

PEASLAKE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meeting held on Monday 15th May in Peaslake Memorial Hall at 8pm

The meeting was chaired by Sam McCormick and attended by 21 Peaslakers

Welcome and introduction

Present: Sam McCormick (chair), Julie Knight (minutes), Lesley Perry, Julie Barham, Andy Clayton, Zoe Horton, Marion Jones, Gerry Reffo, Nick & Penny Wells, Adrienne Golightly, Christine Harrison, Drew Nicholson, Martyn Warrell, Nigel Downer, Janette Weller, Keir Schiltz, Rosi Millar, Shiona Bacon & Jonathon Monk.

Apologies: Jim Collin, Sally & Nick Bray, Anne & Jim Heyes, Alice Williams, Jane Williams, Richard Morris, Deb & Kevin Stevens, Marion Taylor-Cotter, Jeff Jones & Rhys Thomas.

There were no matters arising from the last minutes.

Treasurer's Report: The balance in the account was £291.97 after invoices and the Fair insurance have been paid.

BASH update: (Broadband for the Surrey Hills) – Nick Wells reported that "progress has been steady over the past month with a mix of duct laying for the Wonham Way area and house connections in Peaslake Lane (west side). Pond Lane should also be sampling improved broadband connections in the next week or so adding a further 13 installations to the community broadband project.

B4SH has risen to the challenge by solving the issue for residents who have a longer, existing contractual-term agreement with a commercial service provider. It is noticeable that fixed term contracts have increased to 18 - 24 months for the keenest deals; although the annual escalator clause still permits the provider to increase the subscription by the rate of inflation (CPI).

The introduction of SNOW (Service NOW) alleviates the financial penalty of the existing service provider by discounting the B4SH monthly charge to £5 (inclusive of VAT) for a maximum of 12 months. This covers the majority of service contracts, though the SNOW charge rises for the second year - see below for details. Putting it another way, residents can experience an upgraded service immediately for £5 per month...

Existing contract 24 months or less

- £5 per month 1 - 12 months
- £10 per month 13 - 24 months
- The B4SH monthly service charge reverts to £45 per month as soon as the existing commercial provider's fixed term contract ends.

The SNOW contract is only available in B4SH active build areas under which Peaslake qualifies."

Reports from organisations

Peaslake School: The nursery has recently been inspected by Ofsted and they await the report and its findings.

Open Gardens will take place on Sunday 11th June in the centre of the village with refreshments and plant sales at the Memorial Hall. Any donations of plants can be dropped at the field to the left of the hall on the day before, and before this to contact Keir Schiltz on Keir.Schiltz@gmail.com

Memorial Hall

1) The Coronation Big Lunch was a great success (more to follow under events) and the raffle raised £170 for the Hall Extension Fund.

2) Hall Centenary Party - 24th June, 6pm – late. Tickets are £12 and available now at www.peaslakevillagehall.com

St Marks – Biodiversity Survey, Peaslake Cemetery, Sunday 4th June, 2-4pm

As part of our parish Eco-Church activities we are joining in a national biodiversity survey of burial grounds. Everyone is welcome :-)

For further details and/or if you're able to come, please could you send an email to Jenny Janse on ecopeaslake@gmail.com or contact Shiona Bacon on 07966 718478.

Please note: if it's raining, the event will be postponed.

Peaslake Players - Congratulations on a very successful "Wind in the Willows". It was very well attended and well received. Although a lot of hard work was involved, it paid off with a moving boat, caravan and car, all great fun and resulted in a wonderful production. Well done all.

Friend of the Hurtwood - In January Shere Parish Council awarded the Friends of the Hurtwood the land management lease for the Peaslake Farm Fields. Unfortunately the meeting was informed that FoH, following their recent board meeting, have decided not to go ahead.

Village Events

Peaslake Fair- Bank Holiday Monday 28th August – Everything is on track. Preparations are going well with stalls and entertainment booked. We are working hard to get sponsorship but none secured as yet. If anyone has any leads or would like to sponsor please contact Stuart Pearson on 07812086211.

Coronation Celebrations – The Big Lunch on Sunday 7th May was a great success, well attended with the hall transformed with flags and bunting, and of course food for all! Mike Currier opened proceedings followed by the National Anthem. There was a Coronation Exhibition in the Old School Room. Many thanks to Christine Harrison, Lesley Perry, Marion Jones, Julie Barham and Sandy Eve; also to Matthew Bacon who took a group photo of everybody outside the Hall.

Shere Parish Council

The SPC report focused on two significant issues concerning Peaslake Farm. The Housing Development and the fields adjoining the farmyard.

- Housing Development

Gerry reported significant changes proposed by the Housing Association developer. Details are in the attached paper which was discussed at the meeting.

The Community Council were concerned that the new rents would be unaffordable for local people eligible and interested in one of the homes, and wanted these increases resisted.

- Fields

FotH withdrew from their bid to lease the fields. This is a huge disappointment. Gerry is looking into the details and will report more fully in June. Residents, present at the meeting, were keen to look creatively at how the fields could be protected and benefit the community. Suggestions included allotments and a community farm. We will discuss this in more detail in June so do come along if you have ideas. Please see attachment for further information.

New Peaslake Horticultural Society - Rosi Millar gave a lovely talk on her ideas for a new "Horticultural Society" in Peaslake. She has lots of enthusiasm for everything to do with gardening and the environment. Rosi would like to reinstate the club providing a community space, possible allotments, a tool library and environmental area and possibly produce shows and plant sales.

Any Other Business

- 1) Adrienne Golightly has completed her set of "Maggie's Walks". There are six different walks around Peaslake. They are available on the website. It is hoped they could somehow be used to raise money for local causes.
- 2) Caroline Heslop has expressed an interest in starting a Pickleball Club in the Village Hall. This is a new ball and racket sport that is sweeping the country. Anyone interested should contact Caroline on carriehes@gmail.com

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Date of next meeting: Monday 5th June 8pm in the Memorial Hall

Peaslake Farm Housing Development

The situation has changed because of the increased cost of building and the Stonewater merger with our provider Greenoak Housing Association.

Based on the data I have seen, here is an analysis of the situation and potential options. I would appreciate your thoughts ahead of tomorrow's Council meeting.

What's Happening?

1. Greenoak Housing Association (GHA) were chosen to develop the Peaslake Farm site because SPC's procurement exercise compared bidders from a number of Housing Associations and found that **GHA offered the best designed, energy efficient homes at lower rents** than competitors and had their own maintenance teams to ensure a good ongoing service.
2. In 2022, **GHA merged** with the larger **Stonewater** Housing Association.
3. **Development costs have increased** because of (i) ground contamination and (ii) significantly increased building costs (Ukraine, Covid etc). I cannot give you the figures as GHA/Stonewater say they are confidential.
4. To meet the excess cost, GHA/Stonewater want to **increase rents** and **withhold a one off payment** for the land of **£150k to SPC**. The monthly rent increases are significant. Two bed goes up £339 to £1108. One bed flat goes up £185 to £772 per month.
5. The revenue from these proposed rent increases and withholding £150K from SPC exceeds the stated additional building costs by **£1.2M** over the lifetime of the lease.

Why?

6. GHA/Stonewater want to cover additional costs and increase their return on the development. Stonewater are a more commercial operation with higher corporate costs (Executive salaries £1.3m v GHA £298K).

Potential Options

Potential Options	Pros	Cons
a) Push GHA/Stonewater to only increase rents to cover additional building costs and pay SPC £150K for land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rent increase is reduced - SPC get capital sum for expenditure in the Parish. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GHA/Stonewater pull out and tenants lose the opportunity to live in well designed homes with award winning energy efficiency which keeps bills down. - High rents mean that low income parish residents who qualify for affordable homes will struggle with the rent.
b) Agree to revised terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tenants get good quality homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SPC loses £150K - Tenants pay high rents
c) Look for alternative providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complies with Parish wish for affordable homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previously other providers wanted similar higher rents (80% of market value) and offered less energy efficient and

		<p>less well designed homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building costs have increased since then so they may now ask for greater density housing or to encroach onto the fields to build more units.
d) Revisit Business Barns proposal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Had support from a marginally higher number of Peaslake residents in 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased building costs will impact this project too. - Funding. - Not what the Parish wanted in 2016.
e) Recognise the situation has changed. Look for alternative use for the Farm. For example, car parking at weekends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide a direct benefit to the village - revenue for the Parish to use for the benefit of parishioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not what the Parish wanted in 2016.