



Minutes of the Sway Parish Assembly held on Thursday 4th April 2019, at the Jubilee Field Pavilion, Station Rd, Sway

Present: The Chair of the Parish Council, eleven Parish Councillors, the Parish Clerk, County Councillor Keith Mans, 62 members of the public and a representative from Sway News.

Introduction

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:30pm with a welcome to everyone. He explained that the meeting would not contain any usual council business and would instead focus on the community and charitable groups in the parish, giving them a chance to update everyone on all the good things they are doing, their achievements and their future plans.

He then went on to introduce the main speaker for the evening: Dr Tony Hockley, a Sway resident and the Chair of the New Forest Commoners Defence Association.

Speaker: Tony Hockley

Commoning as a practice used to be country wide, but was now practised in a few small pockets across the land. Atlas maps, showing the allocation of rights are still held at the Verderers' Office in Queen's House, Lyndhurst. Commoning rights are land-based, meaning that if you live on the designated land, you get the rights. A number of properties off the forest still have rights.

The CDA was formed in 1909 when commoners faced particular challenges. The main purpose of the Forestry Commission in that time was the exploit of timber, which was in direct contrast to commoning. The CDA continued to defend commoners' rights throughout the 20th century and now into the 21st century.

The Government now wants to protect environment as it recognises the importance of the preservation and conservation of this fragile and special landscape. The CDA works closely with all the organisations who have an interest in the forest, as allies working together to protect the landscape.

In recent times the focus of the CDA has shifted to additionally highlight the environmental benefits that commoning delivers, but of course the survival of commoning is its first priority. These days part of the challenge is the cost of backup land and its rarity. The current funding scheme is not going to last much longer. That programme has enabled training schemes in rural skills and a mentoring scheme for new and young commoners to learn from those with vast experience and knowledge of the traditions and methods. The Landscape Partnership aims to secure the practice of commoning for the next generation.

The CDA's second priority is increasing the understanding of commoning. It is part of our cultural heritage and they are working hard to get people excited about the nature around them on the forest, so that then they will hopefully take more care of what they do and how they behave.

Following the success of reflective collars in reducing the number of pony casualties from traffic accidents, there is now a trial for reflective cattle ear tags. Overall there are reductions in the number of animal accidents.



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Finally, Tony noted that the CDA is open to ideas for anything that might help sustainability of commoning, wider understanding of the special landscape and safety of the stock.

The Chairman thanked Tony and went on to note that due to the large number of speakers from the parish, time would be strictly limited to 3 minutes.

County Councillor

Cllr Keith Mans covers 11 parishes. He said that usually Burley achieves the best attendance but tonight Sway would exceed them with such a great turnout. Hampshire County Council has good reserves and is in good order, with low to no risk of the failing seen in some other counties. There is a limit to the amount their Precept can be increased, and it remains pretty low. Of particular note is the success of the work in Education – where primary school places show a great record of first choices for placements at over 90%. HCC manages some 5300 miles of road and that costs about £13M a year to maintain at the current levels. HCC recognise it is not enough to keep things perfect, but it is winning the war against pot holes. Finally, Cllr Mans noted that his devolved budget has awarded £1500 to Sway over the last year and that he is delighted to support our parish.

Hampshire Police

PC Ali Longworth introduced himself as a Beat Officer, based at Lymington. He recognised that residents' biggest concern was usually that they never see a policeman on the beat. He explained that there were just two neighbourhood police officers per 30,000 residents and so this presented a huge challenge and meant strict prioritisation for problem areas. It is enshrined in law that residents must have access to the police. This was now possible in a number of ways, primarily of course – in the event of an emergency – via 999; most recently with the inclusion of online resources, and via 101 (where it is known that there is a problem with the speed of response). Lymington police station is moving premises but will still offer a front counter – the only one in the New Forest. A beat surgery was established in Sway in the autumn but as it was consistently very poorly attended the police are withdrawing it. Instead they will use the time to attend community activities instead. Reporting shows Sway and Boldre crime figures together; over the last 12 months 219 crimes had been reported.

Junior Parish Council

Cllr Hattie spoke on behalf of her colleagues, who had joined the Junior PC to make Sway as nice as possible. They had so far met five times. They had created posters to address the issues of litter and dog poo. They were in the process of arranging a new rubbish bin in Westbeams Road. They had funded and installed a dog-poo-bag dispenser to try and reduce this problem. They had set up and were now managing a book swap in the adopted phone box, and had created a poster to advertise the new service. They were currently working on a letter to be sent to the children of Bretteville-du-Grand-Caux, the linked town in France. Next, they hoped to create a short film to highlight the anti-litter work they have been doing and enter it into the Film:New Forest Festival competition. They had just submitted a letter expressing their concerns at the closure of the post office. They had received presentations from an NFNPA Ranger and been awarded their Shared Forest Commoning Champion Badge



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after a session learning all about commoning. They hoped to visit the Verderers Court in the summer.

Sway Village Hall

Graham Turner noted a challenging year in 2018 upon the discovery that the building needed a new roof. Due to the generosity of villagers and some excellent fund raising this was completed and since then some internal refurbishment had also been carried out. Currently they were installing a stair lift to provide full accessibility to the upstairs rooms. They were in good financial shape. Future projects include the possible extension of the site to provide a shared facility between the Little Flyers pre-school and the Scouts. This was likely to be a smaller scheme than the one originally presented some time ago, and hopefully the new plans would be shared with residents later in the year.

Sway Cricket Club

Chris Baughan was pleased that the club had grown enormously and was for everyone, with 200 active players from 5yo upwards, including women and girls' teams. The new season was about to start. They boast some great coaches and have produced cricketers who go on to great things. Due to the lack of female sides to play against, there would be soft ball tournaments and hard ball friendlies. There would be a taster day on Sunday 12th May, for anyone to have a try, with tea and cake and fun! With the World Cup returning to England the club would celebrate with a family fun day on Sunday 2nd June. There would be lots of cricket related games and competitions.

Martial Arts

Adrian Starr – who used to work for Hampshire Police – set up self-defence training in Sway and has continued ever since. They offer classes twice a week: on Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. They have members from 3 days – 73 years old. Martial Arts training has many benefits including safety advice and self-defence to bring confidence, fitness and health.

Tiptoe Green

Pat Rendall, the Chair of Tiptoe Green explained that it was created from a field in 2008. Now designated as a community green space for everyone to use. They would hold the annual May Fayre on Saturday 11th May. Their mission is to conserve the space, in perpetuity, as amenity land for the benefit of everyone in Tiptoe. It includes a wildlife area, and native plants. A local bee keeper has 3 hives (fenced off) and is producing honey. There is a children's area with natural play items. Volunteers are always needed to help keep it in order.

Community Speedwatch

Hugh Marchant explained that 1.5 million vehicles speed (over 35mph) through Sway each year. The group has been running for five years and now boasts the addition of "Vera" the vehicle activated speed limit reminder. All the activities occur currently with just 12 volunteers. One extra person for 3 hours a month would enable so much more. Now the restriction has been lifted on 40mph roads, the group has applied for 3 additional locations on the forest.



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To deliver those additional sessions they will need further volunteers. Statistics show a clear increase in those obeying speed limits and that is the most positive outcome from all the efforts of the group.

Sway Welfare Aid Group

Known as SWAG locally, Jon Hartley explained that this charity provides medical transport, at no cost to the user. Last year they made 385 trips which was a 47% increase on the year before. They were lucky to have 50+ volunteer drivers. SWAG also runs a Lunch Club, which served 560 home-cooked meals in 2018. Primarily for residents who are elderly and alone. A group of 45 volunteer cooks and helpers make this happen. SWAG provides grants towards heating (totalling £8000 last year) and Jon explained that this was the foundation of the charity's original purpose. Increasingly however, the charity was able to offer financial support to very low-income village families in their time of need

Little Flyers

Emma Stelmaszyk explained that the pre-school group operates from the Village Hall and is a registered charity run by parents. She said it was increasingly hard to get parents to join the committee. They take up to 14 children per day from 2 years old. They had increased hours to meet demand and now offered 8am – 5pm for 48 weeks of the year. They also run holiday schemes for up to 7 years old. Recently they had introduced hot lunches. Fund raising is a huge part of keeping the group running and providing equipment and it also relies heavily on donations and grants. They would host a jumble sale in May and in September, as well as a summer raffle. They were planning some sponsored events for the children, but would welcome other ideas for fund raising. They hoped that the proposed future extension would provide more space to enable them to include more children.

Sway Relief in Sickness Fund

Clive Potter noted that the charity was established originally from the funds generated by the sale of the Nurses Cottage, now Silver Hind. SRISF provides help through funding for accessibility aids, and supports local facilities including hospices, day centres, Lymington hospital and various community venues (including the Jubilee Field Pavilion). They work closely with SWAG and relies on clients to request aid since the District Nurse programme was ceased. Anyone who needed help or identified others that might need help could contact SRISF in confidence.

Sway Lawn Tennis Club

Colin Whitell, Chair of the club spoke about the work of the club in promoting and encouraging tennis in Sway. There are 110 adult members and 80 junior members who are supported by two professional coaches. The club is affiliated to the Lawn Tennis Association. League results were overall very positive with winners for the male and mixed teams, and women's teams promoted. After eleven years the club was looking to install new carpet courts in the autumn at a cost of £50,000. The club was sporting new branding, signage, sportswear and planned more promotion. This year's open day would take place on Saturday 18th May – a family fun day with free tennis, refreshments and a bbq. The 100 club lottery is also open, and the audience had received information on this in their packs.



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Sway Bowmen

Simon Curtis noted huge positive challenges in front of the club. They operated from a site in North Common Lane with regular attendance from the 115 members ranging from 9-80 years old. A family-oriented sport which is fully supported with 6 coaches and leaders. Beginners courses start each spring, when all equipment is provided. There is the option for 365 days a year shooting. Between October and March, they shoot indoors at Brock College. The club will run a taster session at the Carnival Fete. They were grateful for support from both Parish and District Councils. The club is now fund raising for its new club house having recently received planning permission.

Sway Gardening Club

The club meets on the 3rd Thursday monthly in the village hall. Sue Gent explained that they always have a speaker and plant sales. They run a Spring Show in March and a Summer Show in August. On the 20th June the speaker would be a Chelsea award winner and visitors would be welcome, as they are to all meetings (£3.50 for guests). There would be an Open Gardens day this year on Sunday 9th June from 11-5pm with 17 village gardens open, refreshments in the church rooms, and cream teas at Gracewells with live music. The club wants to encourage more youngsters into the joys of gardening.

The New Forest Marque

Paul Walton said that the New Forest Marque is a sign of quality local produce. Originally created in 2004 to support forest friendly farming by commoners and small holders. He explained that whilst food and drink is a key aspect of the Marque, other retail, craft and hospitality products and services were now registered.

Sway Women's Institute

Clarissa Evans noted that 2018 was the centenary of the WI. The Sway WI meets every 2nd Thursday in the Village Hall. Currently there are 72 members but like most clubs they would like to get more younger people involved. Visitors are always welcome and can then consider joining. In the past year there were 10 speakers. The WI also offer a number of activities. They are represented at the Sway Flower Festival, the Christmas Tree Festival and the New Forest Show. Every year they support a local charity and this year the chosen charity would be Young Carers of the New Forest.

Sway News

Peter Blick said that 500 copies a month of Sway News are produced and sold in the village for just £1 per copy. They were current looking for volunteers to join the new editorial term. There would be a drop-in meeting on 17th April at the Church Rooms for those interested in exploring getting involved.

Sway Carnival

Pam Wade explained that the 2019 Carnival would be a ten-day experience. The Programme included 15 events for all the community to enjoy themselves, whilst at the same time raising money for various clubs and societies in Sway. Following the 2018 Carnival, £4300



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was donated to 23 different Sway organisations. Some changes this year included moving the fete to the 1st Saturday and the procession to the 2nd Saturday. The Procession would start earlier to make it easier for younger entrants. Pam invited everyone to join in the fun. The theme is 'under the sea'. There would be music, food and a bar at Jubilee Field Pavilion. She explained that the Committee could only make the procession bigger and better if people enter. All the clubs and organisations present at this Assembly could enter.

Sway Allotment Association

Ian Stone explained that there were currently 83 allotment holders, 64 half plots and 27 full. There was currently a short waiting list; he explained that preference was given to Sway residents. No pesticides could be used on the allotments and there were basically zero food miles associated with produce grown there. The freshness of allotment produce cannot be beaten. There are many varieties and variations across the site. Running an allotment is definitely a commitment but so good for you physically and mentally. Allotments could be traced back to the 1800s in Sway. There would be an open day in August.

Sway Cinema

Wendy Collyer introduced the Cinema as the new kid on the block! Fundraising bought the equipment initially and in no small part due to the amazing generosity of locals. The Cinema was installed in August 2018 with the launch in September. It was now 6 months old. The screen is 4.5m wide and 3m high! There would be a double bill on 13th April, featuring Peter Rabbit and Mission Impossible – Fall Out. All generations are welcome and the programme offers something for everybody with films at least monthly. Scheduled film trailers and listings are published on the website and on Facebook, as well as in the What's On guide. Tickets are sold online and from the counter at Sway Deli. The team collaborate with other venues to ensure a smooth flow of films and no clashes with other local screens. The Cinema would take part in the Film Festival 2019 – competition winners' films will be shown.

Sway 1st Guides

April had started up the Guides in September 2018, catering for 7-14 year old girls. The Guides meet on a Wednesday from 7-8.30 at Sway Youth Centre. There was a new programme of badges, skills and activities and they went to camp in February, taking part in a number of outdoor events. They would be joining the Brownies for the Sway Carnival Procession. In the summer the Guides would meet a Girl Guiding ambassador – Anna McNuff – who would be running barefoot marathons across the UK. Guides would get to meet her and talk about her adventures and hopefully be inspired to share her sense of adventure and confidence. April was looking for volunteers to help – especially for Brownies.

Sway Football Club

Ron Loveless, the President, noted that it was nearing the end of the season. The team should finish in the top 6 of the league. The Under-18 team have been magnificent and should win the Southampton League this year. Last game of the season was the following Sunday. The Reserve team were in the Wyvern League. There were invitations to join higher leagues, but that would require floodlights. The pitch was regarded as one of the best in



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Hampshire. They worked hard on fund raising and sponsorship without which they could not survive. The Club would be 111 years old this year.

Sway Cubs

Gavin Jones explained that the Cubs had a wide age range and an even wider range of activities. He showed a video to highlight all the action. There were three camps this year including a night hike and a sleepover at Winchester Science Centre (with 80 cubs!). Also a trip to Lymington Fire Station had been really popular. Inspiring people, motivational stories for the cubs.

spudWORKS

Mark Drury noted that the Commoning Voices exhibition was currently in the space. spudWORKS is a charity which has been going for 7 years. It took over the Artsway building the previous June and secured grants to re-imagine and refurbish the building. They have created office space for creative arts, and now for Janet Kirk's new shop. There was a craft company offering workshops. The space includes a gallery with facilities to provide high quality exhibitions, but engagement with other groups is key. It is possible to rent the workshop. They were now building art studios, which would open in May. There would be an Open Day on 17th May for everyone. The Head of the Arts Council would attend to officially open the building and studios. A new exhibition would also open that day for four weeks, featuring paintings and sculptures by Carlos Cortes.

The Chairman thanked all contributors who illustrated what a thriving Village we are lucky enough to live in and the selfless groups of people who dedicate so much time and effort to all the good things which had just been spoken about.

There was a short break and an opportunity for light refreshments.

Sway Parish Council Awards

The Sway Parish Council Awards had been launched in 2018, and there were two very worthy winners. This year, the Chairman noted that there had been nominations for over a dozen different individuals and organisations, some with multiple nominations. The Council had a closed session to review them all and to vote for their top choices in a secret ballot. There were three clear winners overall and they would be presented with a small token of thanks next.

Wendy Collyer

In nominating our first award winner, one proposer said she <quote> has an amazing amount of drive and enthusiasm; it is difficult to keep up with her. <unquote> and another said she does so much for the Village; and if something good is happening in Sway, she will invariably be heavily involved in one way or another. Wendy Collyer's endless efforts in getting the cinema project up and running have been astounding, and her enthusiasm is infectious – she has recruited a wonderful team there. She has also been at the forefront of efforts to gain funding for the refurbishment of the village hall. She was also heavily involved in the knitted poppies project that did so much to aid in the commemoration of the centenary of the armistice in Sway. Tony Hockley presented Wendy with a framed



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certificate, a splendid pastel mauve themed hand-tied bouquet and a Sway Cinema commemorative mug.

Ted Watts

There are not many locals who can drive their sheep across London Bridge, and only one who is a Past President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. As the proposer said Ted Watts has been the facilitator of the Sway Village Design Statement, the hands-on organiser of litter and leaf-clearing operations in Sway, taking major roles in the Friends of Sway Station and Sway Youth Club, and the facilitator of the singly most successful independent planning lobby group in Sway. And meanwhile the successful Editor of Sway News for about 8 years - and he is still supporting our local magazine today as interim editor. If Ted Watts phones you he will surely collar you for something.

Tony Hockley presented Ted with a framed certificate and a bottle of Marlings Vineyard – which is in Sway – award-winning sparkling rose wine.

Sway Welfare Aid Group

Our final award goes to the Sway Welfare Aid Group – known as SWAG. As SWAG will be celebrating their 50th anniversary next year hopefully this will kick start a series of events to mark this amazing milestone. From humble beginnings in 1970 delivering bags of coal and providing “meals on wheels” to the elderly, they have developed and expanded over the years to provide a critically needed medical transport service to hospital and doctors’ appointments, heating and other financial grants to families of all ages in our village, and a renowned twice month luncheon club. SWAG embodies the essence of what village life should be about in helping others in our community. They now have around 100 local volunteers who all offer their services free of charge in both the running of the charity and the provision of the various services they offer to the residents of Sway.

Sway Parish Council funds – which come from your Council Tax – do not run to a gift for 100 volunteers and one-hundredth of a bottle of wine is not much, so Sway Parish Council have asked SWAG to bring along a collection box for any donations anyone might want to make to SWAG. Tony Hockley presented Jon Hartley – on behalf of all SWAG volunteers – with an award certificate.

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The Chairman invited the Parish Clerk, as the Proper Legal Officer of Sway Parish Council, to make a short announcement.

The Clerk announced that nominations for Sway Parish Council were released the previous day. Twelve candidates have been nominated for the twelve seats, meaning that they will all be elected unopposed. In alphabetical order by surname they are: Dawn Bampton, Nicky Bowler, Peter Dance, Adam Marshall, Karen Marshall, Anthea Merchant, Alex Pepper, Vicky Ryce, Stephen Tarling, Len Thomas, Lisa Thomas and James Willis.

The Clerk noted that she would be posting the list on the Council noticeboards and on the Parish Council website and social media accounts. If anyone would like to meet the new



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Parish Council and find out the various responsibilities of the new Councillors then the Annual Meeting of Sway Parish Council would take place on Thursday 16th May at the Pavilion starting at 7:30pm.

Finally, the Chairman explained that the Parish Assembly is all about the parish and so offered a public session, when any resident was welcome to raise matters of concern or interest to the Parish Council. Neither the Chairman or Clerk had received notification of any formal resolution; the Chairman now asked if there was anything any resident of Sway Civil Parish wished to raise. Nothing was offered.

The Chairman thanked all the contributors, and everyone for coming, and gave special thanks to the supporters who provided local produce for everyone to enjoy. With no further business, the meeting closed at 9:41pm.