



Sutton Poyntz Society

Affiliated to the Campaign to Protect Rural England

Minutes of the Sutton Poyntz Society SGM

Meeting held at the Mission Hall 7.30 pm Friday 24th September 2004; Simon Emblen in the chair.

- 1) The meeting opened at 7.30 with 43 members in attendance. The chairman advised that the SGM was requested by 10 members (633) viz Mr & Mrs Maton, Mr & Mrs Stone, Mr & Mrs King, Mr & Mrs S Emblen and Mr & Mrs C Emblen – and the proposal for discussion was:

“Two years on, from the decision taken at the Society AGM on 9th April 2002 to request Wessex Water to carry out the partial felling and pruning of the tall trees to the south side of the pumping station, Sutton Poyntz, the situation in the opinion of those living in close proximity to the trees has not improved and the Society now request Wessex Water to complete the work and remove the remaining four trees in their entirety.”

- 2) Mr Pressly queried the independence of the chairman as he was one of the requestors of the meeting and his family were three other requestors of the meeting.
- 3) Mr Maton outlined his view that the trees had outgrown their purpose, they were too close to the building and Mr Slatter (the Weymouth and Portland Trees Officer) had called them more than a little unneighbourly. Rook droppings were causing them great concern and apart from the unpleasantness they were also the potential cause of illness. He felt the health of his children was being compromised. The only practical solution suggested had been a rook cull – but this was totally impractical in his garden - and they would simply restock from neighbouring trees.
- 4) A letter received from Mr Pressly (649) expressing concern on the proposal, was read.
- 5) In the ensuing discussion, Mr Jones pointed out that the debate was not about protecting children but protecting the environment. People moving into properties need to check the environment before moving. It is the remit of the Society to protect the environment. Mr Bugler commented that it was a problem of rural living; we would not fill in the pond if the ducks were a problem. We should consider other possible solutions such as scarers or nets. The trees add character to the village. Mr Brown was sympathetic as they have a large pine in their garden which is home to some 70 rooks last year – they have spent 37 years trying to get rid of them. If the trees were not safe an expert should be consulted. Mrs Allen said she had contacted the RSPB who advised on a CD which could assist. Mrs Brown stated she had used it unsuccessfully. She had spent some £350 including hanging old CD in the trees, a plastic sparrow hawk all unsuccessful. She did indicate that the Saunders family, when farming, had an annual cull each year. Mr Pressly tabled a motion which the Chairman took as an amendment: proposed Mr Pressly, seconded Mr Bugler:-

Before any action is taken following this meeting there should be:

1. Consultation with the borough council
2. Exhaustive exploration of all avenues in order to resolve the bird nuisance.

- 6) Discussion continued – Mrs Meech thought the trees were a thing of beauty and if you live in the countryside you have to live in harmony. It was asked if a safety assessment had been done. Mr Pressly suggested the action should be with the W&PBC – where there is a trees officer. Mr Allen suggested that the Society does not have the expertise to make a decision. Mr Brown reiterated that we should find some way to minimise the rooks problem. Mrs Kemp thought the stand of trees was quite ugly since the pruning 2 years ago. Mrs Pemberton, who lived in the area, thought the problem lasted only some 3-4 months and perhaps netting should be tried. A further suggestion was made that the trees were ugly and should be replaced. Mrs Knight thought there was already an over reduction of trees in the area with losing many elm trees. In response to a suggestion that the trees were there before Mr Maton, he stated that of course he knew they were there but when he moved in he had no children. It was their safety that was his concern. He has a power washer and incinerator but he could not shoot birds from his garden. Mr Pressly asked how much of the trees overlapped the adjacent gardens – but it was indicated that the overlap of some 6 feet was not the problem for the residents.
- 7) The secretary referred to some of the correspondence received on the subject – from Mr Slatter expressing his view that the solution was in felling and replanting (Mar 01) and from Mr Williams (Feb 02) indicating what the recommended action was to be (implemented in '02). (Related correspondence refs on the Society files are 41, 5, 43, 45, 48, 129, 132, 149, 152, 161, 174, 175, 190, 194, 198, 208, 238, 239, 249, 250, 626, 632, 633, 649)
- 8) It was asked why the other residents had not spoken – to which Mr Stone indicated that it was still a problem. In addition the waving trees caused great worry during high winds.
- 9) The Chairmen put the amendment to a vote – carried 31 to 10.
- 10) At this point the Chairman called the meeting to an end without any further debate stating that, as the amendment had been passed, that now became the substantive motion. The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.