

**Wheathampstead Parish Council
Maintenance Committee
28 September 2015, 20.00h**

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

4309-15 Apologies & Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillors A Brewster, A Dante, E Habib, L Halford, and J Shardlow (personal reasons).

4310-15 Public Speaking

None.

4311-15 Specific Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None.

4312-15 Friends of the Station Sidings proposal

The proposal brought at Minute 4216-15 was considered and additional information sought of the group. Lance Johns agreed to consult his neighbours regarding their desire to plant and maintain the additional vegetation. Proposal to be resubmitted to the next Maintenance Committee.

Resolved To discuss the Friends Group's recommendations at the next Maintenance Committee.

4313-15 Minutes of Maintenance Committee meeting of 20 July 2015

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2015 be approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2015 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

4314-15 Report of Maintenance Contractor

Further to Minute 4219-15 Peter Ryan, the Maintenance Contractor circulated a brief written report at the meeting and verbally reported that during August he had spent 28 hours redecorating the lobby area by the office/Green Room and 8 hours on the Green Room. In September (to date) a further 14.5 and 14 hours respectively painting.

Other 'non -routine' tasks (litterpicking, ATP maintenance , play area inspections and general maintenance) included graffiti removal to the East Lane Car Park shelter and ATP path, repairs to the vandalised fence around the Tennis courts and sources replacement parts for the mini ATP tractor. The Maintenance Contractor had identified the damage to the Memorial Hall roof, the deputy clerk was investigating the methods to repair it, repaired the Butterfield pavilion roof following reports of leaking, and replaced the notice board posts at the Elephant and Castle.

The fence at Maltings Drive play had been removed. This small play area was due for replacement once s106 monies received from the Butterfield Road development so early removal provided a trial run at an unfenced site – all other parish council play areas except Marshalls Heath were currently fenced including the new Marford play area. Mr Ryan suggested that the fence at Rectory Meadows play area be removed to avoid the need to maintain it. Councillors agreed this should be referred to the Community Involvement Committee for consideration.

The Maintenance Contractor advised councillors that a bench seat slat was missing from the Meads. A supplier of wood was recommended to him.

Following criminal damage and theft of the picnic bench seats on the Meads (Minute 4320-15) the Clerk had asked that the Maintenance Contractor source new seats but was struggling with a supplier. A local timber merchant was recommended by a councillor.

Councillors noted that replacement loose fill wood chip for the Play areas had been approved at Minute 3754-14.

The Maintenance contractor advised that the field gate near the scout hut was frequently left unlocked, agreed that the office write again to the tenants with access advising that this should be kept locked by default, not least for their own livestock security.

Mr Ryan suggested that the East Lane car park shelter be repainted with blue hammerite. Councillors acknowledged this as a good suggestion but one which had been discussed as one which may be undertaken by the youth project.

Councillors thanked him for his report and for organising the volunteers

- Resolved**
- 1 To thank the maintenance contractor for his report.**
 - 2 CI Committee to consider removal of play area fencing at Rectory Meadows**
 - 3 Loose fill to be topped up at play areas as required.**
 - 4 Bench seats to be replaced**
 - 5 To consider repainting the shelter in East Lane Car Park**
 - 6 Office to remind tenants to keep the gate to Marford Field locked**

4316-15 Work of rangers and open space management

Cllr Woodhams, ranger for Rectory Copse, proposed, seconded by Cllr Johnston, and it was agreed, that hazel and hornbeam whips be planted at the King Edward Place (north) end of the copse near the owl box, budget up to £50.

Also that Councillor Woodhams install a trellis at the north end of the crinkle crinkle wall, mindful of the clematis growing on the obsolete herras fence panel.

It was noted that Mr McNeil had undertaken work in the Meads Dell and Community Orchard, and was working with the Environment Agency in respect of flooding near 'New Bridge'.

- Resolved**
- 1 To purchase and plant hazel and hornbeam whips at the north end of Rectory Copse (budget £50).**
 - 2 To install a trellis at the north end of the crinkle crinkle wall.**
 - 3 To note the reports.**

4317-15 Tree work and vegetation management

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the laurel adjacent to and obstructing the Mead Hall be removed, estimated cost £675-£900.

Councillor Haynes proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that a rowan tree be purchased and planted on Station Road (per planning requirement) on the station platform bank, budget up to £100.

- Resolved**
- 1 That the laurel adjacent to and obstructing the Mead Hall be removed, estimated cost £675-£900.**
 - 2 A rowan tree be purchased and planted on Station Road (per planning**

requirement) on the station platform bank, budget up to £100.

4318-15 Melissa Field

It was reported that unauthorised vehicular access to Melissa Field was now blocked by pieces of concrete agglomerate. The tenant of the adjacent grazing field was concerned about damage to her fence following pedestrian access enabling horses to escape onto the busy Lower Luton Road. She had asked council to consider mowing a clear strip between the two fields. Councillors did not believe this would be a deterrent.

Several incident of unauthorised fishing had also occurred- net 'trawling' with fish indiscriminately removed when caught. Concern had been raised regarding the effect upon the fish population. The Environment Agency enforcement team, working with the police, had undertaken a number of night time evening patrols.

Temporary signage advising no vehicular access and no removal of fish had been installed, pictorial signage was being investigated.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that a more aesthetic barrier be installed using materials in hand.

Resolved

- 1 To note the reports.**
- 2 That a more aesthetic barrier be installed using materials in hand.**

4319-15 Devil's Dyke

The Clerk and Chairman reported on a meeting with the Rights of Way Officer and Community Payback Team. The probationers had completed much valuable clearance work at the Dyke and the vegetation now looked managed. Further work would be undertaken.

Resolved **To note the report.**

4320-15 Criminal Damage, vandalism etc

It was reported that various acts of theft and criminal damage had occurred, bench seats taken from the picnic tables on the Meads, the tennis club fence vandalised, and graffiti . The Maintenance contractor had cleaned the graffiti on the Marford path and youth shelter at East Lane Car Park, had been asked to source replacement bench seats and had fixed the damaged fencing. Instances had been crimed and the police confirmed all seats on the Meads had been tampered with. Localised CCTV was being considered.

Resolved To note the report**4321-15 Archery Request**

The Archery Club's request to replace, at their cost, the dilapidated storage shed situated in the bushes at Folly Fields had been circulated.

Councillor Johnston proposed, seconded by councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that approval be delegated to the Clerk and Chairman of Maintenance following a site visit.

Resolved Approval be delegated to the Clerk and Chairman of Maintenance following a site visit.

4322-15 Play areas

It was reported that the Maintenance Contractor had been asked to refill the wood chip at Rectory Meadows and that a cradle swing at Maltings Drive play area had been decommissioned as unsafe. It was anticipated that this play area would soon be refurbished with s106 money. Councillor Johnston proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that up to £150 be spent on a new cradle swing seat and that up to £960 be spent on woodchip loosefill. Community Involvement Committee should lead on a consultation for Maltings Drive Refurbishment.

**Resolved 1 To note the report.
2 Purchase a replacement cradle swing seat, budget £150.
3 Purchase up to £960 loosefill.
4 Community Involvement Committee to lead on a consultation for Maltings Drive Play Area refurbishment**

4323-15 Marford Pavilion

It was reported that the Maintenance Contractor had been asked to make good and paint the windows of the Marford Pavilion. There was debate over replacement or refurbishment. Comparative costs to repair/ replace to be considered at the next meeting

Resolved To consider refurbishment or replacement of the Marford Pavilion windows at a future meeting

4324-15 Memorial Hall

Further to Minute 4314-15 it was reported that the caretaker and Maintenance Contractor had destroyed a wasps' nest on the

roof. On investigation damage to the sarnafil roof was discovered and the installer contacted. Problems had occurred with the central locking system of the north –south doors, and the engineers called out

Resolved To note the reports.

4325-15 Bench Request

A request had been received for a memorial bench on the south Meads.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston, and it was agreed that the request be approved and details be delegated to the Clerk and Chairman of Maintenance Committee following a conversation with the Meads Ranger

Resolved

- 1 To note the report.**
- 2 To approve the request, details delegated to the Clerk and Chairman of Maintenance Committee.**

4326-15 Additional time

The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the meeting be extended beyond 22.30hours so that business may be concluded. Standing Order 1z to be suspended.

Resolved To suspend Standing Order 1z and continue the meeting beyond 22.30h.

4327-15 Exclusion of Press and Public

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Resolved To exclude press and public

4327-15 Consideration of Maintenance Contractor Contract

The Maintenance Contractor's contract was near conclusion. The Clerk advised that a contract was required for receipt of services. A draft contract for services had been circulated including specific clauses regarding independence and substitution, and quotations. A meeting to discuss the contract agreed at this meeting had been arranged with the contractor on 1 October. Proposed by the Chairman and agreed.

Resolved To approve a revised draft contract for services to be discussed with the

Maintenance Contractor on 1 October

4328-15 Readmission of Press and Public

Resolved To readmit press and public

4329-15 Open spaces signage

Deferred to a later meeting

4330-15 Budget Review

The report of income and expenditure against budget was reviewed and noted

Resolved To note the report

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22.50h.

Dated this day of 2015

Chairman