



HEADCORN PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Office, Headcorn Village Hall, Church Lane, Headcorn, TN27 9NR
Tel: 01622 892496 Email: clerk@headcornpc.org.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council Open Spaces Committee Meeting held remotely on Wednesday 16th September 2020 at 8pm.

Those present: Cllrs James, Dungey, Selby, Mather, Walker and Thomas.

Clerk: Caroline Carmichael
Assistant Clerk: Stefan Christodoulou

It is noted that the Clerk had publicised the meeting and invited attendees to contact the Clerk if they wished to be admitted to the online meeting. There were no requests to join the meeting.

1. Election of a Chairman.

Due to the resignation of Cllr Hancock the first order of business is to elect a new Chair of Open Spaces. Cllr James was nominated by Cllr Dungey and seconded by Cllr Walker. Cllr James is now elected the Chair of Open Spaces.

2.

- a. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Evenden was absent as he is in hospital, an apology was given on his behalf by Cllr Thomas.
- b. **To seek notification on whether anyone intends to film, photograph or record any items of this meeting:** There were none recorded.
- c. **Declaration of changes to the register of interests:** There were none recorded.
- d. **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest or other interests as defined by the Kent Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011 on any items on the Agenda:** There were none recorded.
- e. **Requests for Dispensations:** There were none recorded.
- f. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none recorded.

3. Public session. (minute book closed.)

4. **The minutes of the last meeting held on July 13th 2020** - These were approved and will be signed by the Chairman and returned to the Clerk for filing.

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5. Matters arising from the last meeting.

Signposts on High Street.

On agenda, Item 12

Extension to the existing burial ground at the rear of the Methodist Church.

On agenda, Item 11

Spires Ash.

On agenda, Item 9

Section 106 funds.

The Clerk continues to pursue this matter and an update will be prepared for Full Council at the next month's meeting. Reimbursement for the repairs to the Days Green play area have been received (ref 15/501342/OUT). A new schedule of remaining S106 funds will be sought from MBC by the Clerk. Continuing.

Lenham Road.

KCC Highways advise that the most recent designs and the updates required remain outstanding as they do not have a satisfactory solution to all issues raised. Crest Nicholson are encouraged to discuss safety aspects with their auditor during the design with the aim of providing a good width of footway throughout, with safety railing - given the proximity to the ditch and need to retain a secure ditch wall. Safety requirements will of course have to override aesthetics of the job, where there is not enough space to accommodate everything. The question of the temporary footway has also been raised again with Crest. In addition, KCC Ward Councillor has sought information on whether every effort was made to ensure the footpath could go where originally planned and whether moving it across the road would require planning permission to vary the condition. She has highlighted the Parish Council's concerns around safety and the connectivity issue. This is still on going and the Clerk's Office continues to chase all relevant parties. Continuing.

Wooden direction signpost on Kings Road.

The Clerk has agreed with MBC Betterbuild that they will complete the renovation of the signpost. Due to COVID restrictions Mr. Bunce is currently behind on his projects. Mr. Bunce has given us a revised date for the work to start in spring 2021. Continuing.

Parsonage Meadow.

Seats need further sanding and treating. This was agreed by committee and the Village Lengthsmen have now started the refurbishment of all benches in the Village. Continuing.

Kings Road.

Dog Fouling sign to be replaced. MBC to site more permanent signage. New signage is being considered by MBC and the Clerk. Continuing.

Hanging Baskets.

It is anticipated that next year the Clerk will be looking for volunteers to do the watering, this is ongoing. It was agreed that the baskets should now come down.

The Clerk's office will investigate the cost to replace all the baskets with those that have reservoirs and refer to committee. More companies will be approached for solutions. On agenda.

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Headcorn WI Tree Planting.

The Clerk had previously advised that the types of tree had been selected and the planting spots identified, and the matter would be completed in the autumn when it is a better time to plant them. This matter will be pursued with the W.I. Continuing.

Knights Way.

The ditch next to the footpath that runs from Knights Way to Oak Lane is blocked by a fallen tree and other garden debris. The Clerk has reported the issue to Golding Homes. It has also been reported to KCC and will be chased by the Clerk. Continuing.

Lenham Road/Grigg Lane Public Right of Way.

Waste bin at Grigg Lane end of PROW still requires replacement. MBC have been helped to find the original location and the bin should be replaced when they get to it once they have worked through their backlog. Continuing.

Memorial Tree for Dr Hardwick.

A site had previously been identified for the tree on Days Green. Both tree (a Field Maple) and plaque have been ordered. Waiting for the tree.

Bulb planting on Days Green and agree actions required.

The bulbs have been purchased and we are awaiting delivery. Once they have been delivered it was agreed that we should advertise for volunteers on social media to plant the bulbs. Completed.

Dawks Meadow.

The Council agreed that the Clerk would approach KCC PROW Officers with a request to install bollards on the footway section of KH624 to prevent vehicular access to Days Green. KCC advised that a bollard cannot be installed as this would prevent access for double width buggies and mobility scooters. Completed.

Days Green.

The protection of this open space was debated by the committee and it was agreed that the Clerk's Office would seek quotations for a variety of barriers to prevent unauthorised access of the green. The consensus of the committee was that they would prefer a rustic / rural style of fencing. The committee also discussed the updating of our Open Spaces Byelaws. We are also seeking views of Kent Police as per a suggestion by KALC. We hope to have answers in time for the next agenda. On agenda.

Anti-Litter and anti-Dog fouling poster campaign.

Committee discussed a poster campaign targeting litter and fly tipping and it was agreed some posters would be placed strategically around the village. This is still under consideration about the exact form this should take. We are also having formal MBC signs put in place at the Hoggs Bridge and Days Green play areas as a result of PSPO legislation. Continuing.

Days Green.

Councillor Dungey made an observation as to the length of grass beyond the path at the top of Days Green. The Lengthsmen have resolved this issue. Completed.



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Hedge on the A274 main road running north from the Headcorn Bowls Club.

This matter will be reported to KCC Highways as the Hedge requires trimming and the path way beside it needs clearing of under growth. The hedge has been cut and the pathway cleared. Completed.

Bug Hotel on Days Green.

The re-siting of the bug hotel has been completed and the Clerk has filled it with relevant materials. Completed.

6. To receive a Budget Analysis report.

The budget was reviewed. No further action required at this time.

7. To receive correspondence and action as necessary.

Two Items of correspondence have been received: -

Treecycle were asked to investigate an Oak on Days Green that had been reported to the Council as having a high degree of rot at the base and was therefore a danger to the nearby house. Treecycle attended and examined the Oak and reported that there were a few options available to deal with this. Firstly an in-depth invasive inspection of the main trunk to determine the extent of decay and carry out any remedial work as a result. Secondly a heavy crown reduction leaving a much smaller tree. Thirdly to remove the tree to ground level and grind the stump. Treecycle's opinion was that due to the location, very near the neighbours boundary and directly under power cables, which was less than ideal plus the rot and decay in the trunk weakening the tree means that removal of the tree and replanting of an oak in a better spot would be the way forward. The Committee were in favour of option 3 subject to MBC's opinion. The Clerk will contact MBC to ascertain their opinion in this matter. Continuing.

A Parishioner emailed us to enquire if we would be able to highlight the story of her young child who has taken it upon himself to pick up litter on his walks with his family to the extent that he asked for a litter picker as a present. This heartwarming eco story was posted on Facebook by the Clerk's Office. Completed.

8. To consider recommendations and quotation from Treecycle Tree Care for work at Spires Ash.

Treecycle have carried out a survey of the Willows around the pond at Spires Ash and recommend that some be removed and some be "pruned and trained" to better allow visibility of the pond. Thus increasing the visual amenity of the pond area. They have also included a crown lift of another nearby tree. These works were agreed by the Council and the Quotation was accepted. It was also agreed that these works should be carried out before autumn to remove excess leaves that might fall into the pond making item 9, below, more difficult. Completed.

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- 9. To consider the environment and ecology of Spires Ash pond and agree actions required.**
Given the tree works to be carried out in item 8 of this agenda it was agreed that once this work had been carried out that it would be easier to tidy up the pond and remove fish if need be. Therefore any actions needed in this regard will be revisited after the above mentioned tree works have been finished. Item 8, above. On agenda.
- 10. To discuss the RoSPA reports for Hoggs Bridge and Days Green and agree actions required.**
Hoggs Bridge report: -
The majority of the remedial suggestions for Hoggs bridge are able to be carried out by the Lengthsmen. One piece of equipment needs signage on how to use it which will be provided and one piece needs a new foot plate that needs to be situated in the same position as the old footplate necessitating the old one be dug out and the new one set in its place. Completed.
Days Green: -
The remedial works for the Days Green play area are all minor works and can be easily done by the Lengthsmen. They are all tightening bolts and oiling hinges etc. The exception being resurfacing the play area which is being done by DCM Surfaces in a weeks' time. Completed.
- 11. To review quotations for the extension to the footway at the burial ground and agree action required.**
We received two quotations for this work. One from Mackelden and one from Wilsons Tarmac. The Wilsons Tarmac quote was the cheaper and they were awarded the contract. Continuing.
- 12. To discuss the misaligned posts in the High Street and agree actions required.**
Many of the posts in the High Street have been damaged and bend out of true by vehicles hitting/driving in to them. It was suggested that they may be able to be straightened. To this end an engineer will be asked to have a look at them and give his thoughts on any attempt to straighten them. This will be discussed at a later meeting. The sign that was on a bent pole that was over hanging the street has been removed MBC. Continuing.

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13. Village Inspection.

- (a) **Potholes in Foremans walk.** This does not come under our jurisdiction but we have mentioned the problem to the land owner who assures us it is being delt with in the very near future.
- (b) **Long Meadow.** The trees have been removed for the second stage of the Burial Ground extension. We will be contacting two local farmers to obtain quotes for the removal of stumps and roots, tidying, leveling and reseeding with grass. Once the quotes are in we will seek agreement from the Council and try to get the work started in October. A separate tender will be organised for the erecting of fencing and the planting of a hedge. In the mean time we will advertise what is happening with this land on social media so that the public are aware of what is going on. Continuing.
- (c) **Dog waste bin at the entrance of Parsonage Meadow.** This will be moved by MBC to a spot more conducive to its use and less offensive to the nose. Continuing.
- (d) **Lych Gate.** The Lych Gate needs some minor remedial work as it is both showing signs of wear that are commensurate with its age and some that are not. The minor works due to the age of the building are general cleaning and pieces that need replacing. Of slightly more concern is a slight movement in the frame of the building that is twisting the spine of the roof. The Clerk's Office will contact the inspector who surveyed it in an attempt to get the cause clarified so that a permanent fix can be put in place. Continuing.
- (e) **Date of next Walk.**
The date of the next walk is November 15th, 2020 (10am)

14. Matters for information, urgent matters at the discretion of the Chairman for noting only or any items for discussion at future meetings.

There being no other matters for discussion the meeting closed at 9.15Pm.

Signed..... *C James* Date..... *25/11/2020*