

**Wheathampstead Parish Council  
Rights of Way & Commons Committee  
28 July 2009, 20.00h**

Present Councillors:	N Page	Chairman
	A Brewster	
	J Burgess	
	D Hills	
	T Reason	
	K Stammers	
	S Walford	
	A Waterfield	
	M Carter	P3 CMS
	J Thornton	HCC Footpaths
	R Fenton	HCC
	R Sanderson	WDPS
	J Wackett	WDPS
	Julia Warren	Parish Clerk
	Press	0
	Public	0

**442-09 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

None

**443-09 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**444-09 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**445-09 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2009 were approved.

**Resolved: To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2009 as a true and accurate account of the meeting and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**446-09 RAGWORT**

2009 was the third year whereby the biennial notifiable weed ragwort had been hand pulled from Parish Council land and local highways. Extracted plants were counted in an attempt to assess the impact of this exercise, to date 850 had been removed

compared to a seasonal average of 2,400. An alternative removal method was herbicide, the specificity of which was discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Hertfordshire Highways regarding their policy of removal of ragwort and use of herbicides.

It was noted that the removal of ragwort was included in the Nomansland Management Plan. Mr Carter agreed to check progress on this adjacent common land.

- Resolved:**
- 1 To note the report.**
  - 2 Clerk to write to Hertfordshire Highways to enquire of their policy on the use of herbicide on highways land generally and whether there were anything specific to the control of ragwort**
  - 3 Mr Carter to ascertain progress on ragwort extraction on Nomansland and report to Clerk**

#### **447-09 NETTLE TREATMENT**

It was reported that nettle clearance was required in areas of Meads Dell, East Meads, Marshall's Heath and Bower Heath. A fixed quotation could not be obtained as the work was a function of time and weather. Previous similar clearances (supply and application of herbicide spray) cost £250 - £430. It was agreed nettle treatment be approved for 2009 and that in future years the Clerk would authorise (from a previously approved budget) nettle clearance at the appropriate time.

- Resolved:**
- To recommend to Council that**
- 1 Nettle treatment by cutting and herbicide spray be agreed for 2009 for specified areas of Meads Dell, East Meads, Marshall's Heath and Bower Heath. Costs in the region of £400.**
  - 2 In future years that authorisation of nettle treatment where appropriate be delegated to the Clerk**

#### **448-09 CMS WORK - Devil's Dyke**

Mr Carter's previously circulated draft vegetation management plan for Devil's Dyke was discussed. The aim of this project was to protect the value of the Ancient Monument and to enhance peoples' enjoyment. Further consultation with partners and consultees was necessary before the detail could be defined. Mr Thornton agreed to liaise and fund some footpaths improvements as a part of the project.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should be recommended to accept the project proposals and support the actions within, and that Mr Carter would write an article about the project, once approved, for the Pump. Clarification of the Parish Council's responsibilities for Devils' Dyke was also necessary

- Resolved:** To recommend to Council that
- 1 Council accept the project proposals contained in the draft CMS Devil's Dyke vegetation management plan**
  - 2 Mr Carter write an article for the Pump**
  - 3 Clerk to confirm the Parish Council's legal responsibilities for the Dyke**

#### **449-09 CMS WORK – RIVER CLEARANCE**

A request had been received from CMS in association with the WDPS for a skip to collect the arisings from a planned river clearance day on 11 October 2009. This voluntary project would include pruning of the laurel at the side of the Mill Leat and weeding out the reedbed.

- Resolved:** **That the Parish Council fund an 8 yard skip for the CMS/WDPS project in October 2009.**

#### **450-09 KING EDWARD PLACE BRIDLEWAY, FP73 SHEEPCOTE LANE – BROCKET VIEW DOG BINS**

It was reported that 147 ragwort plants had been removed from this bridleway which the owners were reluctant to upkeep. It was agreed that Mr Thornton write to Mr Talbot requesting that he/his tenants keep the hedges pruned but that HCC could include bridleway maintenance as part of their 3 times pa mowing contract.

The problem of dog fouling along the narrow stretch of FP73 at the Sheepcote Lane end was discussed. A bin on Sheepcote Lane was not seen as appropriate. It was agreed that laminated notices reminding owners of their responsibility to clear up, and the location and distance away of the nearest dog bin be installed

- Resolved:**
- 1 Mr Thornton to write to James Talbot re hedge pruning in King Edward Place and offering that HCC take on the mowing contract**
  - 2 Clerk to install polite notices on FP73 reminding dog owners of their responsibilities**

#### **451-09 BR12 CONTRACT, PARKING RESTRICTIONS AT MOUNT ROAD ACCESS & CLEARANCE**

It was reported that SADC was investigating nuisance parking in Mount Road; BR12 also required similar responsible owner/ dog

fouling reminder notices as at Minute 440-09. Liaison with the Highways and Public Transport Committee was agreed.

BR12 was reported to be the responsibility in parts of WPC, Sainsbury and Groundwork. Agree that the Clerk ascertain what each organisation did and when. SQS had yet to complete the tarmacadam surface agreed at Minute 227-09 and would be chased. Fly tipping had been a problem on the area adjacent to BR12 rear of some properties. It was agreed that owner(s) be approached to clear/have cleared rubbish and possibly transfer at a peppercorn rent the responsibility for the land to WPC

**Resolved:**

- 1 To note the report**
- 2 Clerk to ascertain work programmes for BR12 from WPS, Sainsbury and Groundwork**
- 3 Clerk to chase SQS to install the tarmacadam surface to BR12 per Minute 227-09**
- 4 Clerk to write to owners of land behind properties to clear tipped debris and encourage good future maintenance suggesting an alternative to transfer responsibility, at a peppercorn rent to WPC**

#### **452-09 GATE / FENCE REPAIR – OLD STATION YARD**

It was reported that the gate posts had rotted and required replacement. Some remedial work on adjacent fencing also needed

**Resolved:** **Clerk to obtain quotations for new timber gate posts and making good of adjacent fencing**

#### **453-09 BOWER HEATH BARRIER POSTS TO INHIBIT DUMPING ACCESS**

It was reported that posts were needed to prevent vehicular access to Bower Heath for illegal dumping. Access for walkers etc was required. It was further noted that if the area was registered common land permission would be needed to fence it off.

**Resolved:** **To recommend to Council that:**

- 1 Clerk to ascertain whether Bower Heath is registered as common land and if necessary obtain permission to enclose it**
- 2 Mr Dawes to be asked to install small posts once clarification /permission obtained**

**454-09 GUSTARD WOOD COMMON – OLD 16<sup>TH</sup> GREEN PARKING AREA REPAIR**

A diagram of the parking area just north of the Old 16<sup>th</sup> Green and 1.1 miles from the Lower Luton Road Roundabout on the B651 Lamer Lane was circulated. It was reported that the entrance/egress to the lay-by had become potholed and that a 1.5m tarmac strip at each would make the area more accessible. As SQS had still to complete the works on BR12 (Minute 441-09) it was suggested that this project be added to the same job

**Resolved:** **To recommend to Council that the Committee chairman and clerk obtain a quotation from SQS as an add-on to the BR12 work**

**455-09 NEPTUNE BENCHES**

It was reported that a bench on Nomansland had been badly damaged and needed replacement. Discussion ensued regarding the purchase of further benches. Two picnic benches and one additional bench needed refurbishment – work which could be undertaken at the point of installation of new bench(es).

**Resolved:** **To recommend to Council**

- 1 The purchase of one Neptune bench to replace the damaged one on Nomansland at a cost of approximately £565**
- 2 Refurbishment of one additional bench on Nomansland and two picnic benches on East Meads and Old 16<sup>th</sup> Green at a cost of £255.**

**456-09 SCOUT HUT DRIVE**

It was reported that complaints had been received about parking restricting access to the Scout Hut across the scout hut drive and Meads Lane. Notices regarding it being private land and that access required at all times were discussed as was the possibility of yellow line marking. Liaison with the Highways and Public Transport Committee was agreed.

**Resolved:**

- 1 Clerk to produce and install laminated signs stating 'Private land, Access Required at all times'**
- 2 Clerk to obtain quotations for double yellow line marking of scout drive**
- 3 To consult with the Highways and Public Transport Committee**

