

**CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10 April 2025 at Poplar Dene, Cart Lane, Chilbolton; 18:30**

PRESENT: Cllrs David Griffiths (Chairman) (DG) and Emma Noble (EN). Moya Grove (MG), Debbie Collis, Nick Horne (NH), Trish Heaton (TH) and Kerrie Ritson (KR)  
Members of Public: None

1. Apologies: None
2. Declaration of Interests: NONE
3. Approval of Minutes – Wednesday 13 February 2025: These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting. ([COSC Minutes 13.02.2025](#))
4. Matters Arising:
  - a) Track repairs not holding ([41124 22](#)) CPC 6th Jan 2025 minutes - DG agreed that due to the exceptional wet weather the new repair is not holding up as well as expected. JH agreed to investigate whether there is a more substantial/permanent/cost effective solution.
  - b) NE communication - CPC 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2025 Minutes - MG will draft a response to NE justifying what has been done and why (especially for Health & Safety reasons) to the path at the Purleygigg Bridge and that the repair does not damage the SSSI. **Action: MG**
5. Chairman's Report:
  - a. Report to CPC 03/03/2025 re path repair to path at Purleygigg ([CPC 03.03.2025](#))
  - b. Chairman's Report ([COSC Report to CPC – 04.2025](#))
6. To take questions and/or discuss and decide on any proposals within the monthly update reports as follows:
  - A) Finance – Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated the attached CPC report ([COSC Mar Finance](#))
    - i. Finance transactions since last COSC meeting. Nothing to add.
  - B) Allotments – KR reported that Terry Gilmour has arranged for Ian Daubney to strim and weed kill the perimeters. KR has introduced herself to all allotment holders. All allotment plots are taken and Terry has sent over the paperwork which was in good order.
  - C) Common –
    - i. Update on Purlygigg Bridge
    - ii. EN reported that she had looked into the Veolia grant application process. COSC agreed that the 'temporary' repair appeared to be holding up and could be considered permanent, albeit with possible future repairs, so no grant was required.
    - iii. MG said that the brush cutter must not be used to cut thistles. DG was said he was satisfied that careful use of brush cutters would be OK. He will remind Ian Daubney to be extra careful if using brush cutters. DG reported that TVBC volunteers appeared keen but have since gone quiet.
    - iv. MG has not managed to contact Adam Coutts the grazier because he rarely answers the phone, but the cows can come any time as the ground is very dry. DG suggested trying to contact Adam via Edward Painter.

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- v. MG observed that it would be nice to get a message out either on the Chilbolton News website or elsewhere, that dogs should always be on leads when cattle are present, not just when in close proximity to the cattle. MG will contact Chilbolton News.
- vi. DG noted that TARCA (The Anton River Conservation Association) were going to ask at their February meeting whether there were any volunteers who might be able to help with conservation work on the Common. DG will chase.
- vii. MG told COSC that, regarding the Higher Tier Stewardship, the existing arrangements have been renewed but the new arrangements are not in place yet. The new arrangements can be arranged before our current agreement expires but Natural England (NE) have to invite us to apply. As far as the Common is concerned, it is likely we will need to apply for a 'lowland grassland award'. David Hall is aware of this and, hopefully is working on it. MG will ask the Clerk to contact the two individuals who have replaced Alison Graham-Smith to ask what's going on.
- viii. DG reported he has obtained a quote from Andy Bond to repair the bridle way on the approach to the Purleygig bridge. DG will ask Andy to use the machine required for this job to do the Whitelands Path at the same time to save money. DG has also asked him to advise on the requirement of a culvert, which George Marits thought might be required. COSC considers that the repairs to the path are necessary and reasonable and will not damage the SSSI and will be protecting the path from being further widened.
- ix. DG also noted that Julian Hudson has contacted NE about the repairs to the gravel tracks to the cottages to see if a better solution could be put in place. DG doubts NE will countenance any changes to our current arrangements for path repairs. Andy Bond has been asked by DG to quote for doing the usual repairs.
- x. DC reminded COSC that CPC requested a decision on shutting the Common gate over Easter. COSC decided by majority after some discussion that the gate would be left open due to difficulties for the football team who have games over the Easter holidays. COSC should apply some thought to the gate revising our closure policy, particularly with regards to access by the football team. An additional consideration was that, despite the recent fine weather and the beginning of the school holidays, there has not been much pressure on the Common.

D) Machinery Maintenance – nothing to report.

E) Parish Paths – Cllr Griffiths

- i. NH reported that he walked along Little Drove Road and the laurels on the corner from Drove Road are growing out into the road. There is also some garden waste dumped on that road (also highlighted by a villager in correspondence). DG will investigate and discuss with Julian Hudson who advises on highways.
- ii. There was a report that children had made bike bumps on the path behind Station Road. DG will contact HCC as they are the landowner.

F) Village Greens – nothing to report

G) War Memorial Playing Fields

- i. Update on Wild Flower areas – This can be removed from the minutes now.
- ii. Update on play equipment repairs following annual inspection. NH reported that a decision has been made on the repair to the Teen Table. The annual inspection will be put back until after

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the zip wire is repaired. EN has put back the steering wheel and the inspection schedule has now been updated to include the Adventure Tower.

- iii. NH reported that the grass has been cut today.
- iv. NH indicated that the next item is the pump track. The would cost something in excess of £100k to have a professional pump track put there. Instead, a note will be put in the parish magazine & social media asking for volunteers to help on a given weekend to do a DIY job. More soil is required, but this can be obtained. Andover BMX and TVBC are offering help and funding. NH has concerns as to whether enough volunteers will come forward. Also, NH said this initiative has not been formalised and asked if CPC should be officially informed. DG advised that CPC are happy to delegate responsibility to COSC but expenditure in excess of £500 would need to be authorised by CPC.
- v. Regarding the unauthorised entry into the pavilion, EN found no sign of damage to the padlock or forced entry. NH has asked Wayne who oversees the football team exactly how they found the padlock; who was aware of the code; who last locked it and whether anyone at the club may have given the number away. Once a reply is received, the police may be informed, but will wait to hear from Wayne first. The gate code has been changed.
- vi. EN reported that the quote for additional fine mesh to go round the rope bridge on the Adventure Tower had come in at over £600. This had been requested by a villager who found the current net holes too large for very small children. COSC agreed not to go ahead as the cost was excessive and also may reduce the challenge for older children.
- vii. MG queried whether the sponsorship banners pinned to the pavilion is in line with the CPC / COSC policy as it had not been discussed. NH stated that the football team had asked him about it and he had authorised it. The reason being, with the sponsorship money ,they have done some repairs / decoration to the pavilion and will continue to care for the village asset so there should be a trade-off. On balance, COSC agreed that the banners could stay.
- viii. Update on communications with Vita Play re play equipment timbers - NH reported that the zip wire and clamber stack will be repaired and a quote has been received for this work. EN will try to obtain a grant to help with costs.

### H) West Down

- i. DG reported that CPC have considered and approved Orchard Services to repair the fence on part of WD perimeter. They will reuse as many posts as possible to reduce costs.
- ii. Regarding clearing the growth along the fence line, DG has contacted Rick Nightingale who will do it when he can.
- iii. Ian Daubney and colleague have cleared more of the bank leading down to Coley Lane. Next year there should be three days of machine cutting to get the job done fully.
- iv. DG stated a ragwort pull will be arranged in July if required.
- v. TH noted that some of the Nature Trail boards are getting tatty. TH will go back to the company which did them originally and ask how much it would cost to repair / replace them.

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- vi. DG reported that Mike Hardy of HCC had put a chain and a padlock around the damaged overhead barrier on West Down but it is always being left open, probably by Southern Water. DG will ask if the barrier can be properly fixed. The same applies to the low barrier which used to be padlocked.

**I) Tree Warden report**

DG has found out from TE that 'GroundLord' did the work on the large tree that fell on the Freelands boundary and he has contacted them to get a quote for the ash tree on the playing field perimeter.

**7. Correspondence:**

19.02.2025 Email received from resident re Little Drove Rd tipping ([COSC 130325 1](#))

10.03.2025 Email from resident about damage to Copse ([COSC 130425 2](#))

12.03.2025 Email from resident about track not holding ([COSC 130425 3](#))

28.03.2025 Email grant offer TVBC West Down stock fencing ([COSC 130425 4](#))

**8. Questions from Public: None**

**9. Any Other Business – For information only:**

NH asked about succession for the people who are currently on COSC and whether younger people can be encouraged to join. DC reported that someone had expressed an interest in helping with COSC and Julian Hudson has his detail on a list. DG will look to make contact.

**10. Items for the next agenda: None**

**11. Date of the next meeting – Scheduled date is Thursday 8 May 2025 at Poplar Dene, Village Street.**

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 20:10