

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)
Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12 June 2025 at Poplar Dene, Cart Lane, Chilbolton; 18:30

PRESENT: Cllrs David Griffiths (Chairman) (DG), Emma Noble (EN), Debbie Collis (DC), Moya Grove (MG) and Trish Heaton (TH)
Members of Public: 1

1. Apologies: Kerrie Ritson (KR)
2. Election of Chairman: DG elected as chair.
3. Declaration of Interests: NONE
4. Approval of Minutes – Wednesday 8 May: These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting. [COSC Minutes 8th May 2025](#)
5. Appointment of Committees, Working Parties/Groups, their members and agree their Terms of Reference
 - a. War memorial Playing Field Development Group - The existing ToR was agreed without amendment. Members: EN Noble nominated and agreed as Playing Field lead. TH nominated as member of the development group. It was decided that the development would look to complete the pump track project then be adjourned until further funds become available.
 - b. Common: MG nominated and agreed as Common lead.
 - c. West Down and footpaths: DG nominated and agreed as West Down and footpaths lead.
 - d. Allotments: KR nominated and agreed as allotment lead.
 - e. Tree warden: Rick Nightingale nominated and agreed as tree warden lead.
6. Matters Arising:
 - a) Track repairs not holding ([41124 22](#)) CPC 6th Jan 2025 minutes refers. Discussed at PC meeting 02/06/2025 - Natural England has been neutral in their response about material but has stated no tarmac. The matter has been passed back to COSC as there does not appear to be a permanent cost effective solution agreeable to NE. See below, potholes to be filled.

Action: Closed
 - b) NE communication – DG letter sent 2nd June 2025.

Action: Closed
 - c) Allotments – Are rents normally raised. COSC agreed that allotment rents should be left for the time being and reconsidered later in the year.

Action: KR
7. Chairman's Report: [COSC Chairman Report June 2025](#)
8. 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 June Finance](#))
 - i. Finance transactions since last COSC meeting
TH queried the 'Redesign – Common Vehicle closure sign'. Possibly this is an error as Re-Design did the West Down signs and the cost is excessive for the paper laminated Common signs provided by Taits printers.

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B) Allotments – [Allotment Report June 2025](#)

See above re allotments.

C) Common – [Common Report June 2025](#)

- i. Gate Closure Policy- COSC agreed that the Common would close from Friday 20th pm until Sunday 22nd pm in view of the forecasted very hot weather. This will be publicised from Sunday 15th on the Chilbolton Forum Facebook page and Chilbolton Common Facebook page and webmaster email (DC). PC and residents to be informed by DG . DC will close the gate on 20th and put the signs out. DC is happy to keep the A board parking signs for the summer and they will be returned to the container in winter.
- ii. Thistle cut – no progress made with Tarka. DG asked if COSC agreed to Ian Daubney and colleague helping at £15 per hour. COSC agreed.
- iii. Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship - NE have been written to, but no response has been received to date. They have been chased by David Hall.
- i. Longbridge – MG gave thanks to those who sorted the disabled access lock on the Longbridge in time for the school visits. EN advised Carol Eaton was the main repairer.
- ii. Naming ceremony – COSC agreed to the request from a villager to have a naming ceremony on the Common. DG will advise the Common residents once the date is confirmed.
- iii. Protective fence by Purleygigg – EN queried whether this fence can now be taken down as it has been protecting the new area for some years. COSC agreed that it can come down. EN will take this down and put it in the container.
- iv. Poaching - MG noticed persons unknown carrying fishing rods on the Common without authority. MG will report this to Sam McMurrey, the new river keeper at Freelands.
- v. Expenses - DG asked whether he could request payment for the radar keys for the Long Bridge and salt lick to deter cows from licking the cottages – COSC agreed.

D) Machinery Maintenance – DG asked if Ed Treadwell might be able to sharpen the blades on the brush cutters. EN will enquire.

E) Parish Paths – DG

- i. Most paths are in good condition. EN reported On a brief drive past, there appears to have been some work done on the Brockley Warren footpath
- ii. DG reported that he has received a quote from Andy Bond which covers a number of tasks (Whitelands path repair, muddy patch before the Purleygigg Bridge and the potholes on the Common tracks.) He plans to do the work in July.

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F) Village Greens
Nothing to report.

G) War Memorial Playing Fields – [Report June 2025](#)

I. Update on play equipment repairs following annual inspection

- a. EN reported she will complete a short due diligence reply to the report, but most items are in hand.
- b. EN queried whether COSC are happy for the rusty patch on the basketball hoops to be treated with Hammeright. COSC Agreed.
- c. Previously, Nick Horne used weed killer around the bottom of play equipment posts / under the scramble nets to avoid damage caused by strimmers, but last year concerns were raised about the use of glyphosate near children. EN queried whether she should try with glyphosate free weed killer. COSC agreed
- d. EN reported that the repairs of basketball court continue. Although the backboards are now back, the hoops and one bracket have gone astray in the meantime. Hurstbourne Forge have given a quote of £105 ex vat for a replacement bracket. The report identified that the adjusting handle has also been broken off and a quote has been received for £190 ex vat. COSC agreed to the replacement bracket, but that the adjuster is not essential and lends itself to further vandalism so will not be replaced. EN will try to identify the correct replacement basketball hoops on the Spalding website and report back on cost.
- e. The plastic caps on the adventure tower have been snapped off again. Nick Horne recommended replacing them with metal ones from Hurstbourne forge. EN will obtain a quote.

II. Update on communications with Vita Play re play equipment timbers

EN reported that an email had been received from Jenny Brain indicating the grant should be issued shortly. COSC confirmed that the repairs to the clamber stack and zip wire can be arranged once the grant is received, on the assumption that all prices remain the same.

III. Update on the Ash tree overhanging the pavilion

DG will discuss with Rick Nightingale the option of just cutting the one small dead branch overhanging the container. The rest of the tree looks reasonably healthy.

IV. EN reported that Nick Horne has offered to mow specifically the football pitch for £40 (vs £100 charged by Grass and Grounds). COSC discussed and thanked Nick and asked if he could be called on in an emergency.

V. EN reported that there were no particular concerns with the new football contract other than a few minor tweaks, but the only reference to manning gates is where it states '*The User is responsible for unlocking the gates for football access and locking them afterwards*'. COSC agreed that something more specific should be added to cover when the Joys Lane gate is shut.

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Additionally MG suggested cleanliness be emphasised and it be noted that it is used for other events such as school visits.

- VI. EN asked if another lorry load of soil could be arranged in anticipation of the pump track construction day in August. COSC agreed. MG had slight concerns about weed spread from the current soil pile in which garden plants are growing.

H) West Down

- i. Informal Cycle Track in Station Rd Wood – DG reported that he has told HCC, and Mike Hardy has also pointed it out. DG has emailed him again but there has been no reply. DG will ask the Clerk to update the resident of Station Road who reported it.
- ii. DG reported that Andy Smith has done a very good job on the new gate halfway up the concrete path.
- iii. Andy Smith has provided a quote for the fence repair in front of Testcombe. Max Childs the grazier has reported that the top fencing needs fixing as well. To do all of it will be very expensive. DG has sought the advice of Edward Painter and a decision will then be made. Max Childs plans to put the cows up there in two weeks if he is satisfied with fencing.
- iv. EN raised the issue of the person who wanted to install some information boards on West Down about it's war history. EN will liaise with the volunteer and look at financing options.
- v. EN reported she had done a basic repair on the bench on West Down which had been reported as having a protruding metal rod. The rod has been cut down in size, but really the bench is reaching the end of its life. Also, there is a sheared screw on the self-closer on the bottle bank side gate on West Down. EN will look to replace the screw.

- I) Tree Warden report ([tree warden report June 2025](#)) – see above regarding the tree overhanging the container on the Playing Fields.

9. Correspondence:

02.06.2025 Email from resident to request holding a ceremony at the Common ([COSC 05.06.25 3](#))
02.06.2025 Email from resident re Bike Trail ([COSC 05.06.25 2](#))
22.05.2025 Public Spaces Protection Orders Guidance ([COSC 05.06.25 1](#)) – COSC understand that this will not be applicable as the Common is not enclosed as there is a footpath running through it. DG will re-review.

10. Questions from Public:

- a. Resident requested the Common Gate be shut next weekend when the weather is due to be very hot. Discussed above.

11. Any Other Business – For information only:

- a. DC reported that her feral cat had come home with a rope snare around it's neck and requested that members be vigilant.

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12. Items for the next agenda: None

13. Date of the next meeting – Scheduled date is Thursday 10 July 2025 at Poplar Dene, Village Street.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 8:00