

**Wheathampstead Parish Council  
Maintenance Committee  
20 July 2015, 20.00h**

Present	Councillors	T Reason G Clark A Dante L Halford D Johnston P Woodhams	Chairman
		Julia Warren	Clerk
		Press	0
		Public	4

#### **4215-15 Apologies & Substitutions**

Apologies were received from Councillors A Brewster (SADC meeting), E Habib, S Haynes and J Shardlow (personal reasons).

#### **4216-15 Public Speaking**

Lance Johns and Fran Miller reported back on progress regarding the railway station sidings since the meeting with councillors on 5 May. They reported that all households in the close vicinity had been leafleted regarding a Friends Group and ideas invited for maintaining/developing the area.

The aims for the Friends group were identified as

- The railway sidings should be managed with the minimum of intervention allowing inhabitants, both flora and fauna, to care for themselves
- Interference should be for the benefits of natural inhabitants
- An inventory of species should be recorded annually.

Overall they suggested that 'this open space, being located near a busy junction, would not be suitable for any significant public activity , so enhancements should be low key.'

Their suggestions for the railway sidings were:

- Reduce grass cutting to assess flora over the next year
- Enhance the entrance by planting wild flowers/roses in section A (near Lower Luton Road)
- Section B (centre) – seating area with railway benches to maintain history
- Section C (southern bank) left as natural to enhance the biodiversity of the Village, possibility of constructing hedgehog and slowworm homes
- Signage to inform villagers of developments.

Of the hundred leaflets 6-8 responses were received.

The Chairman referred the ideas to the next Maintenance Committee where it would feature as an agenda item for decision. It was noted that the recommendation was for no

mowing to occur in 2016.

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

**4217-15 Specific Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

None.

**4218-15 Minutes of Maintenance Committee meeting of 15 June 2015**

Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015 be approved.

**Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**4219-15 Report of Maintenance Contractor**

The Maintenance Contractor was asked to focus upon refreshing/redecorating parts of the Memorial Hall as discussed over the summer period when there were fewer hirers. Materials would be ordered through the office. The Clerk would maintain a list of prioritised tasks. Contractor to update the office by email as jobs/projects were progressed

He expressed his concerns regarding the misuse of the ATP, including that a small area of the plastic turf had been burnt and rubbish (multiple drinks bottles and clothing) was left particularly over weekends. The bench on FP16 was encroached by vegetation and vehicles were accessing Melissa Field. Additional bins had been provided on the Meads and Marford Field but despite regular emptying they did not have enough capacity. He considered that a shelving system in the Forge would help with storage and was asked to cost a racking system for future consideration by Council. Access to Melissa Field, bins and ATP misuse would also be brought back to Council as agenda items.

**Resolved**

- 1 To note the report.**
- 2 Maintenance Contractor to focus upon refreshing/redecorating the Memorial Hall over the summer period when the hall was less used.**
- 3 Clerk to maintain a prioritised list of tasks.**
- 4 Maintenance Contractor to keep office updated by email.**
- 5 Maintenance Contractor to cost out a**

**possible storage/racking system for the Forge for consideration by Council.**

- 6 Access to Melissa Field to be referred to future meeting.**
- 7 Council to consider mitigation regarding misuse of the ATP.**
- 8 Provision of additional litter bins on Marford Field and the Meads to be considered.**

#### **4220-15 Work of rangers and open space management**

The Maintenance Contractor had produced a draft calendar for the Wheathampstead Open Spaces Volunteers. He was asked to liaise with the volunteer rangers to discuss nature and timing of work prior to Council agreement.

**Resolved Maintenance Contractor in his capacity as coordinator of Wheathampstead Open Spaces Volunteers, to liaise with volunteer rangers to discuss nature and timing of the work prior to Council agreement.**

#### **4221-15 Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust projects**

The Clerk reported on a meeting the previous week with the Living Rivers Officer and local river warden. River bank erosion, mitigation and potential projects were discussed and a full report would be brought to Council for consideration. These to include bank protection by willow/hazel spilling or coir rolls. In the meantime more limited mowing in areas of particular bank erosion was recommended (to discourage children entering the river at these points). It was accepted that some areas were natural entry points, eg the bay near the bridge and by the picnic bench. Councillor Halford proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed, that these mowing variations be implemented with immediate effect.

**Resolved**

- 1 To note the report.**
- 2 To implement revised mowing regime with immediate effect.**

#### **4222-15 Tree work and vegetation management**

It was reported that a tree on Melissa had fallen in the storms into the river, the suspicion was that the adjacent tree, also ivy clad may be vulnerable. Agreed to approach the tree surgeon to remove fallen and potentially hazardous timber

**Resolved**

- 1 To note the report**
- 2 To contact the tree surgeon to remove fallen and potentially hazardous timber.**

**4223-15 Willows on the North Meads**

It was reported that tree disease specialists Bartletts had confirmed that many willows on the North Meads were damaged/dying as a result of squirrels. They had offered to assist with manpower and machinery in clearing dead areas and advise on replanting.

**Resolved To note the report.**

**4224-15 Fish Survey**

It was reported that the annual Environment Agency fish survey had been undertaken on the Lea in the Meads

**Resolved To note the report.**

**4225-15 Hedgehog Survey**

A request to conduct hedgehog surveys on Council land as part of the National Hedgehog Survey had been received. Its aims were to gather information of distribution and abundance of hedgehog populations. Tracking tunnels with food bait and ink pads would be utilised. Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston, and it was agreed, that permission be granted.

*Post meeting note, survey to be undertaken 9-14 August.*

**Resolved To grant permission for the hedgehog surveys.**

**4225-15 Butterfield Play Area**

Further to Minute 4167-15 a meeting between HCC, SADC, WPC, Persimmon and its contractors had occurred earlier on 20 July. Actions were agreed. It was anticipated that once safety aspects (principally the trip hazard and wire by the entry gate) were completed Persimmon would take responsibility for and open the play area, potentially within the next fortnight. Remaining issues would be resolved as fast as possible, including s106 variation, lease, car park surface reinstatement, service provision to pavilion and quotations there for, landscaping matters , ramp access and regradient.

**Resolved To note the report**

**4226-15 Marford Pavilion**

The Maintenance Contractor's report on the Marford Pavilion was discussed. It was agreed that Councillors Dante, Johnston and Reason meet him on site at a mutually convenient time. WWFC to be thanked for cleaning the pavilion

**Resolved 1 To note the report.**

## **2 Councillors Dante, Johnston and Reason meet him on site at a mutually convenient time.**

### **4167-15 Memorial Hall**

Further to Minute 4168-15 Cllr Dante to work with Cllr Haynes regarding CCTV provision.

It was reported that following the weekend hire the disabled toilet was cracked and unusable and needed immediate replacement. The Maintenance Contractor was unable to undertake this work. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the Clerk ask a plumber to undertake the work as soon as practicable.

The Clerk was thanked for negotiating with Morrisons Utilities, who, in exchange for using the Memorial Hall car park as safe parking for works equipment would line mark disabled bays in the Memorial Hall car park and also hatch entrance to the Marford Field and East Lane car park overflow.

**Resolved**

- 1 To note the reports.**
- 2 Plumber to replace the broken disabled toilet asap.**

### **4228-15 East Lane Car Park extension**

The recommendations of the working group of 5 May were considered. Councillor Johnston proposed, seconded by Councillor Dante and it was agreed:

#### *Extension*

1. The bund to be planted
2. A sign directing people (possibly with a map) to the Meads placed at the start of the path through the copse.
3. A bench to be placed on the river bank close to the entrance to the new extension but on the "old" car park side.
4. To improve security for riverside residents, suitable shrubs such as Pyrocanthus or Blackthorn to be planted close to the end of the fence by the river.

#### *Western Boundary*

5. The boundary with the Bull is lined with well-secured concrete posts that once held wooden planks and some of which remain. Although not pretty, these act as a barrier preventing vehicles from crossing between the Bull Car park and ELCP. We recommend these be left in place some tidying of the shrubbery effected along the boundary as it approaches the shelter.
6. Remove the "D" shaped flowerbed and realign the kerb to create an additional parking space.
7. Realign the kerb at the south-western edge of the boundary to create another parking space.
8. Paint the entrance barrier.

9. Realign and paint the bollard that stops vehicles passing between the barrier and the hedge.

*Access by Loufenway*

10. Install, if possible, a barrier similar to that created where the copse path enters Meads Lane to the access to prevent people stepping straight onto the road.

**Resolved**

***Extension***

1. **The bund to be planted**
2. **A sign directing people (possibly with a map) to the Meads placed at the start of the path through the copse.**
3. **A bench to be placed on the river bank close to the entrance to the new extension but on the "old" car park side.**
4. **To improve security for riverside residents, suitable shrubs such as Pyrocanthus or Blackthorn to be planted close to the end of the fence by the river.**

***Western Boundary***

5. **The boundary with the Bull is lined with well-secured concrete posts that once held wooden planks and some of which remain. Although not pretty, these act as a barrier preventing vehicles from crossing between the Bull Car park and ELCP. We recommend these be left in place some tidying of the shrubbery effected along the boundary as it approaches the shelter.**
6. **Remove the "D" shaped flowerbed and realign the kerb to create an additional parking space.**
7. **Realign the kerb at the south-western edge of the boundary to create another parking space.**
8. **Paint the entrance barrier.**
9. **Realign and paint the bollard that stops vehicles passing between the barrier and the hedge.**

***Access by Loufenway***

10. **Install, if possible, a barrier similar to that created where the copse path enters Meads Lane to the access to prevent people stepping straight onto the road.**

**4229-15 Storage facilities**

It was reported that the external storage facilities were almost at capacity. Agreed to consider increasing capacity at future date .

**Resolved To consider additional storage ata future date.**

**4230-15 Open spaces signage**

A report from Councillor Shardlow as awaited

**Resolved To note the report.**

**4231-15 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 21.50h.**

**Dated this day of 2015**

**Chairman**