

**Wheathampstead Parish Council
Rights of Way & Commons Committee
30 March 2010, 20.00h**

Present	Councillors	N Page	Chairman
		A Brewster	
		D Hills	
		K Stammers	
		S Walford	
		A Waterfield	
		D Johnston	Station WG
		Julia Warren	Clerk to the Council
		Press	0
		Public	0

1002-10 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillors Begg, Reason & Burgess (personal reasons).

1003-10 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

1004-10 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

1005-10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2010 were approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2010 as a true and accurate account of the meeting and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

1006-10 ACCESS STEPS TO OLD STATION PLATFORM

It was reported that the Station Working Group had put forward 3 possible access routes for steps to the former platform, two of which had been marked out with red and white tape. Access for the less able had been considered but the steep incline made wheelchair access impractical. Councillors had independently visited the site (Minute 879-10 refers). Details for consultation and the siting of the steps had been delegated to the Rights of Way Committee (Minute 982-10). The committee favoured the access route from the Codicote Road as most practical and with least visual impact on the rural appearance of the attractive treed bank.

It was agreed that this decision be passed to the Working Group.

- Resolve**
- 1 To note the report.**
 - 2 To convey the decision to the Station Working Group.**

1007-10 OLD STATION PLATFORM HEDGE SCREEN & OTHER MATTERS

As discussed by Council at Minute 982-10 implementation of the Yew screen to increase privacy to the east end of the platform had been delegated to the Rights of Way & Commons Committee. 19 Yew trees would be planted by the Council's regular contractor (at a maximum cost of £175) and those working on the platform project encouraged to water them at each visit. The CMS would provide a water butt at the 'top' of the embankment. Harpenden Recovery had agreed to provide additional water upon request.

The details for trackbed planting and platform surfacing would be discussed by the Station Working Group and its recommendations returned to Rights of Way and Commons Committee.

Resolved To note the report.

Mr Johnston left the meeting

1008-10 SMALL PROJECT PROPOSALS

Councillor Burgess has put forward four small project proposals:

- Repainting the footbridge over the River Lea adjacent to the Forge
- Repainting the sewer ventilation pipe in the Old Station Yard

It was agreed that both of these were neither the property nor the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to establish the ownership and then write to encourage the owner(s) to refurbish them.

- BR12 signs – installation

It was noted that these had been beautifully refurbished by Councillor Burgess. They now required installation which enabled occasional lorry access for tree pollarding. Agreed that the Clerk contact the HCC footpaths officer to discuss with the Chairman the installation of a bolt secured barrier-hole which would allow removal of the signpost as necessary.

- Access barriers to Forge and Scout Hut (repainting)

It was reported that these were due to be painted with red oxide by the contractor who secured the Forge

- Resolved**
- 1 Noted that Thames Water has agreed to paint the ventilation pipe in the Old Station Yard.**
 - 2 Clerk to establish ownership of the footbridge and request it be refurbished by the owner.**
 - 3 Clerk to contact HCC footpaths officer to liaise with the Chairman re. installation of a posthole with removal bolt for BR12 sign post**

1009-10 GARRARD WAY FP26 OBSTRUCTION

It was reported that the footpath adjacent to 29 Garrard Way was blocked off by a wooden gate and wheelie bins. Agreed that the Clerk contact HCC footpaths officer and the local neighbourhood police officer informing them of the obstructions.

- Resolved** **Clerk to contact HCC footpaths officer and police neighbourhood officer to request that the obstructions be removed.**

1010-10 TREWORK UPDATE

Councillor Page reported that the winter tree work in Mellissa Field and the North Meads was completed. He had personally treated a number of cherry and ash saplings on the boundary of Rectory Fields and the north face of the Old Railway embankment. Removal of the cherry saplings on the south side of railway embankment had been required by St Albans District Council Trees and Woodlands Section in response to a request by the neighbouring resident. The Sycamore tree in Rectory Meadow has been removed (Minute 882-10) leaving a large stump. Councillors agreed to the quotation of £150 for stump grinding. Councillor Stammers asked that his dismay be recorded that Council had undertaken this work which he did not support.

In November 2009 (Minute 681-09) the Rights of Way Committee had resolved to 'A budget spend up to £300 for mature tree(s) including a Norway maple to replace the diseased Horse chestnuts felled on Marford Field'. No time frame had been specified and the motion to discuss this at a subsequent meeting, including the possibility of an alternative species fell.

Councillors subsequently agreed to the immediate purchase and planting of a Norway maple.

It was agreed that the trees/branches marked on the Old Station mound be removed by the contractor at his day rate and, if time permitted, some work be done on a damaged willow in Meads Dell.

It was noted that the P3 grant of £1037 received in March 2009 had been accounted for as 2008-9 income. This was intended for the tarmacadam work of BR17 quoted for in March 2009, ordered in May but completed and invoiced in November. The money had been allocated as general reserves. Councillors recommended that this reserve money be allocated to the Rights of Way Committee

- Resolved**
- 1 To note the report**
 - 2 To purchase and plant forthwith a Norway maple on Marford Playing Fields adjacent to Necton Road to replace the horse chestnuts.**
 - 3 Contractor to carry out approved treework on Station mound and work on the damaged willow in Meads Dell, time permitting.**
 - 4 To recommend to Council that the £1,037 P3 money received in March 2009 and held on general reserves be transferred to the Rights of Way budget.**

1011-10 POSTS FOR DOG SIGNS

Members agreed that the Clerk request installation of two sign posts for mounting responsible dog signs alongside BR12 (end of Palmerston Drive) and FP73 (location to be marked near dog bin).

- Resolved** **Clerk to request installation of two sign posts by HCC for Footpath 73 and Bridleway 12.**

1012-10 PARKING RESTRICTION ON MOUNT ROAD

It was reported that there continued to be access problems with vehicles parking and blocking BR12 at Mount Road and no progress in the parking restriction measures discussed with County officers on site by the Chairmen of the Rights of Way and Highways Committees. Councillors agreed to refer this matter to the Highways and Public Transport Committee for action.

- Resolved** **To refer to the Highways & Public Transport Committee the continued problem of vehicles blocking public access to the Ayot Greenway and BR12/17 from Mount Road and the lack of progress in introducing measures to ensure free access to properties in the ownership of Marford Farm, Parish Council and Sainsbury's.**

