

**SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Footpaths Properties & Greens Committee  
Meeting held on 16 March 2017 in Shorne Village Hall**

**PRESENT**

Mr R Lane (Chairman)  
Mr R Theobald  
Mr R Bugg  
Mrs S Lindley  
Miss P Clifton

**ALSO IN  
ATTENDANCE**

Mr A Wombell, Tanyard Hill  
Mr A Morbin, Racefield Close  
Mr D Parmenter, Woodlands Lane  
Mrs J Cox, Racefield Close

**APOLOGIES**

for absence were received from Mr R Cooper,  
Mr C Rea, Mr M Redfern and Mr R Hardy

**60     Matters Raised by Parishioners**

**Conservation Area - Racefield Close**

Mr Morbin, who moved to Racefield Close in January 2017, was concerned that the recent Conservation Area appraisals were not discovered in the local searches carried out by his solicitor. Mrs Cox stated that she had not received any correspondence regarding the proposal to extend Chestnut Green Conservation Area to include Shorne Common Rough.

It was explained that the appraisals and consultations carried out in October 2015 and in March/April 2016 were in fact conducted by Gravesham Borough Council, not the Parish Council, although they were publicised by Shorne Parish Council in the parish magazine and on the website. However, the Parish Council is not aware of any properties impacted by the proposal to extend Chestnut Green Conservation Area, which was adopted by Gravesham Borough Council at the Council Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017.

Mrs Cox was concerned that the boundary of the extended Conservation Area cuts across part of her garden which she purchased some years ago. However, on inspection of the map, it was noted that the boundary in question is in fact the original conservation area boundary and not the extension. It was suggested that the part of the garden concerned was probably already in the conservation area when it was purchased.

In response to a question from Mr Parmenter, the Chairman stated that the Parish Council is the sole owner of Shorne Common Rough, (meaning that part of the Common bounded by The Ridgeway, Woodlands Lane, and the pathway between) and that the Parish Council supported the inclusion of all of the Common land in the extended conservation area. Mrs Lindley clarified that the footpath near Venesta is the northern boundary of the Parish-owned land. It is accepted that Mr Parmenter owns a strip of land between the footpath and the edge of the previous Venesta dwelling and curtilage which is subject to common rights, and the border of the common land is now regarded as being the Venesta fence (now a wall).

Parishioners were advised to take the matter up with Gravesham Borough Council if they have any queries or objections.

**61     Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 February 2017**

The minutes were AGREED as a true record.

**62     Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

**63     Update on Telephone Kiosk at Chestnut Green & Post Office Green (45)**

Miss Clifton confirmed that the light in the telephone kiosk at Chestnut Green had in fact been repaired promptly by BT. This can now be closed.

Mrs Lindley has objected on behalf of the Parish Council to BT's proposal to remove the public telephone at Post Office Green, and has also pointed out that the Parish Council were not notified or consulted on the proposal. GBC has objected to BT's proposal, using the reasons provided by SPC, and now awaits a response from BT. GBC will consider that response in consultation with relevant organisations such as PCs and respond further.

GBC is also reviewing their approach to the consultation process with a view to improving it in line with best practice.

**64     Volunteer Litter Patrols (46)**

Mr Lane reported that the Spring Litter Patrol took place on Saturday 4 March attended by 30 residents on the day and a further 3 on the previous and subsequent day. Approximately 50 bags of litter were collected, plus a further 40 bags and a significant amount of fly tipped materials from Shorne Ifield Road. The next patrol will be scheduled for late September or early October.

**65     Crabbles Bottom – Kent Wildlife Trust to Provide a Written Report (47)**

Mr Redfern has now received and circulated the written advice from Neil Coombs of the Kent Wildlife Trust.

HP Conservation Works have stated that they require an additional £15 per visit for carrying out 2 cut backs of the footpaths and bridleway at Crabbles Bottom this year. Mr Lane considers this still offers good value and proposes to place an instruction with them. This was AGREED by members.

Mr Lane has also contacted Landscape Services to quote or confirm their prices for weed treatment and flailing of the meadow and orchard area this year and proposes to liaise with Martin Redfern and instruct the contractor to carry out selective aspects of the work required, taking into account the advice from Neil Coombs.

**66      Additional Maintenance & Cutting of Greens & Verges (48)**

As previously reported, Colin Lawrence has been contracted to carry out 4 supplementary cuts to the verges and greens at Post Office Green, Tanyard Hill and Chestnut Green this spring, starting in March 2017.

Mr Lane has circulated a paper detailing the verges and greens in Shorne that will revert to KCC for cutting from April, together with proposed actions should the standard or frequency of grass cutting deteriorate. This is to obtain quotations for grass cutting from suitable contractors, and to find out from KCC how much they would pay the Parish Council if it took over the responsibility from KCC.

**67      Pathway Obstructions in Court Wood (49)**

At the previous meeting, Mr Theobald reported that he had contacted Ordnance Survey and was advised that as the Parish Council is a local authority, mapping would be free. He has opened a local authority account. Mr Theobald now has the Ordnance Survey mapping and needs to place the details on this.

Mr Theobald reported that he had been in contact with someone at the Borough Council who has sent him some mapping but it is only in outline, without all the necessary layers. Mr Lane mentioned that KCC Heritage Maps show the historical existence of the pathways and agreed to send Mr Theobald a link to the maps.

Mrs Lindley reported that she has carried out some further research on historical maps which she had sent to Mr Theobald previously. She had looked at the 1842 Tithe Map but that primarily details land ownership. She thought that the 1910 Finance Act Maps and notes might be helpful but that will require visiting the National Archives at Kew. She had previously suggested that the Land Registry could be formally asked to tell us all the present land ownerships and agreed to raise an enquiry with the Land Registry to obtain their assistance in establishing who owns the plots of land.

**68      Shorne Common Rough Chestnut Butts (51)**

Following the previous meeting, Miss Clifton put Mr Lane in touch with Ian Germaney Landscape Services, who agreed to install the replacement timber

butts for the same price as previously quoted by GW Contractors. The work was carried out on 23 February 2017.

During the work, Mr Lane instructed Mr Germaney to replace 2 further butts at a cost of £100 in total. Mr Lane requested the Committee to approve this additional expenditure. Mr Theobald moved that the £100 be AGREED.

**69     Swillers Lane Pathway Extension (54)**

At a previous meeting, Mr Theobald undertook to contact Mr Shove to point out that it might be in the owner's interests to get the private pathway extending from Swillers Lane registered as a public bridleway. Mr Theobald reported that he will contact Mrs Shove's daughter about this.

**70     Discussion on CCTV Considerations (55)**

Mr Lane has invited quotations for the installation of CCTV cameras in The Street and other possible locations. He has also publicised the proposal in the parish magazine and on the website, inviting parishioners to provide their views and comments. The closing date for quotations and comments is 28 April 2017.

**71     Michael Gardens Landscaping Screening Strip (56)**

Mr Lane has responded to the parishioner in Astra Drive regarding the cutting back of trees at the rear of Fairfields, Michael Gardens, and Wykeham Close. Mrs Lindley has written to GBC on the matter. In response they asked for clarification of the locations that were of concern. Mr Clive Rea kindly investigated and that information has been passed on to GBC.

**72     Defibrillator Considerations (57)**

Mr Lane has tabled a proposal to the Village Hall Management Committee, suggesting that if they wish to proceed with obtaining an automatic external defibrillator (AED), they should apply for a grant from Gravesham Rural Neighbourhood Forum in the first instance, but that if this application is not successful, the Parish Council would be prepared to consider a grant to the Village Hall Management Committee. Ms Clifton will check the cost of defibrillators from KALC, who have made bulk purchases.

**73     Shorne Common Play Area - Annual Inspection (58)**

At the previous meeting, Members agreed that the decayed bench should be replaced. At the Parish Council Meeting on 16 February, it was agreed to purchase 2 Forest-Saver recycled plastic moulded benches at a cost of £601 from Earth Anchors. The new benches were delivered on 7<sup>th</sup> March and were installed by Messrs Cooper and Lane on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March, supported by Mr Bugg.

A further supply of wood chippings has been requested from Graham Marchant of GBC.

**74     Adult Fitness Equipment**

At the previous meeting, Mr Rea raised the possibility of looking into the demand for obtaining adult fitness equipment, possibly for Michael Gardens play area. Mr Rea will submit proposals for consideration.

**75     Land between Claylane Wood and Thong Lane (59)**

At the previous meeting, concerns were raised regarding horses straying across footpaths and neighbouring property, and the ongoing disturbances caused by off-road bikers in the area.

Mr Lane wrote letters on behalf of the Parish Council to Gravesham Borough Council, the Police, and Mr John Rossi who owns most of the land in question.

Mr Lane and Mr Rossi spoke on the telephone on 14<sup>th</sup> February. Mr Rossi said that he is keen to work with us on this, but he does not know what more he can do. He has patrolled the area with the Police, he has put up signs, installed a long earth bund, and has repaired the fences on many occasions only to see them broken down within days. He spent £1,000 on a swing gate, which was damaged within 5 days and the fences knocked down either side. As far as the horses are concerned, the fences have been knocked down twice. He blames this on gypsies or travellers who are keeping horses in a field on the Darnley Estate adjacent to Thong Lane. He said that the Police have since contacted him, and he will be discussing the issues with them.

GBC responded on 20<sup>th</sup> February, stating that they intend to make contact with the landowner(s) regarding the fencing, the horses, and the nuisance bikers, and that they have also been in contact with the Police.

Kent Police responded on 7<sup>th</sup> March. The key points are that the Police are aware of the issues, having recorded 25 calls in the past 18 months. The letter stated that:

- The area is routinely patrolled by their Community Safety Unit Teams.
- On 19th February, the Police off-road bike team issued 3 x Section 59 Notices to off-road bikers caught on the site.
- The Police have been in contact with the land owner (John Rossi) and given advice on making the land more secure.
- Mr Rossi has reported that the horse fences are inspected daily.
- Mr Rossi has been in contact with the Highways authority who are in the process of repairing broken fences alongside the A2.
- Police will continue to patrol the area and look at joint problem solving initiatives with the land owner and council/highways.
- We are advised to encourage residents to continue to report issues using 101.

It was agreed that there is little more that the parish council can do, and that we should keep the situation under review.

**76     Advertising Signs and Option C Posters (59)**

Concerns raised by Mr Rea at the previous Footpaths meeting were discussed in detail at the Parish Council Meeting on 16 February 2017. Any further issues are a matter for the Planning & Highways Committee.

**77     Fly Tipping in Shorne Ifield Road**

This has been discussed in the past and the recent litter patrol highlighted the issue. Mr Lane has carried out some research and covert CCTV cameras do not appear to be practicable due to cost, the lack of power supplies and the lack of resources to replace batteries, re-site cameras, and secure prosecutions. He has written to GBC on this, since they are responsible for the cost of clearance of fly tipping and may have access to the necessary resources.

The Committee is invited to consider any other actions that the Parish Council might undertake to reduce the problem.

Mr Wombell pointed out that the law has changed on fly tipping. Mrs Cox suggested that CCTV cameras could be fitted at the entrance to Shorne Ifield Road and the Police could then trace vehicles by the registration numbers. Mr Lane said that prosecution is not feasible unless the offenders are filmed or caught in the act of fly tipping.

Mr Parmenter complained that the centre of Shorne Ifield Road is covered in dirt and detritus, making it difficult for bikes. Mrs Lindley advised that there is a KCC website to report highway defects, and parishioners were recommended to make use of this facility.

Mr Lane will look into additional fly-tipping signage and will follow up with Stuart Alford about progress GBC is making with combatting fly tipping.

**78     Any Other Business**

- (a) Mr Theobald referring to Mr Lane's e-mail regarding the damage to the footway at Shorne Crossroads, reported that there was sometimes a large, long vehicle parked there. Mr Lane said it is definitely root damage, close to the fence.
- (b) Mrs Lindley reported that litter was particularly bad on the Dover-bound slip road. It was noted that this is the responsibility of Highways England. Highways England do not seem to have an obvious way to report litter so she had reported in to KCC so that they could pass the report on.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.52pm.