

Springthorpe Annual Parish Meeting

13th May 2024 7pm

Minutes

Annual Parish Meeting (APM) Meeting opened 7pm

Chair: Dr Gillian Procter Tel: 07484041037 email: chair_SPM@outlook.com

1. Present: Ella Collins, Jill Cowan, Adrian Winter, Julie Oaks, John Oaks, Shirley Winter, Wendy Gelder, Sue Dewsbury, Daniel Elkington, Marian Graham

Apologies: Brian Cameron, Annabel Cameron, Alex Amaira, Tom Graham, Mike Dewsbury, Clare Anyan, Michael Anyan, Steve Gelder, Sue Winter, Tim Leckey, Anna Leckey, Paul Howitt Cowan

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2. The Chair gave a review of the year 2023/24 as attached

3. Daniel Elkington gave an overview of the Springthorpe and Sturgate neighbourhood plan, progress to date and plans for 2024/25:

- Social event to be held 24th June 2024 to collect village history
- Consideration of buildings and areas we wish to preserve as they are
- Anna Leckey to set up a Website
- Grants potentially to be available in due course
- Additional volunteers needed to support the plan process
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APM- 12 May 2025 Springthorpe Village Hall (SVH) 7pm

Meeting closed 7.25pm

Springthorpe Annual Parish Meeting

13 May 2024 at 1900hrs

Chairmans address

Thankyou for the opportunity to serve the community for another year.

I'd like to announce my intention of stepping down as Chair in May 2025. I am happy to be nominated for Chair again for this year and would like to help any incoming Chair by mentoring them as Vice Chair for this year and supporting them by being Vice Chair next year. There are two vacancies on the 'committee' for Treasurer/RFO and for Web Manager for the Parish: both voluntary but their impact on what the Parish could achieve more easily enormous, with a great opportunity to learn about the sphere of local government. Maybe the start of a new career for someone. Don't be shy

2023-2024

A year again overshadowed by the consultation on NISP proposed by Tillbridge Solar Ltd. Expected application did not arrive till 10 April 2024: they still propose being on line in 2028.

Whilst we waited what did we achieve?

We completed the third part of the Coronation plan which was to replace the picnic table on the Village Green. Thankyou to Adrian Winter and Julian Cowan who provided instant muscle for the installation.

The campaign to stop the flooding on Hill Road gathered pace. Many thanks to our District Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan who found a way for us to keep a watch on the progress of this in committee. We are waiting for LCC highways to complete their CCTV assessment of the problem with the drain on the northern bend and recommend (or not) a civil engineering solution. I'm hoping that the lesser problem further south on the middle section of Hill Road might respond to whatever treatment is recommended: if not we will start again with that problem.

We continued the discussion with LCC highways about the safety of pedestrians on the unpaved section of Hill Road. Slow signs were painted at the northern and southern entrances to the Village. Thankyou to Katie Parkin for her input (and Neil Winter for his outtake – what a guy!): quite unexpectedly recently she received a letter stating that there had been a decision to install warning signs on the southern section warning motorists of pedestrians in the road. This is a significant step forward but may not be enough to reduce the risk of injury or death to zero: in my reply to the letter I asked for other signage – road narrows, oncoming vehicles in the middle of the road - and maybe even traffic lights if the council couldn't provide a

footpath. I still haven't had a reply four weeks later though receipt of this letter has been acknowledged. LRSP provided evidence of vehicles speeding within the 30mph restriction limits on both ends of Hill Road. This will have to be addressed separately by joining the Police Community Action scheme and adopting tactics that work. This will require the dedication of one individual to act as liaison and teach others in the Village what to do. The process is free and provides access to approved signage warning motorists to slow down. We need a volunteer

Having been successful with the application for a Community Grant – thank you Claire Morris and WLDC - for repair and minor upgrades to the Playing Field the fence is being fixed and the furniture awaits installation. More volunteers required! Investigation of the lease on the Playing Field has been tortuous but was a necessary part of the application – we had to ask Thonock estate how long we have the field for and provide the information to WLDC. The current Thonock Agent has suggested five years renewable in a letter to the Parish in September 2024. Having taken legal advice from LALC/NALC I have had to write to WLDC to ask whether the Parish has the power to negotiate with the Estate and create a lease agreement in law. We are awaiting the reply: we may have to ask WLDC to do this for us. The logistics of owning/running the Field and ensuring its viability are daunting: probably a job that needs its own subcommittee to oversee issues around upkeep, funding and health and safety. I propose that if we keep the Field a formal subcommittee of the Parish Meeting is formed to do just that. The alternative is for a body within the Village that does have the power to negotiate a lease takes over the running of the Playing Field. The Village Hall as an independent organisation could do this. The Parish Meeting could decide to relinquish the ownership of the lease in favour of the Village Hall today. There is an argument for not bothering: the land is prime development land and is 'low hanging fruit' for infill development. Unless we could negotiate a longer period of use many of us would not think it worth the effort unless we could make much better use of it than as a dog exercise area. Developing the use of the Field could be something the Village Hall could do more easily than the Parish Meeting that faces constraints on the use of public money (which is its only source of funding) unless it were to become a competitor with the Village Hall and the Church for raising funds in the Village which seems non-constructive. I've talked myself into it. Perhaps we should decide today

We started the Neighbourhood Planning process in January 2024 with permission from WLDC to do so. We will elect the Subcommittee later this evening and look forward to their presentation of progress thus far. Thank you to Anna Leckey, Daniel Elkington and John Oaks for their work so far and welcome to Sue Dewsbury and Chrissie Brown, looking forward to their contributions this year. The first social meeting on 24 June is to focus on the history of the Villages of Springthorpe and Sturgate (to help pinpoint the areas/views – and they don't have to be buildings) that have special significance, that we would wish to preserve) and promises to be of interest to everyone. The next task is to scope the scale of the task further by deciding on the Village envelopes, the areas beyond which we recommend no further development occurs. And then to outline the necessary infrastructure that any developer would have to address to support it in comfort. I have heard it said that

developing the Plan is a waste of time and money. Well we may have to do it on a shoestring because the Conservative government hasn't provided any funding for this civil initiative this year yet. And I defy anyone who thinks that doing what they can to better the future of their environment for themselves but mostly for their successors to be a waste of time. Enough already.

This APM/APCM format is a new look for the AGM. It reflects the move to a new set of Model Standing Orders adopted by LALC in 2018 and modified in 2022. We are going to vote on formally adopting these later this evening together with a raft of Springthorpe-specific draft Policies that have been languishing unadopted for two years (I'm hoping everyone here has done their bedtime reading/homework). These crystallise the principles and behaviours we expect of Parish Members and volunteer officials in their official capacities and provide standards against which if needed performance can be measured and remedial action taken. Perhaps most necessary in the area of financial probity on which we have to submit to annual monitoring through the AGAR process

2024-2025

So there you have it: Tillbridge Solar NISP, the state of the roads, the running of the Playing Field, dry bureaucracy (including the switch to gov.uk web mail) – 2024-25 stretches before us and is going to be..... exciting?

But first two more thankyou's

To the usual suspects that help with every event and goings-on: Shirley Winter, Marian Graham, Wendy Gelder, Sue Dewsbury, Sue Winter, Jill Cowan, Joy Horton, Charles Anyan, Mike Dewsbury, Richard Horton, Tom Graham, Adrian Winter, Julian Cowan, John Oaks, Russ Smith . The authors of a very successful Coronation Party and the relaxed and enjoyable senior reception earlier this year. The Parish really couldn't manage without you

Last but not least, thankyou to the Postbox Fairies who keep us all smiling

GSP April 2024