

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - 16th MAY 2011 at 7.30 pm. SUCKLEY VILLAGE HALL

Over 60 people attended the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th May. We had a very full Agenda, with a number of interesting speakers, including the Head Teacher of Suckley Primary School Mr Matt Meckin and three of his pupils.

Mr David Armitage from Malvern Hills AONB and Mrs Gwyneth Rees from Colwall Parish Council spoke to the meeting about Suckley producing a Landscape Character Statement. In an AONB area such as Suckley, Mr Armitage stated that the landscape should be regarded in the same way as a national park with safeguards to enhance and conserve the character. The Parish Council needed to take an informed view from all residents as to what they considered to be important features. This was not just limited to views and country terrain, but could include buildings, monuments and any particular assets that people felt were of importance to the history and wellbeing of the parish. Mrs Gwyneth Rees explained to the meeting how Colwall had put together their Landscape Character Statement – it had not been an easy task, but everyone had enjoyed doing it. They were all very proud of their final document which she felt was a very powerful way of protecting the area for the future.

Mr Matt Meckin, Head Teacher of Suckley Primary School, spoke about the last 12 months of the school year. The reputation of the school was growing, and pupil numbers stood at 47, with 10 children lined up to join in September. The future of the school was looking very good and an exciting curriculum was in place. He introduced three of the pupils who very ably described various projects each year had been involved in putting together – organising a farm fayre, making puppets and stories to read to the nursery group and setting up their own treasure hunts, puzzles and challenges.

Woodland Road Flood Barrier Scheme was next on the Agenda, with Mr Paul Bingham from Festival Housing giving the meeting an update on progress being made. Further Wayleave Agreements had now been signed with Central Network and landowners. Work should start in 2 – 3 months time. The Barrier would be about 4-5 feet in height, and letters would be sent out to Woodland Road residents asking for their comments.

District Councillors David Hughes and Anthony Warburton reported on their work to oversee the financial cutbacks which they felt were essential to get the District Councils into a more robust financial state. A review of senior management posts was under way as Malvern Hills District Council had merged services with Wychavon and Worcester City Council.

Hilary Pitt reported to the meeting on the progress being made with the Community Plan. Various groups which formed the Community Plan were now focussing on the Jubilee Celebrations for 2012, with the intention of not only bringing together as many people as possible into the community, but raising money for local good causes and having some fun. The theme would be the last 60 years of village life in Suckley – how the village had changed since the 1950's. Possible events included a Sports Day, Puppet Shows, Raffles, local exhibitions, stalls, a Barn Dance and/or Pig Roast, Treasure Hunt, Open Gardens, Music Events – using all the facilities of the village. All these event would take place between 2nd – 5th June 2012. Volunteers and helpers were needed to make the Big Event in June a success. A meeting was being called for Monday 23rd May in the village hall at 7.30 pm. Everyone was invited.

PC Sarah Ransome Williams, our Local Beat Officer, was not able to attend the meeting, but sent a report. Crime Statistics for Suckley were :- 3 road traffic collisions (no injuries); 2 criminal damage; 10 incidents of anti-social behaviour relating to neighbour disputes (not youth related); 0 violent crime; 1 burglary; 1 theft. The figures were fortunately very low for the area.

Mr Richard Harward reported that he and Mr Peter Markins continued to work as a team very successfully, as our Footpath Wardens. The Countryside Access Database had been launched during the year which was proving to be a very useful tool. He and Mr Markins had made and repaired steps, stiles, fences and fingerposts, and also cleared trees which had fallen over the footpaths.

The Revd Andrew Bullock reported on the activities of the PCC in Suckley over the past year. Baptisms had increased during the year and he was delighted with the increase in family attendances at Church Services. The Church was holding more informal and mid week services which were proving very successful. Anne Lewis addressed the meeting on the future plans to open up the body of the church to be used as a multi functional space. Toilets and professional quality kitchen facilities would also support these expanded activities. Funding was being sought via the National Lottery, Grants and fund-raising activities. She invited everyone to an open public meeting in the Church on 8th June at 7.30 pm to discuss ideas.

Cllr Mrs Carol Luton reported that the major concern with the Playing Fields over the last 12 months had been the maintenance and upkeep of the Field and pavilion. The inside of the pavilion had been severely affected with burst pipes (which had now been repaired) but not before creating a huge mess inside the building. It was planned to paint and tile the walls in the coming year. Litter, including broken glass, was becoming a major problem, and thanks were due to Cllr John Green for his tireless efforts in clearing up the litter, undertaking running repairs and keeping a general eye on the field.

Mr Mo Dutta spoke to the meeting about the Hill Trust (Village Hall). He felt it was essential for the future of the hall that fundraising activities were supported. These were run by supporters and volunteers of the Hill Trust, and more members were needed. The hall was in need of upgrading, including more insulation and heating.

Speeding issues were the main topic of discussion at Public Question Time. Residents spoke of a number of near misses and collisions in various parts of the parish. The Chairman, Mr Walter Huband spoke for the Parish Council, who were well aware of the speeding problems. The Parish Council was looking at ways and means of combating this, including the possible purchase of a mobile VAS camera. The Clerk was looking into sharing the cost of this with a neighbouring parish.

The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. All those present were invited to stay and have a glass of wine/fruit juice and nibbles.