

CHILBOLTON PARISH COUNCIL'S OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE (COSC)

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

PRESENT: Cllrs David Griffiths (Chairman) (DG), Debbie Collis. Moya Grove (MG) and Trish Heaton (TH)
Members of Public: none

1. Apologies: Cllr Emma Noble (EN) and Kerrie Ritson (KR)
2. Declaration of Interests: None
3. Approval of Minutes – [12 June 2025](#): These were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters Arising:
 - a) COSC extended its warm thanks to Nick Horne for the many years' service he had provided to the village through his involvement with COSC.
 - b) In addition, COSC are extremely grateful to Ed Treadwell for his support to the village through his extensive repairs to village assets.
 - c) Other matters arising are dealt with under the appropriate agenda headings.
5. Chairman's Report: COSC noted the [Chairman's report to CPC](#). Comments are included under the agenda items below.
6. Allotments. Nothing to report
7. Finance. Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had circulated the attached report ([COSC Finance July 25](#)). COSC noted the report with thanks.
8. Common: COSC thanked MG for her report ([Common Report July](#)) .
 - a) DG reported that the owner of Old Cottage had erected an electric fence to keep the cattle away from the walls of the cottage. The owner of The Old Inn Cottage has queried the cost of filling in the holes on the track as, in his opinion, not all holes have been adequately filled. DG would visit to consider whether more work needs to be done.
 - b) The thistle cut went well with volunteers from HCV, one from TARCA and one from the village. Thanks to Edward Painter for providing the trailer for disposal of the thistles. HCV had agreed to help with stream clearance in October and will come back in the winter for other work.
 - c) Thanks were given to MG for having hosted/arranged 10 visits to the Common which will attract valuable funding.
 - d) It was agreed that a standard form of words should be used to advise on Facebook etc about the closure of the gate to the gravel area. The agreed wording is:

"Please be advised that the gate to the gravel area will be closed to vehicles over the weekend from the evening ofday/date... until...day/date...

The reason for the closure is because: *an extended period of good weather is anticipated/ the risk of fire is high/essential maintenance work is being carried out/ other (as necessary).*

The Cow Common SSSI remains open to all on foot, the bridleway remains open to horse riders and cyclists.

Parking is available at West Down - follow the road signs in the village to find this parking area.
Please remember: when there are cattle on the Common dogs should be on a lead at all times.

Agreed and signed (Chairman)

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- e) In response to the request for parking for individuals without a Blue Badge, CPC policy remains clear and COSC will not be making an exception (see correspondence below).
- f) A report had been made by a visitor that her dog had been caught up and injured by a metal rod under the bridge on the track leading to the houses (the Sleeper Bridge). A thorough examination of the bridge has been carried out and no explanation could be found for why the rod should have been there. The search under the bridge has revealed nothing further that might cause injury. DG would ask the Clerk to respond to the visitor.
- g) A response about the Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship funding is still awaited.
- h) Poaching. Should any further concerns be raised about unidentified persons carrying fishing rods, this will be reported to the river keeper at Freelands.
- i) Thanks to EN for renewing the notices on the Common notice board.

4. Machinery Maintenance. Thanks to Ed Treadwell for sharpening the brush cutter blade.

5. Parish Paths:

- a) DG commented that clearance of the Brockley Warren path was not within the Lengthsman's capability, either in terms of capacity or cost. He has asked Rick Nightingale to look at the task and he had quoted £735; this had been approved by CPC.
- b) The muddy part of the Whitelands Path had been repaired with scalping. Maintaining the parish paths is an important aspect of COSC work and is appreciated by the walking community.
- c) The path through the butterburr is scheduled for repair by HCC on 21/22 July.
- d) The part of Frog Lane between the houses and the Common becomes impassable in the winter. This is a repair task for the future.
- e) TH commented that the pedestrian gate leading to the water supply works had dropped. DG agreed to take a look.
- f) Village Greens. DG said that the metal benches needed attention - he had bought Hammerite and would repaint the one outside his house. EN had agreed to paint another. If parishioners 'adopted' a bench, this would help with maintenance. It was agreed to advertise the initiative on Facebook and via the village webmaster.

6. War Memorial Playing Field. EN was thanked for her very comprehensive report ([WMPF Report July](#)) and the actions she had taken.

- a) COSC also noted EN's email update of 9 July in which she advised that she had received offers of free soil and a digger for the pump track work in August. Regrettably, COSC members do not feel up to giving physical help with the construction work on the pump track but would attend if they are around on the date.
- b) Nick Horne was thanked for his offer to mow the football field but it was felt that it would be easier for COSC to continue with the contracted cuts by Grass and Grounds.
- c) COSC approved payment of approximately £15 for new water isolators to the showers.

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- d) DG noted the Rick Nightingale had agreed to take off the dead branch above the container for £145. This was approved.
- e) It was agreed that a Portaloo could be sited on the playing field for the Walk The Test Way event in September.

8. West Down

- a) An unknown person had tried to block the informal cycle path in Station Road wood. This remains an issue for HCC who, whilst not happy with the track, have yet to take action.
- b) CPC had agreed the quote from Rick Nightingale to clear the paths and also to clear the Mark Way.
- c) DG would be contacting the grazier for West Down to see if he was content with temporary repairs to the fencing. If not, there would be a significant cost for repairs which would be done over the winter. The PC is responsible, in its lease from HCC, for all repairs. Nevertheless, it was felt that an approach to TVBC should be made as they are so often helpful; DG agreed to action.

9. Tree Warden report. DG will meet with the Tree Warden to see the trees where action has been recommended.

10. Correspondence: all dealt with above.

- a) 17.06.2025 Email resident re cow common fence around house ([COSC 07 1](#))
- b) 17.06.2025 Email resident/quote re cow common fence around house ([COSC 07 2](#))
- c) 23.06.2025 Email from a member of public re parking situation ([COSC 07 3](#))
- d) 30.06.2025 Email response to member of public re parking situation ([COSC 07 4](#))
- e) 26.06.2025 Email from visitor re visit to Common ([COSC 07 5](#))
- f) 26.06.2025 Email reply to visitor re visit to Common ([COSC 07 6](#))
- g) 03.07.2025 Email request for portaloo re Walk The Test Way ([COSC 07 7](#))
- h) Other correspondence received from two people offering help with the Pump Track – both sent to EN

11. Questions from Public: None

12. Any Other Business. None

13. Items for the next agenda. None

14. Date of the next meeting. DG proposed that there should only be a meeting in August if email correspondence is not suitable to deal with any matters.