Hougham Without Parish Council History

Hougham is a rural parish lying to the west of Dover and is bounded by two other rural parishes, that of Capel-le ferne to the west, Alkham to the north and the Eastern boundary being with Dover’s town wards. There are approximately 400 parishioners on the electoral roll with two main villages, West Hougham, which has approximately 150 dwellings and Church Hougham, which has just 23 houses in the core of its village. Industry in the parish was predominately agricultural in nature with many small farms and a number of dispersed dwellings around the two village groups.

A school was built in Church Hougham in 1856, by the owner of the The Elms manor house, originally a single classroom and was extended to two classrooms in the 1870’s and served the area until 1964 when a new school at Capel was able to accommodate all Hougham’s children.

A number of farms are still operating within the parish but with much farmland now under equine use the parish has no other major industry apart from tourism. There is one of the large hotel chains and pub/restaurants-serving travellers on the popular route to the port between Dover and Folkestone.

The present parish council in Hougham can be traced back to the Local Government Act of 1894 when the statutory provisions for controlling proceedings were set by this act of parliament.

The first Hougham Parish Meeting took place that year on 4 December 1894 at the Schoolroom in Church Hougham and was attended by 42 parishioners. The County Council had defined that a maximum of seven councillors can be elected and this number is still the same today.

The title of the council is somewhat unusual with the term “Without” referring to an earlier time when the Hougham parish boundary extended well into the town of Dover and reached the coast at the Western end of Dover port. During this time there was a Hougham Within as well as a Hougham Without although the part within Dover has since been fully incorporated within the Dover Town Council.

ARF 22/4/17