

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY, 25th APRIL 2005 AT 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT

Mr Pusey, Mr Barnes, Mr Chilton, Mr Hockley, Mr Kennedy, Mrs Thake

District Councillor Mrs Deborah Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE

9 members of the public

APOLOGIES

Mr Broadley, Mr Brooksbank

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and briefly described the way it would be run with short speeches of about five minutes duration, each followed by questions.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr Kennedy proposed that the Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting, held on Monday, 26th April 2004, be taken as read. Mr Chilton seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Mr Pusey said he could not do this job without the help and support of his fellow councillors and of course the council's long serving/suffering clerk, Mrs Burns.

He gave particular thanks to David Broadley for being such a good Vice-Chairman – he knew David had had a difficult year but he had still found time to make a valuable contribution to the village.

Mr Pusey said that the year had seen the resignation of John Blakesley and the co-option of Rob Brooksbank. Following John's resignation, Geoff Barnes had picked up the reins on planning and had been doing a good job. Rob had joined the group tasked with developing the extension to the Recreation Ground.

It had not been a quiet year and, although former Parish Councillors could look back on their struggles to bring about the wonderful facilities in which the present meeting was being held, and could now enjoy their retirement with some satisfaction - there were always things left over with such a big development. In addition, the council had several new and exciting projects to concern it.

Mr Pusey said there were some matters that would not come up on the later agenda items and that he would like to refer to briefly as part of his introduction. If nothing else, he said, it would give those present some idea of the range of business the council was dealing with on behalf of parishioners. Apart from the myriad of small things dealt with on a day-to-day basis, he said there were some big things that affected the village. These were as follows:

- The PC had acted as enabler for the village web site and Mr Pusey said he was very grateful to Ian Sanderson for developing the web site and urged everyone to

go and have a look at www.foxtoncambs.info if they hadn't already. He also urged both individuals and organisations to make use of this village facility.

- Mr Pusey said the council was informed, at a recent meeting on the future of the A10 rail crossing, that the scheme for bypassing the crossing and building a bridge had been taken out of the County Council's medium term plan. Network Rail also seemed to be in "suspended animation" and there did not appear to be any commitment to lengthening the platforms at Foxton Station.
- Mr Pusey said the council had had no success in its efforts to persuade the County Council to deal with white lining in the village, parking problems in Fowlmere Road and speed restrictions at the entrance to the village. It appears that these will have to await the results of the forthcoming County Council elections.
- Mr Pusey said that the temporary use of the old school site by pupils, formerly attending Littleton House, Girton, had been working extremely well. They had opened out to the community and the result had been that he had not received a single adverse comment. As for the longer-term use of the site, he said the council had been working steadily with its District and County Councillors. Originally the council had wanted a sheltered scheme, but District Councillor, Deborah Roberts, said that South Cambridgeshire District Council was not prepared to support new schemes, so the council had been concentrating its efforts on affordable housing.

Recently Hereward Housing Association was asked to approach the County Council with a view to discussing options for redevelopment. They were told that the County intends to redevelop the site itself in 18 months time. Mr Pusey said that he was still waiting a reply to confirm this apparent change to what was agreed by the Director of Education. Although not directly linked, there was a view that the provision of affordable housing on the old school site was threatened by the application by Hereward Housing for 20 affordable houses (on parkland to the rear of the former Press houses) in association with a further 14 to be build on the Press site. He said the application would be on display in the Village Hall on the 5th May and would be considered at the AGM on the 9th May. Mr Pusey said the council would be pleased to receive parishioners' views on this possible major development in the heart of the village.

- Mr Pusey said that in his experience the village had had its worst year yet for vandalism, with residents having to call the police on a regular basis. There had been a gang of boys in the village lacking any respect for adults. He said he would warn them and their parents that the levels of petty crime and disorder experienced at times this year would not be tolerated and that everyone needed to work together to name the culprits and to report any incidents to the police.
- Mr Pusey said the biggest issue by far had been the threat of new development coming out of the East of England planning process. Foxton - or was that Fox Town? - gained some notoriety as a possible site for the next Milton Keynes. The council had organised local parishes to combine forces to oppose the principle of such large-scale development in the vicinity. He said the village owed a great debt to Catherine Cairns for her advice and for helping to draft the council's written responses. Mr Pusey said there was a national agenda, and at the 11th hour Mr. Prescott had requested a further 29,000 houses be added to the East of England

Plan: not a word about the infrastructure deficit had been heard. Mr Pusey warned that the threat of large-scale development on the village's doorstep had not gone away.

- Although Mr Pusey knew the matter would come up under R&A he said he would just like to say that his main disappointment this year was that the council had not made progress on the skateboard park - despite giving a lot of time to the project it had again stalled.
- Mr Pusey said he would end his introduction on a more positive note. The dovecote site had seen much progress in the last 12 months and despite the fact that the leases were still not finalised, hopefully, completion was now only a matter of a couple of months away.

The Friends group, which consisted of himself, Catherine Cairns, Ian Sanderson, Rachael McIntyre, Rob Mungovan and Mark Kennedy, had been making considerable progress. The council had been awarded the maximum grants from the Countryside Agency Local Heritage Initiative Fund (£25,000), South Cambs Village Green Spaces Fund (£5000) and the South Cambs Historic Building Fund (a further £8,600). Mr Pusey thanked Mrs Roberts for being so supportive of this project.

So, Mr Pusey said, together with monies raised locally, over £46,000 was available for the project. The council would only know whether or not this would be enough when the work had been specified and contracts had been tendered. "Friends" have asked that drawings are presented to their meeting in June and following this the council should be able to submit these to S Cambs - both for approval under the Historic Building Fund conditions, and to obtain planning permission. Subject to the satisfactory completion of these processes, the council should be able to let contracts for stabilising the building until it can restore the building in 2006. Rather nicely, Mr Pusey said, this would coincide with the 300th anniversary of the building.

Mr Pusey said that meanwhile the council had an approved Management Plan in place for the management of the meadow, and had started work on that plan. There had been several volunteer days, the grass has been cut, seeds had been sown and the High Street frontage had been tidied up and planted.

The line of the footpath was finally agreed in March and was now only subject to internal administrative confirmation within the County Council. Mr Pusey said the council should be in a position to instruct the contractor regarding the fencing of the path in the next few weeks. The council did not envisage opening the path until the building had been made safe and restored. This would also give one growing season for the grass to be established along the line of the path. Mr Pusey said that there was plenty of work to look forward to on this project over the next few months.

Mr Pusey then invited questions.

Mr Challis said that there were a lot of good things the council had done and were doing, but he found it unfortunate that it was taking so long to acquire the allotments ground.

Mr Pusey said that it was very frustrating, but there were so many legal niceties to be sorted out that the process had been very lengthy. However, he was hopeful that the end was in sight.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

There was no report due to the absence of County Councillor, Professor Anthony Milton.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Mrs Roberts began by thanking the Parish Council for its efforts in the community.

Mrs Roberts reported that the District Council's move to Cambourne had been an expensive project. There had been a capital shortfall from the sale of the two prime Cambridge properties and both the running costs and the travel expenses were now greater: she pointed out that she had never been in favour of the move. However, on a brighter note, the Call-in Centre in Cambridge was now operating satisfactorily. One of the big things happening at the District Council was a review of council housing in South Cambridgeshire. A housing options leaflet was being distributed to SCDC tenants to establish the sort of housing needed.

Another major concern was the very real possibility of rate capping after a letter had been received from the ODPM about the 100% increase in the District Council's precept for the present financial year. Mrs Roberts pointed out that for 9-10 years the precept had been very small, or nil, or the District Council had even returned money to taxpayers. The council had been able to do this because it could use the interest from its very good capital balance.

One of the present tasks of the council was Traveller issues for which £½ million had had to be put aside for associated action. Also, the Northstowe development was taking up a lot of the council's resources in terms of time and money.

Mrs Roberts said that the District Council had also had to spend millions of pounds for techno-development at the government's behest.

Returning to the threat of a rate-cap, Mrs Roberts said this would result in considerable numbers of staff losing their jobs. Even if the whole of her department were closed the Council would still have to find 2 million pounds. Mrs Roberts said that of the nine councils threatened with rate capping, all were asking a precept below the national average. She added that the District Council would not know until July what the outcome would be.

Turning to local matters, Mrs Roberts said that the threat of large-scale development appeared to have abated, but warned that it was still there. The possibility of Marshall's Airport moving to Duxford had now been discounted.

Mrs Roberts said that she and Mr Pusey had attended a meeting at the SCDC offices about the Dovecote project. SCDC officers were delighted with the project.

Mrs Roberts said that she still enjoyed the job: she had two super villages in Foxton and Fowlmere and two super parish councils. She concluded by thanking the parish council for the charm and courtesy extended to her and also gave her thanks to the village.

Mr Pusey thanked Mrs Roberts for her report and invited questions.

Mr Challis said that Mrs Roberts was in an impossible situation (regarding the SCDC precept), but that some of the District Council's problems were self-inflicted. He said the council must live within its means and that levying more money was too easy. The move to Cambourne had been wrong and this was one of the reasons for the present need for extra funds. He concluded by saying that he sided with Mr Prescott on this matter and that the District Council should learn its lesson.

Mrs Roberts responded that half the problem was that taxpayers do stand for the increases – very few residents ring and complain. She added that the capital shortfall in the purchase of the Cambourne building, and the overspend in the housing department, were unforgivable.

Mr Boreham said there appeared to have been a lack of strategic planning: why had there not been a gradual increase in the District Council's precept rather than a sudden jump of 100%?

Mr Chilton said that he knew Mrs Roberts had recommended a gradual increase, but what were the other district councillors doing?

Mrs Roberts said that she was an Independent, but many of the other members were tied to political parties, which entailed taking the party line – the Conservatives had voted for the increase.

Mr Pusey queries how the change to cabinet government in local councils had affected decisions.

Mrs Roberts said that the decision on the increase had been taken in full council, but that, in her estimation, council officers had decided this was what they wanted a long time ago. She felt bitter that the council had owned two buildings in Cambridge (Hills Road and Station Road) that would have provided sufficient accommodation for its staff if its tenant at the Station Road property had vacated the premises (as it was apparently willing to do). In addition, a further lightweight floor could have been added to the Hills Road property.

Mr Sutton said that it would be nice to think that lessons had been learned.

Mrs Roberts agreed, but reminded those present that £140 (the SCDC precept) was still below the national average.

REPORT OF THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Mr Chilton, Chairman of the Recreation and Amenities Committee, gave his report as follows:

He said the other Committee members were Mr Pusey, Mr Broadley and Mrs Thake, Dr Grindley and Mr Barnes.

1. Grass Cutting

Every effort had been made to ensure that the Recreation Ground and the grass verges had been cut regularly throughout the spring and summer months. Tenders had been sought for the grass-cutting contract for the next four years. The successful firm was Cleanaway and it was hoped that high standards would be maintained.

2. Mr Victor Mead

Mr Mead continued to keep the play area maintained to a very high standard, as well as looking after Vicarage Corner, keeping it tidy and respectable. He has also continued to look after the litterbins, making sure they are emptied regularly, and has carried out minor repairs round the village when necessary.

3. The Play Area

The annual safety inspection by RoSPA had been carried out and passed.

4. Committee Projects

A number of new litter and dog-waste bins had been installed around the village, including a cigarette bin outside the Village Hall.

The five-a-side goal posts installed on the Recreation Ground last year seemed to be popular and were in constant use. This had caused the grass to wear, necessitating their being moved to an alternative location. An additional set of ground sockets were on order and would be installed near the new sports pavilion.

With David Broadley heading a Committee of dedicated residents, and the Skateboard project was slowly moving on, but, with the cost rising to an unacceptable level, it had been necessary to look again at the location. He said the committee was currently looking into the feasibility of moving the skateboard park to the new Recreation Ground extension. Mr Chilton thanked everyone involved in this time-consuming project with particular thanks to Mr Broadley and Mrs Thake who had put in a lot of work on this very sensitive project.

The Allotments and Recreation Ground extension was also moving forward although the planned layout might need to be revisited if the skateboard area were to be moved to this site and a fresh consultation might be needed.

5. Other Matters

Damage had been caused to the Play Area fence, and a rubbish bin and seats on the Recreation Ground, and this was being dealt with, including the purchase of a new seat to replace the damaged one that had been donated to the village in memory of Ivy Hardman.

Dog fouling continued to be a problem on the Recreation Ground, despite the provision of additional dog-litter bins.

Vandalism still remained a problem, with a number of instances around the village and on the Recreation Ground. Every effort was being made to stop this senseless damage and catch those responsible.

Finally, Mr Chilton said the committee would like to thank the growing band of volunteers who help keep the War Memorial/Village and planted areas clean, tidy and attractive. He also thanked his fellow members on the committee for all their help and support over the last year.

Mr Boreham asked what was the attitude of the police to vandalism.

Mr Chilton said that the problem was that people had even been physically attacked but had been too intimidated to report matters to the police.

Mrs Thake said that a certain group of youths, and their parents, had been spoken to by the police, and had their names and addresses taken. They had been warned that any more trouble would result in a harassment order. Mrs Thake also said that some of the present trouble may be from Melbourne lads and that, although there had been a rumour to the contrary, PC Sutton was not leaving.

She added that there had been problems in the past week: the telephone kiosk in Station Road had had a window smashed and she had been informed that graffiti had been sprayed on the chapel side door.

Mr Boreham suggested that Foxton Parish Council arrange to have the number to ring to report incidents to the police regularly published in "The Laurentian".

Mr Pusey thought this was a good suggestion.

Mr Sutton wondered whether the skateboard park was too expensive, but suggested that a skateboard park might reduce vandalism.

Mr Chilton pointed out that after consulting with the youth of the village what they really needed, they had said this was a place to meet. The council had provided a room in the old village hall, with voluntary supervisors, and after only two weeks attendance had fallen to zero.

Mrs Thake said it was proving impossible to get volunteers for the Youth Club, even from parents who said there was nothing in the village for their children to do.

Mrs Howell asked whether there was any penalty for parents who don't control their children

Mr Chilton asked whether Mrs Thake thought she was getting the support she should from the police.

Mr Kennedy asked whether statistics could be obtained of the number of calls made to the police.

Mrs Roberts suggested that she speak to two SCDC officers in the department that deals with these sorts of things with a view to them coming to speak at one of the parish council's meetings.

Mr Pusey thanked Mr Chilton for his report. There were no questions.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr Hockley said that the main function of the Finance Committee was to monitor the council's expenditure and set the precept requirement each year.

The precept for the financial year from 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005 was set at £11,900: this was a small reduction from the figure of £12,500 in the previous financial year. The reduction was made possible by virtue of the support from the Recreation Ground Trust, which contributed £4,000 towards the maintenance of the Recreation Ground.

Mr Hockley reported that at 31st March 2005 the bank balances were as follows:

Current Account	£284.24
Deposit Account	£13,227.88
Cambridge Building Society	£8,128.74

The total reserves and balances increased during the year from £14,330 to £21,640. Reserves were made up of the tapestry Maintenance Fund (£240), the Dovecote Fund (£6,615), the Skateboard Fund (£3,105) and the General Fund, which now stood at £11,680 (all figures given being subject to audit).

Mr Hockley said that during the past financial year £2,000 had been allocated to the Dovecote/Meadow Fund and £2,241 (including public contributions of £1,741) to the Skateboard Fund.

Mr Hockley said the precept for 2005/06 had been set at the same figure of £11,900 as for 2004/05. He said the Recreation Ground Trust would support the council up to the figure of £4,500.

Mr Hockley said that the accounts would be available for inspection by the public during the audit period this summer.

Mr Pusey thanked Mr Hockley for his report and invited questions.

Mr Challis said he was always struck by how well the money is handled and offered his thanks to Mr Hockley and to Mr Pusey.

Mr Hockley said it was hoped the council would be able to make a further contribution to the Skateboard Fund this year.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mr Barnes said that each year the council receives a number of planning applications. These are circulated between the committee members, which then reports to the parish council. The final response is then sent to the SCDC Planning Department, which notes the parish council's comments. However, the SCDC Planning Department was responsible for the decisions reached on planning applications.

Mr Barnes said that planning applications ranged from conservatories and house extensions to large housing developments such as that currently submitted by Mr Ridgeon.

Over the past year the main issues had been:

- The continuing prospect of a large new town close to Foxton
- The possible development of Moore's farm for mixed housing (private and affordable)
- The proposed redevelopment of the Press site and a large development of affordable housing (P Ridgeon)

Mr Barnes said that Foxton was classed as a suitable village for infilling with groups of houses limited to 8 (15 under special circumstances). Applications over the past year could result in up to 50 affordable houses (with the possibility of some outside the village envelope), whereas the housing needs survey carried out in the village revealed a need for only about 16 affordable houses.

Mr Barnes commented that it seemed that Foxton was acting as a “honey-pot” for housing associations and that this was something the committee would be keeping an eye on. However, Mr Barnes praised the vast improvement brought about by Hereward Housing Association to the Caxton Lane houses.

Mr Barnes concluded by thanking Mrs Roberts for her help on planning matters. He said that it seemed that SCDC Planning Officers did not all “sing from the same hymn-sheet”. He also expressed sadness that the village was likely to lose another farm (Moore’s Farm).

Mr Pusey thanked Mr Barnes for his report and invited questions.

Mrs Roberts said that the latest application (P Ridgeon) had come as a bolt from the blue. Hereward Housing had given a presentation at the last FPC meeting and claimed they had been in discussion with South Cambridgeshire District Council. Mrs Roberts had arranged a meeting with officers straightaway who gave a different account and who said that the need for this number of affordable houses was not proved. Mr Pusey commented that Hereward Housing had come into the village, but that such partnerships only work if the housing association works with the parish council and that this application was not in that spirit. He said he was minded not to support the application.

Mr Challis said that the proposed development was the most sensitive the village has had to look at. Regarding the access road, he said that the district council would have to reverse its former decision if the application were to be given planning permission.

Mrs Roberts said that when the site outside the village envelope was last looked at, the application was for a lot less houses. However, the application came unstuck because the parish council did not support it and because one owner/occupier would not negotiate on releasing some land. She said that the District Council was not, in principle, averse to looking at the application: South Cambs own the Station Road frontage where access is being proposed. Mrs Roberts also expressed concern about the number of vehicles that would be associated with the development.

Mrs Brooksbank asked what could be done to galvanise the village when a contentious scheme was being considered.

Mr Pusey suggested the formation of a group.

Mrs Roberts said it was important to get a letter to all residents in Station Road about the application and offered to deliver them - (40 letters already prepared were passed to Mrs Roberts).

Mr Chilton suggested putting an insert-sheet in “The Laurentian” as it was too late to include a printed article in the magazine. The clerk was asked to try to organise this with the editor (Mr Smith) and Lawrence Printers. The clerk also agreed to make some notices, which Mr Kennedy agreed to put up round the village.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE RECREATION GROUND TRUST

Mr Pusey said that all parish councillors are automatically Trustees and are responsible for that part of the Recreation Ground held in Trust, and the Trust also acts as landlord of the Community Buildings including the Hall and Pavilion.

Mr Pusey said that, at present, the most important project being managed by the Trustees was the purchase of the land to the south of the existing recreation ground to provide for allotments etc. Unfortunately the County Council was proving desperately slow in progressing this sale. Outline Heads of Terms were agreed some time ago and he had hoped the sale would be completed this year. After arranging a survey in June last year, a County Officer withdrew funding approval, and the Trustees had had to wait another six months before arrangements could be put in place to carry out the survey. This had now been done and the County Council had plans to attach to the sale particulars. Mr Pusey said he had been pressing the new officer responsible for this matter to complete the paperwork for the County Council's solicitor and that he really did feel the end was in sight.

In the mean time, Mr Pusey said he had arranged with the County Council that the Gardens Association be permitted to enter onto the site to begin the preparation of the ground for allotments.

The Parish Council had set up a working party to develop this project and an inaugural meeting should be arranged shortly.

Turning to financial matters, Mr Pusey said that the Trust funds stood at just over £430,000, generated mainly from overage on the new development. Trustees were constrained on the use of this money in several ways. It had to fall within the objective of the Trust i.e. the provision and maintenance of a recreation ground, the funds have to be unrestricted and, lastly, not required for the purpose of a sinking fund to meet future capital payments on the buildings as defined in the lease.

He said the Trustees were working slowly towards changing the Trust Deed to reflect changed circumstances. A draft Deed had been agreed prior to submission to the Charity Commissioners, but before it could be submitted the Trustees needed to complete two exercises.

Firstly the Trustees needed to register the land owned by the Trust. Mr Pusey said this was reliant on the same land survey he had just mentioned and that the trustees had draft plans showing boundaries of all land in the ownership of the Trustees, Parish Council and County Council. The exercise had thrown up a number of issues that were being worked through one by one and were currently subject to a reply from the Trustees' solicitors. Once this was received, all neighbours would be consulted on the proposed boundary to be registered.

Mr Pusey said that, subject to satisfactory completion of the consultation, the Trustees should be able to instruct their solicitor to register Title with the Land Registry.

Secondly, the Trustees needed to put a value on, and agree the workings of, a sinking fund to provide for the longer-term maintenance of the Community Buildings, roadway etc.

Mr Pusey said the Trustees now held much of the base information, and were working through the detail in conjunction with their auditor, Peter Sutton. He said he was currently waiting for a reply from Foxton Sports Club Association on the requirements for the pavilion before proceeding.

Mr Pusey said that once the Trustees have both the registered land data and the sinking fund agreed, they could begin consultation with the Charity Commissioners.

Mr Pusey expressed his thanks to Mr Hockley for managing the Trust finances this year.

He said that Mr Hockley had already produced draft accounts for the year ending 31st March 2005. These were subject to audit, and showed a balance of unrestricted funds available of just over £13,000.

Mr Pusey said that in 2004/05 the Trust was able to make a contribution towards the maintenance of the Recreation Ground of £4,000 and it was planned to increase this to £4,500 in 2005/06.

Mr Pusey said that Trust funds had been safely invested: £304,000 was in a Portman Building Society Account and £123,000 was with the Skipton Building Society. These accounts were expected to earn about 5% gross in 2005/06. He added that the balance was held from time to time in a Barclays Premium Account and that a Barclays Community Account was used for making cheque payments.

There were no questions.

REPORT ON FOXTON COMMUNITY PROJECT

Mr Pusey said that, although the new Village Hall was completed in 2002, there were still snagging items, and defects attributable to the contract, to resolve.

He said that he, Mrs Howell and Dr Grindley had had to constantly harass the responsible County Council officer and had recently, in desperation, called on our County Councillor to help, of whom Mr Pusey said he thought it was true to say that he could now understand some of the frustrations the council was experiencing at the hands of officers.

The remaining list was being dealt with gradually and the council could be grateful that at least there was an acceptance of liability by the County Council.

Mr Pusey said the main issues outstanding were sorting out the gas metering, replacing the external lights and replacing faulty taps in the pavilion.

Mr Pusey said that it was pleasing to be able to report that, following pressure from the parish council, the developer made up the access road and footpaths. It was less pleasing to report that works to adoption standard had not yet been completed. Mr Pusey said that perhaps this was fortunate because, as part of the land survey exercise, it had been identified that the vision splay at the exit from Edis Way had been taken in as garden. He said the council was currently trying to arrange for the vision splay to be incorporated in the Highway Adoption Plan.

Mr Pusey suggested jokingly that the Community Building Project might not need to be an agenda item next year.

There were no questions.

FOXTON TOWN LANDS TRUSTEES' REPORT

Mr Challis reported that the Charity began the year with £1,689.95. There had been no payments or expenses and the rent for land of £350, plus bank interest of £39.90, had now brought the amount in the bank, at 31st December 2004, to £2,079.85.

The Trustees, who were responsible to the Charity Commissioners, remained as himself, David Boreham and Nigel Oakley.

FOXTON HELP GROUP

Mrs Sanderson, secretary to the Help Group reported on behalf of the group as follows:

Mrs Sanderson said that the car scheme operated as usual with 13 volunteer drivers providing 115 journeys in the last twelve months. The rate charged had recently increased from 20p to 25p per mile making the charge for a trip to doctors' surgeries at Melbourn and Harston £1.50, whilst that for the round trip to Addenbrookes remained at £5.

Social events organised by the group for residents had continued their usual pattern with a springtime afternoon tea (hot cross buns and cakes), a Christmas social (sherry, mince pies and Christmas Carols from the schoolchildren) and two coach trips. There was a trip to Lavenham in Suffolk with a stop at a vineyard on the way back that included wine tasting. The other trip was to see "The Lion King". Mrs Sanderson said that all the events seemed popular and that the coach trips were usually fully booked with a waiting list.

Mrs Sanderson said that school lunches for elderly citizens with the school children now happened on a regular basis and were well supported by a regular band of customers.

A new event in 2004 was the Christmas lunch booking. Instead of three separate sittings at the White Horse, 72 senior citizens sat down together for lunch at the Motel in Shepreth. The meal received definite approval and a request to make this a regular booking.

Finally, Mrs Sanderson said that at the recent Springtime afternoon tea, those present were asked if they knew anyone who needed extra help, or a regular visitor along the lines of a community warden. No names were put forward, but there was a consensus for a request to hear more about a warden scheme with a speaker at a future meeting.

Mr Pusey thanked Mrs Sanderson and invited questions.

Mr Challis added his thanks and said the group's activities were much appreciated by "we old folk". Mr Hockley also said he was a beneficiary.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT REPORT

Mr Hockley said that Foxton, when compared with villages of similar, or indeed much greater size in Cambridgeshire, is generally well served by public transport. This was not to say that improvements could not be made: in particular, there was no bus service during the evenings or on Sundays.

Train Services

Mr Hockley said that there was an hourly service between Cambridge and London in each direction on weekdays and evenings with a half-hourly service at peak hours.

There was an hourly service in each direction on Saturdays and Sundays. On weekdays and Saturdays the last train from Cambridge to Foxton was after 11pm.

Bus Services

Mr Hockley said that the main route through Foxton was the Stagecoach service 26. This ran hourly in both directions between Royston Foxton and Cambridge on weekdays, and on Saturdays during the working day. However, there was no evening or Sunday service.

In addition, on weekdays and Saturdays there was a peak hour “Flier” service to Cambridge before 8am returning at 5.45pm

On Wednesdays only, there was the 139 service, which ran a circuitous route via many villages to Sawston and Royston, that enabled a roughly 2-hour visit to any place on the route. This was the only service that travelled via Foxton, Hillfield.

Mr Pusey thanked Mr Hockley for his report. There were no questions.

Mrs Howell, on behalf of the residents thanked the parish council for all its efforts throughout the year.

Mr Pusey reminded those present that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be the **Annual General Meeting, which would be held on Monday, 9th May 2005 at 7.30 pm in the Meeting Room of the Village Hall.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.