

HENSTRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ian Treece. Rivendell, New Street, Marnhull,
STURMINSTER NEWTON DT10 1NP Tel: 07745 270285
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Draft minutes of Henstridge Parish Council's Open Spaces Committee held on Tuesday 30th September 2014.

Present

Councillors: Simon Cullum (Chair), Carolyn Nichols, Peter Crocker

Clerk: Ian Treece

The meeting began at 18:37

The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the new Open Spaces Committee. He commented that a request to increase the membership of the Committee from four to five would be considered by the Parish Council at its meeting on 6th October.

1. Apologies and to approve reasons for apology as seen fit.

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To receive and note the terms of reference of the Committee as agreed by the Parish Council on 1st September 2014.

Noted.

4. Allotments:

a. To review the current layout, management and state of the allotments.

Members of the Committee had previously inspected the allotments on Furge Lane and had agreed that the area of land at the southern boundary of the allotments be sprayed.

Noted and approved.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Clerk be instructed to write to those tenants of allotments that were not maintained to a good standard asking them to either bring the allotment plots up to an acceptable standard or to relinquish the plots and to offer vacant plots to people on the allotments waiting list. It was further agreed that the Clerk be instructed to investigate the availability and cost of additional grounds maintenance resources to undertake additional clearing, strimming and spraying work at the allotments if this should prove necessary.

b. To review the allotments tenancy agreement.

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The Committee felt that the existing agreement failed to adequately address the issues caused by tenants failing to maintain their plots to a good standard and then leaving the plot in a poor condition. In addition, the Committee were strongly of the view that the formation of an allotment holders association would be beneficial in terms of the management of the site and could offer economic advantages to members of such an association through bulk purchase arrangements, etc.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Clerk be instructed to draft a revised tenancy agreement that incorporated these points and seek legal advice on the agreement as appropriate. It was further agreed that the Clerk be instructed to investigate the best way to encourage the formation of an allotment holders association.

5. Cemetery: To review the layout, state and management of the cemetery.

The Committee commented on the generally excellent condition of the Council's cemetery. They identified areas in the closed churchyard maintained by SSDC where trees were growing through graves.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the Clerk be instructed to liaise with SSDC over the issues identified in the closed churchyard area of the cemetery.

6. Recreation Ground:

a. To review the current state, use and management of the recreation ground.

The Committee, whilst of the view that the recreation ground was well maintained and managed, made a number of comments about possible future enhancement of the standards of maintenance and uses:

- (i) That the grasscutting arrangements should be reviewed to ensure that they met the requirements of all users of the recreation ground.
- (ii) That the advice of SSDC's specialist trees officer be sought on a maintenance plan for the leylandii hedge on the southern boundary of the recreation ground. The Clerk reported an email from a local resident living adjacent to the hedge referring to a dead tree in the hedge and it was agreed that this be included in the inspection by SSDC.
- (iii) That the pedestrian gate in the southern boundary needed repair.
- (iv) That a meeting with the chairmen of the football and cricket clubs be arranged to discuss future uses of the recreation ground.
- (v) That the new fencing on the A357 road boundary of the car park was a great improvement and that a sign by the entrance to the car park publicising the existence of the village hall and, possibly, the recreation ground should be considered.

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RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Clerk be instructed to progress these matters and to liaise with the Village Hall Management Committee where appropriate..

b. To review the current state, use and management of the play area.

The Committee agreed that there were no particular issues with the play area. The Clerk reported that the most recent inspection had identified one loose stump which, whilst not an immediate hazard, required attention and that he would ask George Edwards to pack it.

Noted.

c. To review the current state, use and management of the skate park.

The Clerk reported that there were no current issues with the skate park and that there had been no further instances of antisocial behaviour.

Noted.

d. To consider future uses for the recreation ground.

The work on the Parish Plan had demonstrated demand for additional facilities on the recreation ground, such as an green gym and a hard path all around the boundary of the recreation ground to cater for people with prams or push chairs or using wheelchairs.

There was some discussion about the concept of a green gym and the Committee were favourably disposed to this idea, assuming that external funding could be obtained. The Clerk and Simon Cullum referred to various sources of external funding that might be prepared to support this venture.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Clerk be instructed to prepare plans for these amenities and seek external funding sources for the project.

There was some discussion about the amount of work that might result from these plans and the Committee were of the view that this would create a workload beyond the normal hours of the Clerk.

RECOMMENDED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the full Council be requested to review the contracted hours of the Clerk in view of the likely workload resulting from the creation of the Open Spaces Committee.

7. War Memorial: To review the state of the war memorial and plans for future maintenance.

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The Clerk reported that the War Memorials Trust is currently processing the Council's application for a grant towards the works at the war memorial;. The Clerk also reported that he had requested information on best practice for ongoing maintenance of war memorials from the Trust and this information was presented to the Committee. In the light of this information, the Committee felt that the ongoing maintenance of the war memorial could be carried out by the Committee and local volunteers. Peter Crocker volunteered to act as the co-ordinator for maintenance of the war memorial and this was gladly accepted by the Committee. Peter Crocker offered to obtain bulbs for planting at the war memorial, at his own expense.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that Peter Crocker be the co-ordinator for maintenance of the war memorial, that his offer to provide bulbs for planting at the war memorial be accepted and that volunteers be sought to assist with the planting and annual maintenance of the war memorial, probably each spring.

8. Oak Vale Wood: To review the management of Oak Vale Wood.

The Committee identified no issues regarding Oak Vale Wood.

Noted.

9. Budget: To review the budget for Open Spaces activity and to draft a budget for 2015/16.

The Clerk reported on the elements of the 2014/15 budget that related to the work of the Open Spaces Committee. The Committee was mindful of the need to construct a budget for 2015/16 to assist the full Council in its agreement of an overall budget and precept for 2015/16.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Clerk be instructed to prepare a budget for the Committee for 2015/16 in liaison with Carolyn Nichols.

The meeting closed at 19:50.

The next meeting of Henstridge Parish Council's Open Spaces Committee will be held at the Henstridge Village Hall on Monday 8th December 2014. All items for inclusion on the agenda must be received by the Clerk by 9.00am on Thursday 27th November 2014.



**Ian Treece
Parish Clerk**