

# **WOOLMER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of Eighth Annual Parish Meeting held 8 April 2008**

**Present:** Cllr Mrs J Watson (Chair), Cllr N Collingridge, Cllr H Bryant, Cllr M Burge, Cllr S Day, Cllr A Gribble.

**In attendance:** Mr A Edmonds (Clerk), Mrs J Pearce (Deputy Clerk), Herts County Councillor Mr R Smith, Borough Cllr Mrs J Cragg, PC Clare Parfitt, Mrs M Westley; Headmistress of St. Michaels School, Mrs S Keach; Churchwarden, Mr P Arrowsmith; Wickfield Close sheltered accommodation, Mr G Fenton; Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Mr Brian King MBE, 40 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for absence:** Borough Cllr S Markiewicz, Mayor C Storer.

**2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 2007:** Copies of these Minutes were available.

**3. Matters arising from these minutes:** None.

**4. Chairman's Report:** Cllr Mrs J Watson welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave thanks to staff. She outlined the Parish Council's areas of responsibilities which include consulting with Herts County Council, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, neighbouring Parishes and other organisations on matters that might impact on Woolmer Green. Recently these have included planning, highways, airport expansion and gypsy & traveller sites.

The Parish Council is also responsible for the maintenance of the Village Hall, grounds and the pond. The Hall is now equipped with a computer & projector funded by the HAPTC and the possibility of licensing the Hall for wedding ceremonies is being explored. Plans for this year include cleaning the War Memorial, distribution of a footpath map to every household and entering Woolmer Green into the Village of the Year Competition. Parishioners are kept informed via the regular Newsletter and Woolmer Green Parish web site. Cllr Watson expressed thanks to a number of unpaid volunteers that offer help throughout the year and to Farmers Market Manager, Mr S. Blackman, for providing refreshments.

**5. Delivery of petition from St. Michael's School to County Cllr. Richard Smith:** Headmistress of St. Michael's school, Mrs M Westley, and a number of parents presented a petition to County Cllr R Smith requesting that the speed limit along the B197 be reduced to 30 mph as they are very concerned for the childrens' safety as they walk to school. Cllr Smith will submit their petition to the HCC Joint Members Panel on 15 April 2008.

**6. a) St. Michael's School:** Mrs M Westley informed parishioners that the school has had a good Ofsted report and outstanding reports by the Church and Local Authority. The school is becoming increasingly popular and have plans to expand.

**b) St. Michael's Church:** Churchwarden Mrs S Keach reported that maintenance work has been carried out on the vestry and that the Church have organised fund raising events. They have links with the school and hope to form a Junior Church in the future. Lead has been stolen from the church roof and security measures have been taken to try to prevent a recurrence. Mrs Keach is due to retire and Cllr Watson expressed thanks for her work as Churchwarden. Cllr Watson also reminded the audience that the Council had budgeted for up to £500 matched funding for the upkeep of the churchyard.

**c) Wickfield Close sheltered accommodation:** Mr P Arrowsmith described Wickfield Close as having a happy atmosphere where, with on call warden support and organised social events, the residents are able to lead independent lives.

**7. Questions from the Floor:** Questions raised included the possibility of arranging youth activities in the village and concerns on the dangers of the B197.

**8. Neighbourhood Watch:** Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Mr Gary Fenton, demonstrated his award winning Online Watch Link (OWL) internet application.

**9. My Life in the Theatre:** Mr Brian King MBE gave an entertaining talk on what inspired him to become a performer and his experiences in the theatre.

In closing the meeting Cllr Watson informed everyone that the theme of this year's Village Day, on 7 June, is Climate Change. Volunteers are needed.