

Wheathampstead Parish Council Rights of Way & Commons Committee 20 October 2010, 19.15h

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

1418-10 Election of Chairman

The chair was taken by Councillor Waterfield, Vice chairman of the committee, following Councillor Page's resignation as Chairman of the Rights of Way Committee (Minute 1231-10). Under LGA 1972 and Standing Order 43 an election was to be held. Councillors Reason and Page were nominated, confirmed that they were prepared to stand, and each gave an election address and answered questions. Votes were cast

Cllr Page	2
Cllr Reason	4
Abstention	1

Councillor Waterfield declared Councillor Reason elected chairman and vacated the chair.

Resolved To elect Councillor Reason Chairman of the Rights of Way & Commons Committee

Councillor Hills left the meeting (19.40h)

1419-10 Apologies & Substitutions

None

1420-10 Questions from the Public

None

1421-10 Specific Declarations of Interest

Cllr Walford declared a personal interest in Minute 1427-10 as she lives close by to the Old Station Yard

1422-10 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2010 were approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2010 as a true and accurate account of the meeting and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

1423-10 Station Platform Working Group

It was reported that there had been little activity since the 150th Anniversary Celebrations in September which about 150 people had joined. No major works were planned for the immediate future. Following Council's approval (Minute 1311-10) for ivy clearance a working group was scheduled the following weekend to tidy the area and weather permitting to plant the two approved screening trees. The grass seeded by the steps had taken well boding well for the future.

Project expenditure was queried and noted that this was dealt with at Minute 1433-10 but that the use of an accounting package would increase clarity.

**Recommendation To note the report.
to Council**

1424-10 Walking map – CMS grant 2010-11

The 2001-11 £1000 CMS Parish Paths Partnership (P3) grant had been allocated for reproduction of the walking map produced in 2006. It was agreed that this be reprinted, asking the printers to correct a few errors and with minor amendment such as signposting Heartwood Forest and the new development at Butterfield Road. The Clerk was to ascertain the economic breakpoint and report back for decision when the minutes came to full council. The map's availability would be advertised by way of posters as well as website.

**Recommendation 1 To note the report
to Council 2 Clerk to ascertain economic
breakpoint for publishing and
report back to enable order to be
placed**

1425-10 CMS Grant 2011-12

Council was invited to apply for the Parish Paths Partnership grant for the next financial year – for a grant up to £1000. Parish Paths Partnership provides grant funding to enable improvements to the existing Public Rights of Way network for local people to enjoy the countryside on their doorstep. It can be used for improvements and maintenance to the Public Rights of Way in the parish. In addition the scheme can fund publicity such as walk leaflets, events eg guided walks and surveying directly related to the Rights of Way. The application deadline was 30 November.

Various possibilities were discussed including waymarking directional fingerposts and hard surfacing the grass part of FP73 running across Marford Playing Fields to Brocket View. It was agreed that the grant be requested for footpath improvements for the paths to access Devil's Dyke from the Village (Sheepcote lane ends of the footpaths FP73 to Brocket View, and north of the River Lea towards Mount Road). These areas became very muddy and unpleasant

Recommendation to Council That an application for £1000 be made towards improving footpath access from the Village to Devil's Dyke

1426-10 The Meads

Cllr Reason reported that she had met with Mark Carter of CMS to consider accessible pathways in the Meads and general improvements to the area. Consideration was to be given to a fishing platform, further information was awaited.

It was reported that following a meeting with EDF to consider compensation for the unauthorised felling of the two willow trees by their contractors, and as part of the reinstatement work following underground cabling in the Meads, a single phase electricity supply would be taken to the Forge. Subject to easement restrictions cabling would follow the footpaths. EDF had agreed to reinstate the ground with crushed concrete topping which would enable all access to the area. The Parish Council were asked to notify the public that during the works period, for 2-3 weeks in April 2011 parts of the footpaths would be closed.

It was agreed that Council should determine future use for the Forge and subsequently electrical socket/lights provision.

An application had been received by Cllr Page for a memorial bench on the Meads. Consideration was given to the locality of benches and memorial trees and agreed this be explored by Full Council.

An application had been received by Cllr Page for two memorial willows on the Meads including the White Willow below. It was agreed that the Parish council could arrange to plant them (through its contractor at the donor's expense).

In addition he recommended that the following be planted

Red Willow (*Salix alba*) x2

Purple Willow (*Salix purpurea*)

White Willow (*Salix alba*)

Orange Willow (*Salix alba*)

This was agreed, total cost £441.50 subject to confirmation that the trees were native species and thus benefited local wildlife

Consideration was given to gloss painting the barriers on Meads lane near the Forge in red oxide red. The value of and need for the internal barrier (near the footbridge) was questioned. It was agreed Not to paint the barriers.

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| Recommendation
to Council | 1 | To note the report |
| | 2 | Parish Council to consider future
use of the Forge |
| | 3 | Parish Council to notify temporary
closure of footpaths during EDF
laying the cables underground in
the Meads Area, April 2011 |
| | 4 | To consider potential locations for
memorial benches |
| | 5 | To approve and accept memorial
donations |
| | 6 | To approve purchase and planting
of native willows (£441.50) |
| | 7 | Not to gloss paint the barriers by
the Forge in red oxide red |

1427-10 Treework & maintenance

Bower Heath

Reference was made to potential dedication of a path in Bowers Heath ridden by horses as a Definitive Bridleway. It was agreed to postpone consideration of this matter to the next meeting.

Old Station Yard

Cllr Page had obtained a quotation for bramble clearance of the area (£485). Councillor Walford declared a personal interest as she lived adjacent. She confirmed that the area was overgrown and best viewed from the back of the garages in Kingfisher Close. It was agreed that this should be considered at the next meeting following all members taking a site visit, the bramble control budget could be used.

Nettle treatment - various

Cllr Page had obtained a quotation for herbicide treatment to nettles at Bower Heath, Rectory Glebe, Meads Dell and North Meads (£350). The timing and necessity of treatment including effect on loss of habitat was discussed. Up to £350 herbicide treatment was agreed.

Marshall Heath maintenance

Cllr Page had obtained a quotation for winter clearance work on Marshalls Heath. It was agreed that this be postponed pending consultation with the Friends of Marshalls Heath who had in previous years offered voluntary assistance

Melissa Field maintenance

Concerns were raised regarding the extent of clearance of this area in the previous financial year. It was agreed that members would visit the site and advice would be sought from the CMS.

Rectory Glebe

It was reported that arboriculturalist Mr Girling's report recommendation (Minute 882-10) regarding pruning and felling of the Ash and Red oak in Rectory Glebe had been undertaken. As autumn approached so did the appropriate time to replant. It was agreed that a Small Leafed Lime (*Tilia cordata*) Red oak (*Quercus rubra*) be purchased and planted subject to confirmation of location (£530).

**Recommendation
to Council**

- 1 To note the report**
- 2 To consider the potential dedication of a path in Bower Heath as a Definitive Bridleway next meeting
Councillors to visit Old Station yard to view overgrown brambles – agenda next meeting**

- 3 To approve up to £350 herbicide treatment of nettles**
- 4 Friends of Marshalls Heath to be consulted regarding winter clearance work**
- 5 Advice from CMS (Countryside management Service) to be sought regarding management of Melissa Field**
- 6 To purchase and plant (subject to confirmation of location) a Small Leafed Lime and Red Oak at Rectory Glebe (£530)**

1428-10 Footpath 26 Garrard Way to Offas Way

It was reported that this footpath was once again blocked by a fence, and bins just off the footpath on Parish Council land. HCC (responsible for the footpath) and the Police had previously (temporarily) dealt satisfactorily with the situation. Agreed to notify HCC and local police.

Recommendation to Council

Clerk to ask Hertfordshire County Council and Police to deal with this matter

1429-10 Dog signposts

It was agreed that the request to HCC Footpaths Officer to supply posts for no dog fouling signs on FP73 (Sheepcote Lane end), Waddling Lane and Butterfield Road – field entrances be followed up.

Recommendation to Council

To ask for sign posts for no dog fouling signs from HCC

1430-10 Nomansland FOI request

In addition to the FOI request sent to SADC by WPC (minute 1321-10) and circulated Cllr Page had personally sought information, which he shared

Recommendation to Council

To note the report

1431-10 Commons Registration

Council had agreed at minute 1384-10 to register its land at Nomansland with the Land Registry. It was noted that local councils were being encouraged to register ownership of all property. Agreed that all unregistered WPC land should be formally registered. Clerk to set up a meeting with the land Registry to facilitate this

