

MAYFIELD AND FIVE ASHES PARISH COUNCIL



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF MAYFIELD AND
FIVE ASHES PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT FIVE ASHES VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2006 AT 1930 HOURS**

SUMMARY OF MEETING

- Argos Hill Windmill issues debated
- Policy for mobile telephone masts requested
- Wealden District Council report possible local Government reorganisation
- Planning Process discussed
- Results of Southmead Close Housing Consultation received

ATTENDANCE

Martin Pitcher Chairman	(MP)	Present and Voting
Paul Amans	(PA)	Present and Voting
Peter Deller	(PD)	Present and Voting
Philip Dixon	(PX)	Present and Voting
Diane Kirkness	(DK)	Present and Voting
Lloyd McLean	(LM)	Present and Voting
Edward James	(EJ)	Present and Voting
Graham Playfoot	(GP)	Present and Voting
Felicity Ryan	(FR)	Present and Voting
Hubert Hills	(HH)	Present and Voting
Andrew Stokes	(AS)	Present and Voting
Deveda Redman	(DR)	Present and Voting
Catherine Swingland	(CS)	Apologies for absence
Robert Fitzsimmons	(RF)	Present and Voting

Present and voting 13 Present and not voting 0
Apologies for Absence 1 Not present 0 Other Council Business 0

Also Present

ESCC Councillor Robert Tidy (RT) and Christopher Dowling (CD)
Wealden District Councillors Brian Redman (BR), Robert Standley (RS) and Jonica Fox (JF)
Wealden District Council Officers Daniel Goodwin and Terry Crone attended for Item 1
David Thompson Parish Clerk (DT)
There was 13 members of the public present and one member of the press.
Apologies for Absence were received from ESCC WDC Councillor Anna Monaghan

MINUTES

1. ARGOS HILL WINDMILL – PRESENTATION BY WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1.1. MP introduced the Wealden District Council team:

- Daniel Goodwin – Corporate Director of Resources
- Terry Crone – Head of Corporate Assets

1.2. Daniel Goodwin noted that he had recently taken over as Corporate Director of Resources and would soon be moving on as Chief Executive of another Council. He apologised for the absence of Councillor David Logan (Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holder) who was unable to attend because of personal problems.

1.3. Daniel Goodwin reported that he wished to establish, with regards to the windmill:

- Where we are
- Where we can go

A briefing note covering the presentation points was distributed to all present. The briefing note is attached as Annex 1 and covered:

- History of the windmill
- Finance Issues
- WDC Funding available
- Options including repair estimates
- Management Options

1.4. The key issues were:

- WDC had responsibility for the windmill but lacked the resources to carry out the responsibility, both now and the likely foreseeable future.
- Complete repair would absorb 20% of WDC total financial reserves, or would if collected in one year represent an increase in Council Tax of 6%.
- The building was recognised to be of prime heritage importance.
- If undertaken by the Parish Council in the form of a loan, the cost would be around £35,000 per year for 25 years and would place approximately £19 per Class D household on the Parish Precept.
- English Heritage would be unlikely to contribute more than 30% of the cost.
- There were seven repair options available.
- There were five Management options available.
- There were access problems.

1.5. LM thanked Daniel Goodwin for his professional approach to the subject and his analysis, which in his view would have been welcome 10-20 years ago.

- 1.6. Brian Pike representing the “Friends of the Windmill” said that their aim was to restore the windmill to its 1990 position and to be able to maintain it in that position. The reason for this policy was that it was not a practical proposition to make the windmill work, because the machinery was dangerous and that there was not enough space to safeguard the machinery. Daniel Goodwin replied that his aspiration closely matched option 3, but noted that English Heritage required to see the possibility of the mill coming back into full use in the future.
- 1.7. PD considered that option 3 sounded reasonable and asked to what extent WDC would fund and to what type of body. Daniel Goodwin replied that any responsible properly organised body would be considered. £70,000 was immediately available as a one-off grant. DGoodwin noted that there needed to be a process in place to demonstrate commitment, it must have a clear plan and be able to promote the project. The first steps would be:
- Establishment of a Trust – ready to go ahead.
 - WDC funds, £70,000, any extra would require a political decision.
 - Other grants would need match funding.
 - Progress project with available funds.
- 1.8. PD was of the view that WDC should lead the projects. Daniel Goodwin said that WDC would do nothing without commitment. If the commitment locally was there, then WDC would produce an Action Plan for the group.
- GP was still of the view that as owners of the windmill WDC should take on full responsibility. In response DG said that if that was the case, the pressures on WDC were such that only a minimal repair option could be carried out so the alternatives were:
- Minimal repair as a view point.
 - Potential improvement to 1990 standards.
- He would take action accordingly. Interested parties needed to decide now.
- 1.9. Mr Vic Oliver of Uckfield noted that the Argos Hill Windmill was of far more than local interest and that after much damage the repairs carried out by WDC had been substandard, and had altered the balance of the mill to the detriment of its future. Repairs to make the structure safe were urgent. This view was also shared by Mr Greenwood who lived very close to the Windmill, and he asked that in any future work local knowledge be taken into account.
- 1.10. In summary Daniel Goodwin stated:
- He would take into account the comments on standards of workmanship.
 - There were many funding opportunities available.
 - WDC wished to get a project moving.
 - After restoration there must be a maintenance plan.
 - He would work with English Heritage and would leave the preferred option of restoration to local decision.
- 1.11. LM inquired about the house which was situated on the site and what could be done about access problems. Daniel Goodwin replied that property interests needed to be considered separately.

FORMAL MEETING

2. COUNCILLORS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

- 2.1. DR wished it to be known that her daughter lived near the site of the proposed Orange 3G mast and that she had a personal interest in the project.
- 2.2. There were no other declarations of interest.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 3.1. There were no Chairman's announcements.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 4.1. BR raised the issue of the proposed "Orange" 3G mast near the junction of A267. This was to be substantially bigger and taller than the existing mast and asked whether the Parish Council had a policy on telephone masts, if not could one be made. MP replied that the council did not have a policy. LM said that he was against them but agreed that the Planning Committee did not have a policy. PD noted that it used to be believed that there could not be objections to telephone masts but this was no longer the case. He noted that Orange had not formally applied at this stage.

5. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2006

- 5.1. The minutes were amended:
Minor matter of fact 4
Minor errors 4
- 5.2. With these amendments the minutes were accepted as a true record by unanimous vote.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- 6.1 There were no matters arising.

7. MINUTES FROM THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2006

- 7.1. DK noted that there were no matters for decision only noting issues.
- 7.2 PD asked for an explanation of minute 5F9/12.1. DK replied that the grant of £5000 had been given on the grounds that there would be complete transparency over the Memorial Hall accounts and policies.
- 7.3 PD asked for a simple statement which showed the current state of Parish Council funds and reserves. DK explained that the Clerk was currently reviewing the Financial Regulations including the holding of reserves, and that he would also produce the statement.

ACTION DT

- 7.4 The minutes were accepted as a true record without amendment.

PROPOSED DK

SECONDED HH

VOTE UNANIMOUS

8. FINANCE REPORT

- 8.1. The December accounts were circulated.
- 8.2. PD inquired as to the reason for a credit of £8156 in the Parish Accounts. This was money from the Youth project donations from MMM.

9. REPORT FROM ESCC CONCILLORS R TIDY AND C DOWLING

- 9.1. RT reported that ESCC had received a 2.5% Rate Support Grant increase.
Council Tax increases were:

2006/7	4.7%
2007/8	4.3%
2008/9	3.9%
2009/10	3.5%
- 9.2. ESCC had been working on an Invest to Save Project and had built up a £15m fund. They were trying to increase the amount to £35m.
- 9.3. There would be pressure on staff and members to improve working practices.
- 9.4. The good news was that the Rights of Way maintenance teams had been given a budget increase of £80,000, and there had also been a change of management team, and they will be consulting with Parishes to prioritise maintenance work.
- 9.5. A question was raised as to the huge expense of the recent murder trial held in the County Court and if there were any effects on police funding. RT replied that different budgets were applied. So far as vehicles for PCSOs were concerned he anticipated success in provision within two months.

10. REPORTS FROM THE WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCILLORS BRIAN REDMAN, JONICA FOX, ANN MONAGHAN AND ROBERT STANDLEY

- 10.1. BR reported that the budget review was still ongoing, with an increase of 4.5% likely. There were still some risks in particular from concessionary fares.
- 10.2. Two other issues were reported:
 - The scrutiny committee were examining the lack of water resources and the effect on housing.
 - A forthcoming local government reorganisation, possibly heading towards unitary authorities with large parishes.
- 10.3. JF reported a resignation from the Planning Committee of WDC and the current situation within the Planning Process. There had been a slight improvement in the turnover of planning applications.
- 10.4. JF paid tribute to the hard work and efficiency of Daniel Goodwin.

11. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 JANUARY AND 23 JANUARY AND 6 FEBRUARY 2006

- 11.1. The Planning Committee were now meeting each two weeks.
- 11.2. With regards to minute 5P17/2.1 Oak Croft, the Planning Committee decision of No Objection which was overridden by what appeared to be an objection. LM replied that this was an observation on the height of the building at the rear, in order to be as helpful as possible to WDC.
- 11.3. A minor error in minutes P16 was notified.
- 11.4. RF drew attention to the recent letter of objection to the planning application for “Jasons” which had been made by St Dunstan’s Church. There was a dispute as to whether the extractor fans were on Parish land. It was noted that the Clerk had written to WDC on the subject.
- 11.5. With regards to minute 5P17/2.3 Steps House, There was of the view that the comments made in the minute should mean that the committee should have objected to the application. LM replied that this was not the case since the comments qualified the “No Objection” decision of the Parish Council. He reported that a site visit had been made in this case.
- 11.6. LM explained that the Parish Council did not have precise instructions on the issues to be taken into account over Planning decisions and that it was Planning Committee policy to be as helpful as possible. It was agreed that better instruction would be sought.

ACTION DT

- 11.7. DK asked about the advice given in Yellow Pages. It was noted that this advice had to be made retrospectively because Yellow Pages was a monthly publication whilst the Planning Process was on a two week cycle. Applications were always available at the Clerk’s office for inspection and were displayed on the notice boards. PX also noted that Planning applications were posted on the WDC website, and PD reported that they were published in the press on a weekly basis.
- 11.8. All three sets of minutes were accepted as amended, as a true record by unanimous agreement.

12. MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2006

- 12.1. There was one minor change to the minutes which were then unanimously accepted as a true record.
- 12.2. PX noted the key events from the last meeting which had covered a presentation from AIRS on Planning and Consultancy techniques and substantial progress on the Parish Plan.
- 12.3. PD reported that he had completed the work required of him under action 5D8/4.3.
- 12.4. PX noted that the plan required a “Vision Statement” and asked members for contributions.

13. REPORT FROM THE SECURITY COMMITTEE HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2006

- 13.1. The minutes of the meeting were accepted as a true record by unanimous vote.
- 13.2. RF introduced Paula Matty a Heathfield PCSO to the meeting. Paula was working with TB on “Flytipping” problems.

- 13.3. RF reported police success in the apprehension of two people on drug related issues, who were helping police with their enquiries.
- 13.4. With regard to police force mergers RT reported that the East Sussex Division held sufficient funding for Mayfield policing. The proposed mergers would take a long time to process and there would be a considerable cost in achieving the proposals because of redundancy and resettlement etc.
- 13.5. PD asked for clarity on a remark made by Sister McLaughlin for road markings by the "In Gate" of St Leonards School. He noted that it would be 2-3 years before a review of Mayfield parking would be carried out but agreed that the issue should be added to the Traffic Committee workload.

14. REPORT FROM THE TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

- 14.1. PD reported on the meeting of the NCN21 Sub-Committee held on 31 January 2006.
- 14.2. W S Atkins had spoken to the sub-committee, and had shown themselves to be receptive to ideas and suggestions. PD spoke highly of the team leader from W S Atkins who had demonstrated a good grasp of local issues and had taken down all comments. The meeting notes covered the issues.
- 14.3. There were no other issues or questions for the Traffic Committee.

15. REPORT FROM THE KING GEORGES FIELD CHARITY COMMITTEE

- 15.1. The next meeting was on 22 February, there were no other issues to report.

16. MINUTES OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY AND TREES COMMITTEES HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2006

- 16.1. Ted James reported that ESCC were undertaking a large amount of work on behalf of the Committee. These were recorded in the Work Programme.
- 16.2. DK referring to minute 5R4/2.6 and asked if the visit to the Old Iron Works was open to non committee members. It was agreed that the visit was open to all.
- 16.3. PX commented on the Holm Oak at Bay Tree House, it was noted that the owner may have mistaken the Holm Oak for a Bay Tree.
- 16.4. With two minor corrections the minutes were accepted as a true record.

17. MINUTES OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2006

- 17.1. DK apologised to Councillors affected over the "constitution" of the Youth Group. The issue had been corrected.
- 17.2. DK reported that funding was available for 20 weeks and that further funding of £3000 from the Monk Family Memorial donation may be available.
- 17.3. PD commented on the good progress which had been made with the project and enquired into costings. It was noted that Youth leaders were provided at hourly rates.
- 17.4. The minutes were accepted by unanimous vote.

18. HOUSING ISSUES

- 18.1. Southmead Close housing issues are laid out in Annex 2 to these minutes. It was noted that clearance works had already started at Southmead Close. In reply to a question from HH, the Clerk replied that sketch plans for the scheme were held in the Clerk's office.
- 18.2 Queensmount: Scheme will be included in consultation as a HOPE site.
- 18.3 Criers Lane: Land owner ready to complete sale.

19. CLERK'S REPORT

- 19.1 There were no comments on the Clerk's report.

20. VOTE FOR CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR

- 20.1. There were two candidates for co-option for Parish Councillor and a vote was conducted to fill the vacancy. The results were:

Bramwell J 7

Lilly C 6

Mrs J Bramwell was duly elected.

- 20.2. MP said that the vote had been very close and thanked Dr Lilly for his interest, and asked that he would maintain contact with the council because a further vacancy was known to be arising shortly.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 21.1 AS asked if the street sign Leeds Lane could be amended to read Leeds Lane leading to Meres Lane. PD replied that the Post Office had influenced a street naming policy but the suggestion would be added to the "Traffic Committee" workload.
- 21.2 GP asked that because of the growing number of more important meetings taking place at London House, whether a refreshment service could be arranged.
- 21.3 PA asked for a check to be made with highways to ascertain the ownership of land where certain private notice boards were erected. PD would assist.
ACTION DT/PD
- 21.4 PD enquired on the advantages to becoming a Quality Council and to the current state of progress. LM agreed that Quality status was desirable. DT to reply.
ACTION DT
- 21.5 DR reported that the Flu sub-committee would hold its first meeting soon.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 2148 HOURS.

**THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MAYFIELD AND FIVE ASHES PARISH COUNCIL
WILL BE HELD AT:**

VENUE: MAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

DATE: MONDAY 13th MARCH 2006

TIME: 1930 HOURS

ARGOS HILL WINDMILL

Briefing Note for Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council February 2006

Wealden District Council inherited the freehold interest in the Windmill from Uckfield Rural District Council in the 1974 Local Government reorganisation. The Windmill is a Grade 2* listed building standing within the grounds of a private residence. The Council only owns the land on which it stands, which does not extend to the turning circle of the rear fantail and support.

Over the years the Mill's condition has deteriorated and in 2002 was placed on English Heritage's Building at Risk Register, it is currently estimated that a full repair would cost in the region of £400k-£500k. Cabinet discussed in July 2003 various options to secure the long-term future of the Mill. These included the potential formation of a Trust by the Friends of Argos Hill Windmill, which had the potential of accessing external funding to enable necessary restoration work to proceed. This development has not yet taken place. It was decided that a Consultant be appointed to explore the various repair options and the possibility of the Council obtaining external funding itself and that, as an interim measure, scaffolding be erected to protect the Mill and to enable further investigative works to be initiated. Whilst the scaffolding and protective works have been erected, it has proved difficult to identify a suitable consultant who has both the experience and diary time to work on this project. The Council is currently discussing the project with a new consultant.

In May 2004, Cabinet was advised that the Friends had changed their aspirations regarding the degree to which the Mill ought to be restored (although even this reduced level of work would cost around £150k and might not meet English Heritage requirements). In May 2005, Cabinet was advised that the Planning Consent for the erection of the scaffolding was for a three year period and that within that timescale a fully funded programme of repair and replacement need to be in place. It was thought that this would provide sufficient time to form a suitable trust.

Financial Issues

- £500k represents just under 20% of WDC's current reserves and 25% of its planned reserves in three years' time. If collected in one year it would represent a 6% increase in Wealden's Council Tax.
- The Parish Council could access Public Works Loans Board at a rate cheaper than could WDC (currently 4.5% rather than 7.2%) because of local government finance rules. As an example only, financing a loan of £500k would cost around £35k per year for 25 years, this represents around £19 per band D household on the parish precept.
- English Heritage is unlikely to provide more than 30% of the total required funding.
- Heritage lottery funding is only likely to be forthcoming if public access is achieved in some way.

The following funding is allocated to Argos Hill Windmill in the Council's budget:

Once-off

Repairs and maintenance	£50k
Capital budget	£10k
Total	£60k

Recurring

Repairs and maintenance	£7k
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Options appraisal
Repair options (Estimates)

Option	Once off Cost	Ongoing Cost	Impact/Issues
Doing nothing other than minimum maintenance		£7k	Not an option as the council has a responsibility as the owner of this listed building.
Dismantle completely and store in suitable museum	£40k		Undesirable because of local landscape impact and would not meet with English Heritage approval.
Minimum external repair only	£100k	£10k	Could be seen as first stage in restoration, English Heritage likely to be highly supportive of seeing project move forward.
Repair as landmark and store internal machinery offsite	£125k	£10k	Unlikely to meet with English Heritage approval unless there was a very good reason for taking this course of action.
Complete repair	£450k+	£25k	Would require rights of access for fantail on land and more direct ongoing management of machinery. Unlikely to get funding without public access.
Develop as low profile museum	£750+	£25k	Would require rights of access for public, small provision of car-parking, minimal changes to highway access, planning permission and relevant neighbour consultation relating to changes. Friends would need to supervise public.
Develop as high profile Museum	£1m+	£100k	Would require rights of access for public, provision of car-parking and arrangements for easier access by traffic through lanes around the mill and at junction with A267. Would require planning permission and relevant neighbour consultation relating to changes.

Management options

Option	Issues
No change – WDC retains ownership	Unsustainable: Little prospect of significant funding because Argos Hill Windmill is unlikely to be the council’s top priority (as opposed to affordable housing, for example)
Hand ownership to trust	Theoretically viable but unrealistic: Focused ownership by specialists who will have the mill as their top priority. However the trust is unlikely to take it on without a funding package and little progress will be made without one.
Hand ownership to Parish Council	Theoretically viable but unrealistic: Could help to provide better local engagement and would focus any costs on those Wealden residents without a funding package and would probably need assistance of specialist knowledge from Friends.
Hand to trust with once off grant*	Viable, but potentially disjointed local engagement: Ownership by specialists who will have the mill as their top priority. Funding package would allow trust to seek match funding from English Heritage and others.
Hand to Parish Council with once off grant*	Viable if Friends/Trusts involved in giving advice: Could help to provide better local engagements and would focus only extra costs on those Wealden residents most likely to perceive a benefit from them. Funding package would allow further funding to be sought from other bodies.

*Given the figures overleaf it is possible that a once off grant of at least £70k could be provided by WDC to a suitable organisation that would be willing to take on the ownership of the windmill.

SOUTHMEAD CLOSE CONSULTATION RESULTS

72 LETTERS SENT OUT

20 FORMS RETURNED = 29%

16 RESPONDENTS 22% AGREE TO PROPOSALS

5 RESPONDENTS 7% DO NOT AGREE

COMMENTS FROM NON SUPPORTERS

- Smaller 1 & 2 bed properties required
- Parking issue
- Destroy the wildlife
- More traffic going up Southmead Close, which already congested and difficult to park in.
- Extra traffic, parking, children and noise in a road that is predominantly populated by elderly residents is unacceptable.

COMMENTS FROM SUPPORTERS

- Concerns over the parking especially when construction work starts, if not addressed properly will cause a lot of friction between builders and residents.
- As long as the trees at the back of the site are retained and a fence is also erected to stop people cutting through.
- Welcome improvement provided the rooflines are sensitively limited, there being a single storey properties to the south.
- The tree planting scheme illustrated should be a planning condition as should solid fencing as a fixed boundary.
- Parking and traffic increasing in the road.

OFFERED CURTILEGE PARKING

- 19 Southmead Close – garage tenant
- 26 Southmead Close – garage tenant