

**Wheathampstead Parish Council  
Maintenance Committee  
15 June 2015, 20.00h**

Present	Councillors	T Reason L Halford S Haynes D Johnston P Woodhams	Chairman
		Julia Warren	Clerk
		Press	0
		Public	2

**4155-15 Apologies & Substitutions**

Apologies were received from Councillors G Clark (SADC meeting) and A Dante (personal reasons).

**4156-15 Public Speaking**

None.

**4157-15 Specific Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

None.

**4158-15 Report of Maintenance Contractor**

The Maintenance Contractor advised that he had nothing to report.

**Resolved To note the report**

**4159-15 Rectory Copse**

Committee members thanked Mrs G White for her kind donation of £150 towards ferns. It was reported that these were now planted along the crinkle crinkle wall.

It was further reported that grass cuttings had been spread beneath the trees in the Copse, Clerk to contact Hammersmatch to advise their gardener, who may be the inadvertent culprit, that this was not required.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston, and it was agreed, that the Heras fence panels at the north end of the copse be removed and trellis fixed discretely to the existing concrete posts. Budget £100.

**Resolved**

- 1 To thank Mrs White for her kind donation towards ferns.**
- 2 To contact Hammersmatch regarding**

**disposal of grass cuttings.**

- 3 To remove the Heras fence panels at the north end of the copse be removed and trellis fixed discretely to the existing concrete posts. Budget £100.**

**4160-15 Minutes of Maintenance Committee meeting of 13 April 2015**

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2015 be approved.

**Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2015 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**4161-15 Dog Mess**

Concerns had been expressed from both members of the public and the Meads ranger regarding the extent of dog faeces left uncleared by owners in the open spaces. It was noted that fines could be implemented. The maintenance contractor advised that marking it with bright paint had effectively shamed people into 'picking up'. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that residents be encouraged to name and shame offenders, and that up to £20 be spent on spray chalk to mark the faeces.

It was further agreed that information on public health risks be published on notices, the website and Pump

**Resolved**

- 1 To note the report.**
- 2 To purchase spray chalk for rangers' use in marking up dog faeces.**
- 3 That information on public health risks be published on notices, the website and Pump**

**4162-15 Work of rangers and open space management**

The Meads contractor reported that the thistles in the rough grassland north of the Meads (zone C) were to be cut within the week, slightly earlier than 2014.

Councillors observed that the HMWT plans for an education centre had been shelved, but reminded him that space in the Forge was at a premium, any future plans for presentation to Council should look at increasing the floorspace.

Zone F, Meads Dell, was doing well, the trees planted in January 2014 were thriving.

The Meads Community Orchard, zone G, was similarly thriving.

Insecticide was to be applied to the worst of the aphids attacking certain immature trees, the grass was growing and from a distance looked superb.

The Chairman and Meads ranger (in his capacity as river champion) had met David Johnson, the newly appointed HMWT Living Waters Officer. Consideration was to be given to installing baffles near Melissa Field and restoration work along the Meads. Councillors noted that there was often a build up of unpleasant flotsam near the weir in the Village centre. Councillor Haynes proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed, that the Environment Agency be asked to review the weir works in anticipation that some of the debris be retained further upstream and that the debris be regularly removed.

**Resolved**

- 1 To note the report**
- 2 To contact the Environment Agency to ask them to review the weir works in anticipation that some of the debris be retained further upstream and that the debris be regularly removed.**

#### **4163-15 Subscription to HMWT**

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Haynes, and it was agreed, that WPC take out an annual subscription to the Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust.

**Resolved**                    **Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Haynes, and it was agreed, that WPC take out an annual subscription to the Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust.**

#### **4164-15 HMWT projects – Upper Lea, East Lane Car Park**

The river champion had recommended that WPC work with the HMWT upon a jointly funded project adjacent to East Lane Car Park. Working with the Environment Agency upon a catchment management plan this area was identified as over-shaded with little wildlife habitat and minimal bankside vegetation. Work would be undertaken by volunteers pending EA approval.

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed, that a grant of 50% , up to £100, be approved to jointly undertake the project with HMWT.

**Resolved**                    **That a grant of 50% , up to £100, be approved to jointly undertake the project with HMWT.**

#### **4165-15 Tree work and vegetation management**

Further to Minute 4149-15 it was noted that the WEB marquee for Village Day had been relocated.

It was reported that the Council's chairman and clerk had met SADC's Arboriculture Officer to look at the self set and outgrown pollarded/coppiced trees on The Hill BOAT near Four Limes to discuss potential works to the highway trees. It was noted that crown lifting was required for vehicular access and coppicing / pollarding of secondary growth would be beneficial. It was suggested work be phased as some would require traffic management. It was a potential joint project between parish and county councils.

The chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that a tree application be submitted to SADC.

The chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that crown lifting of trees on Melissa Field be undertaken by the Maintenance Contractor to improve the views of the river.

Mr Carter to be consulted to confirm the appropriateness of retaining the dead willow tree as habitat near the river.

*Post meeting note – advised it was surrounded by nettles and unlikely to pose a safety risk to the public.*

**Resolved**

- 1 To submit a tree application to SADC.**
- 2 That crown lifting of trees on Melissa Field be undertaken by the Maintenance Contractor to improve the views of the river.**

#### **4165-15 Maintenance Contractor contract and programme of works**

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the Maintenance Contractor's contract and programme of works be deferred to Council.

Consideration was given to highways works following the meeting with highways officers and the county councillor. This included

- 1.** a signage audit with a view to decluttering,
- 2.** removal of earth mound on south side of Lower Luton Road near the goat field
- 3.** cycleway – points for discussion with officers
- 4.** Dyke Lane scrape
- 5.** Ideas for 2016-7 highways locality budget
- 6.** Tesco loading bay
- 7.** Lower Luton Road – safety, congestion and quality of life.  
HCC suggested a public petition.

Councillor Johnston proposed, seconded by Councillor Halford, and it was agreed, that Wheathampstead Parish Council work with local residents to put together a petition to HCC for resolution of the issues in respect of the Lower Luton Road.

**Resolved**

- 1 That the Maintenance Contractor's**

**contract and programme of works be deferred to Council.**

- 2 That Wheathampstead Parish Council work with local residents to put together a petition to HCC for resolution of the issues in respect of the Lower Luton Road.**

**4166-15 Overgrown Footway Station Road**

It was reported that complaints had been received regarding overgrown hedging limiting the width of the footway. HCC were responsible for the roadside hedge, Kingfisher Close residents for the west side of the hedge. The west hedge was most overgrown.

The chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that all adjacent households we asked to keep trees, hedges and turf cut back.

**Resolved To write to all adjacent households we asked to keep trees, hedges and turf cut back.**

**4167-15 Butterfield Play Area**

An update on the current situation regarding the outstanding works which Persimmon Homes were liable to carry out under the sale agreement for the former Hertfordshire Development Centre site was given.

HCC had written to Persimmon formally pointing out that there were works which they were obliged to carry out which were outstanding, listing the details of those, and reminding them that the County Council could if necessary serve a formal notice requiring those to be completed within 20 working days, failing which HCC had step-in rights to carry out the works and recharge the costs incurred to Persimmon. Thus far, no response either from Persimmon Head Office or Legal Department had been received. HCC had also contacted Vine Technical Services, who act on behalf of Persimmon, to see if they had any of the outstanding works in hand, and if so what the timescale for those to be carried out might be.

If HCC continued to receive no response to their letters they advised they would review and may look to serve formal notice. They were also looking to obtain their our own quotes for the outstanding works.

An update on the lease was also being sought.

**Resolved To note the reports.**

**4168-15 Memorial Hall**

It was reported that two teenage girls took advantage of unlocked toilets. Their screeching and laughing was heard by the librarian who found in excess of 30 tissue bombs plastered all over the ladies' toilets, most on ceiling. Under her supervision the pair cleared much of the mess. A description was passed on. The caretaker confirmed no permanent damage had occurred on this occasion. Concerns were raised about the state of facilities for hirers when they were previously open access. CCTV images were disappointing. Councillor Haynes agreed to investigate and cost amore up to date, possibly, HD system, for subsequent consideration.

**Resolved**      **1 To note the report.**  
                         **2 To consider more up to date CCTV**

**4169-15 Memorial Hall refurbishment- AV, lighting and acoustic surveys**

The chairman proposed, and it was agreed, to delegate the approval of the cost of a plan, schedule and specification, up to a budget of £1,700 to Clerk with Councillors Haynes and Johnston.

**Resolved**                      **To delegate the approval of the cost of a plan, schedule and specification, up to a budget of £1,700 to Clerk with Councillors Haynes and Johnston.**

**4170-15 Memorial Hall – annual deep clean**

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Haynes, and it was agreed that Clean Complete undertake the annual deep clean as discussed budget £210

**Resolved**                      **that Clean Complete undertake the annual deep clean as discussed budget £210.**

**4171-15 East Lane Car Park extension**

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams and it was agreed that the Maintenance Contractor be asked to remark the disabled parking bays in the Memorial Hall car park and hatch a 'no parking' area at the entrance to the East Lane car park extension, and by the footpath across the Marford Playing Fields from the Memorial Hall.

The Maintenance Contractor also to add temporary signage indicating the overflow parking. Costing for permanent signage to be brought back to committee.

**Resolved**                      **1 Maintenance Contractor be asked to remark the disabled parking bays in**

**the Memorial Hall car park and hatch a 'no parking' area at the entrance to the East Lane car park extension, and by the footpath across the Marford Playing Fields from the Memorial Hall.**

- 2 The Maintenance Contractor also to add temporary signage indicating the overflow parking.**
- 3 Costing for permanent signage to be brought back to committee.**

**4172-16 Storage Facilities**

It was reported that storage facilities were almost at capacity. Costings to be brought to next meeting for more storage

**Resolved Costings to be brought to next meeting for more storage**

**4173-15 Open spaces signage**

A report from Councillor Shardlow as awaited

**Resolved To note the report.**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22.10h.**

**Dated this day of 2015**

**Chairman**