services, no museum closures and Dover District Council is grateful for the co-operation of parish councils in keeping toilets open. The Council Tax had gone up by 2.5%. Over the next two years there will be a 3% reduction per year in the Central Government Support Grant. To find the necessary savings the Council will expand joint working with neighbouring councils. Together with Thanet, Canterbury and Shepway, the Payroll and Human Resources functions are shared. Plans are well advanced to share services in the management of council housing and in waste collections and disposal. It is expected to sign the contracts for these in autumn for implementation the following year and there will continue to be weekly collections of food waste. A broader programme of joint working with Thanet and Canterbury is planned to start in 2011 and in each case a saving of at least 10% with no reduction in quality will be required.

A review of priorities is underway so that staff can be targeted at key areas. There will be no salary increase this year, unless resulting from a job evaluation and there will be none in 2010/2011. Councillors have refused increases in allowances for two successive years.

Local Development Framework – the Government appointed Inspector endorsed the plan in January. Dover is one of only three authorities in Kent to have had their plan approved. The plan which runs through to 2025 will see the construction of a proposed 14,000 new homes in the District and the creation of 6,000 jobs. The new housing will be concentrated around Dover, Deal and Aylesham. New housing will be permitted elsewhere in the District and local district councillors have been particularly keen to support plans for affordable housing in the villages.

Regeneration – it had been disappointing that ASDA pulled out of participation in the Dover Town Centre scheme. The Council will seek to fill this gap. Dover is a trust port but Dover Harbour Board's management cannot retain that status if they are to fund the expansion of the Western docks needed to handle the increased traffic expected over the 10 years. The proposals under consultation would include a Community Fund and an employee profit sharing scheme.

St Nicholas House – from September 2010 DDC could no longer operate care homes with shared facilities. The cost of the internal re-design meant that the decision was taken to close and sell it.

Community Safety Unit – provides a range of services including mediation for neighbour disputes. It can be contacted through the main DDC switchboard number 01304 821 199.

Young People – DDC has been working with KCC and the three local parishes of Ash, Wingham and Preston to provide paid youth workers to support the running of local youth clubs. Unfortunately the grant application was not successful and so the parishes will see if they can set up a scheme run by volunteers.

DDC Community Development – the DDC Officer for Ash, Miranda Pitt, is available to help support existing and new groups and local action plans.

Planning - Local councillors are often called to help with contentious planning issues. They can point people in the right direction to get advice on the processes involved and to speak at Planning Committee Meetings on behalf of residents, as all three have done in the year. The councillors also do their best to follow up enforcement issues. This year had been difficult as the unexpected and sadly early death of DDC's Chief Enforcement Officer in the autumn meant the department had difficulties completing the work he had started.

Questions for the District Councillors

- Parishioners raised the increase in the numbers of caravans / mobile homes at Westmarsh and that the Westmarsh Hall had been booked by the local authorities for use as a reception centre to check the work status of those now living at the various caravan sites. While the use of seasonal agricultural workers was long standing, there were over 60 caravans in the area and this could not be just for local workers. The matter has been on-going for some seven or eight years and action was needed urgently.
- It was explained that the new waste contracts currently being negotiated would extend the recycling of waste and include more types of plastics. Recycling plastic was difficult as it was necessary to ensure that the recycling of it was done responsibly.
- The question of weekly and fortnightly waste collections was raised. It was acknowledged that food waste can attract vermin. The new contracts required food waste to continue to be collected weekly. General household waste collections had not been finalised nor had the extent of the use of wheelie bins. Details would be available when the contractor had been chosen. KCC would provide finance for the wheelie bins if they are to be used but it is recognised that not all properties are suitable for them. The actual recycling process will depend on which companies the successful contractor uses. The green waste collections had been included in the criteria for the tenders.

10.11 Any other business concerned with parish affairs

- In response to a question about the state of the Red Lion (Lagaan's) it was explained that English Heritage had decided that the listing should stay. DDC had asked the owner to make the building safe pending re-building. DDC had carried out the safety work and recharged the owner. The owners had a reasonable time to re-build and it was likely that at least a year had to pass before any enforcement action could be taken by DDC.
- The requirement by English Heritage was that the building had to be re-built as listed but this did not extend to the use of the building or indicate if in future there would be an application for change of use.

The Chairman thanked all those present for coming to the meeting.
There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.55pm.