

Chilbolton Parish Council

Chilbolton Open Spaces Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 11th August at 18:30 at Poplar Dene

Present

Nick Horne (NH), Trish Heaton (TH), David Griffiths (DG), Rick Franke (RF), Julian Hudson (JH), Terry Gilmour (TG), Emma Noble (EN), Moya Grove (MG).

Apologies

DG confirmed he had contacted Edward Painter (EP) to find out if he wished to continue to be a member of COSC but was yet to receive a reply. *(DG has contacted EP. He is content to leave COSC but will help when asked.)*

Members of the public present

Abby Purver (AP)

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 21st July ([Thursday 21st July 2022](#)) were agreed as a true record and signed by the chairman

Matters arising

Matters arising are covered under the main headings below:

Finance

A finance report was provided by the Parish Clerk ([11822 4](#)) and agreed

Allotments

Report provided by TG ([11822 1](#))

TG confirmed the allotments had been well used this year, but due to the very dry weather the water tanks emptied. Allotment holders were supportive of a water supply and willing to pay, but the outlay costs may be prohibitive. The initial investigation by Southern Water will be £85 just for site visit and estimate. TG expects the

total costs to install will be roughly £2500 and if installed suggests no hose pipe usage and pro rata prices paid by allotment holders. COSC agreed and DG approved the expenditure of £85 for initial investigations.

Chilbolton Cow Common

Report provided by MG ([11822_5](#)). Matters discussed further in the headings below:

Closure of the Common parking area

MG considers that a parking area closure is now necessary as there are new factors of extreme heat and the high fire risk warnings combined with the longstanding issues of poor parking and high numbers. She raised concerns that we could be considered culpable if there was a fire and the fire brigade had access difficulties. MG proposed a closure this weekend to last until the autumn term and this was discussed.

DG suggested that we don't give a date for reopening, we keep it under review depending on the conditions.

RF suggested a sign at the top to avoid traffic backing up on Joys lane. The Parish Clerk, Mandy Denyer (MD) has come up with a sign for this purpose. This is stored in the container. DG agreed to fetch it and put it in place.

NH disagrees with the decision to close the parking area and considers that allowing access is all important and that we need to guard against over reacting. CPC have an obligation to keep the Common open for all. He considers there are two different issues: poor behaviour and the new concern of fire. CPC don't have any proposals for addressing the poor behaviour in place at the moment; and the fire risk is only 'exceptional' on Sunday and visitors don't tend to go in the very long grass where there might be a more serious risk.

DG agrees with NH that the aim should be to keep the Common gate open but felt the inconsiderate parking issue will continue to be a serious problem; and we need to be certain as possible that the emergency services can access the houses. COSC agreed by seven votes to two to recommend the closure the Common parking area this weekend.

COSC agreed that due to the lesser concentration of people, lack of thatched cottages nearby and the fact that we are only lessees, West Down should be kept open. This also keeps open the upper car park for parking for Common users.

Update on Wessex River Trust proposal

No updates.

Update on Common Information Boards

No updates. Awaiting response from Sue Larcombe.

Update on Common ladder boards

Andrew has managed to sort one board but the other has split. MD is still awaiting a quote. MG recommends going ahead with it now wording is agreed subject to cost considerations.

Update on redesign of the Common gravel area

Report provided by JH ([11822_2](#)) and a [Gravel Area Redesign V5](#)

JH suggested that loose railway sleepers are used to demarcate spaces. Disabled bays should be larger but there is not really enough space. They will be marked as disabled. MG confirmed that Natural England (NE) are usually ok with this and that plans have been sent to them.

JH raised concerns that with this plan the overhanging trees might cause difficulties for long vehicles

DG prefers the first plan ([Gravel Area Redesign V3R1](#)) as it is cheaper to implement and simpler to undo if it proves unsuccessful. No external contractors would be required.

NH suggested that in plan V3R1 the very first parking space on the left may cause difficulties to horse riders. JH suggested the new gate be put at more of a 90o angle and that some dragons teeth be installed there to lessen the problem.

DH said that during his meeting in the week with some horse riders, it was suggested that the new gate be hung the other side. JH felt that this would be a better idea because it would block off the BT manhole covers as well. He suggested the bin be moved to where the other bins are, round towards the cottages, further opening up the area for horse riders.

JH will produce a V3R2 with the bin moved, dragons teeth by the equestrian gate and the new gate hanging on the other side before extraordinary meeting on the 17th August.

Access for horse riders

Following a meeting with local horse riders earlier in the week, DG suggested the fallen tree next to the Purleygig Bridge be cut down to allow equestrian access that way, as there are often people sitting at the ford exit. MG noted that that the proposed exit had previously proved unpopular with horse riders due to its depth. A representative from the British Horse Society has also attended the meeting on the Common and suggested some changes to the Long Bridge gate so that it had a longer handle; a less aggressive self-close mechanism and wider. She pointed to the Rural Communities Fund – Countryside Access Scheme as a possible source of funding. DG also noted some over-hanging trees obstructing equestrian access alongside the Long Bridge which could be dealt with by village volunteers and / or COSC members.

Other Common matters

DG to discuss with AP and George Whitefield possibilities for a larger opening for bikes at the kissing gate by the Long Bridge.

DG has ordered Romsey Red for the gravel area which have already been delivered and will be used to fill in holes by George Whitefield. The cost has been approved already by CPC.

MG asked if it would be worth updating and printing off information sheets for Common visitors. NH mentioned that CPC were not interested in leafleting previously when it was suggested and that they might end up littering the Common. NH feels that an ambassador scheme would a better way of informing Common visitors during busy periods but as there had been no response to the call for volunteers, it was decided that this would be deferred until more volunteers can be found. *(So far only one person has offered to be a volunteer)*

MG confirmed that the tree which had fallen on fencing at the back of the Common had not yet been dealt with. RF said that he had had his chainsaw course cancelled this week, but would be going in September and would then be able to look at this tree.

TH said signs on Common re cyclists have faded and were almost illegible. DG to look into this. *(I have asked Mandy to try and obtain some more)*

Machinery Maintenance

Nil to report

Parish Paths

Nil to report

Village Greens

NH raised the issue of whether we should take the open areas of Test Rise under the umbrella of COSC. MG said that this was still owned by Kings, the original builders. DG advised that we leave this issue to CPC who have been having more dealings with it.

War Memorial Playing Fields

Report provided by NH ([11822_6](#))

One of the basketball hoops has become detached. NH to investigate a repair.

The roof of pavilion has rust on it and a quote of £200 has been received by a local roofer to brush off the rust and treat it. RF has said he will deal with this to avoid the cost.

Regarding the tree branches overhanging the container, RF has agreed to help deal with the ones easily accessible from the roof. The larger branch may need to be removed professionally. Thanks expressed to NH and Ed Treadwell for fixing the lighting.

NH suggested buying ladder hooks to tidy up storage in the container. DG approved the likely cost.

The bill for table tennis table has been received and will be paid by MD. We will then be able to claim back 50% from the Community Asset Fund.

Site visits are in hand for the potential adventure tower suppliers. A written update went to CPC outlining the adventure tower plans, DG to submit (or resubmit) to CPC for their information / comment.

Regarding the boundary issues, NH has only had only circulated the draft document to so discussion will be deferred until the next meeting.

West Down

DG reported that the cows escaped twice last week. George Whitefield is going to fix the gate post. Thanks to Andy Bond who helped get the cows back to West Down with his trailer.

DG reported almost all ragwort was pulled in the enclosure. Thanks to Edward Painter for the use of his trailer.

Lengths Man Work

DG confirmed the Lengths Man can install dragons teeth opposite the recycling bins but at extra cost. He will provide a quote for this work.

DG will also ask the Lengths Man to trim around the metal bench, picnic benches and do right up to the fence along the bottom of West Down along Coley Lane as well as clearing the path that leads to Test Valley Farm. (FP 16)

Correspondence

MG to deal with the enquiry from Wessex River Trusts about non-native species removal volunteers.

NH queries the cost of the information boards for the Common (£4600ish). DG to investigate

HCC have screwed down the planks on the Purleygig Bridge.

NH reiterated that the barbed wire upstream on the long bridge has not been removed, despite being attached on Common land. This is the wire from the first river you reach on the long bridge, which joins the main river. This will be raised at CPC.

Questions from Public

None

Any Other Business

Abby Purver agreed she would like to join COSC and will be liaising on equestrian issues. It is hoped she will be able to help with the equestrian area redesign

Items for the next agenda

None

Date of the next meeting

Scheduled date is **Thursday 8 September 2022** at Poplar Dene, Village Street.