

Meeting 9th November 2021

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THREE SHIRE STAGES MOTOR RALLY

The Clerk received an email from a parishioner raising various points in relation to the Rally held in September. That email was put to the Rally organisers for comment. Both the original email and the comments received from the organisers are given below.

Email from Professor Lorna Hardwick

As you will know many local residents had concerns before Sunday 5 September, both because of the undesirability of racing cars round narrow and bendy Eldersfield lanes and because of the lack of prior liaison between the organisers and those most likely to be affected. I have spoken with a number of fellow residents, both on the day and subsequently and I am sorry to say that the day was even worse than had been feared. Not only was there constant noise and air pollution, those on the route and in a wide surrounding area were in effect confined to their homes (with doors and windows closed on a hot and airless day). This impacted severely on 'essential activities', such as care of livestock and accessibility for Carers. In addition, church attendance was precluded for most people, children had difficulty in getting to sports practices and other activities, family visits were prevented. It was an act of remarkable insensitivity to lock people in their homes for 14 hours when lockdowns have been in force for so much of the last 18 months, and furthermore to do so on the last weekend of the school holidays.

There is also an important point of principle - this was a take-over of public space, enforced by private 'marshals' who are not accountable and were in most cases ill-informed about residents' needs. Most marshals at least attempted to be polite and I felt rather sorry for them as they were taking the brunt of the criticism that should be directed at the organisers. However, some marshals were brusque and dictatorial - it is not acceptable to tell an elderly gentleman, who lives well outside the route and was merely collecting his milk at 8.30 am on a Sunday, that he has '10 minutes to get back inside or be shut out of the whole area until 8pm'. I personally witnessed a marshal attempt to prevent a local resident from fulfilling her business commitment to care for livestock for her clients.

There was an astonishing failure of the organisers to honour the commitments made on their website and the assurances given when they made their presentations to local councils. I understand that a some glossy leaflets were sent out to a select few (often at the last minute) but no attempt was made to liaise with people affected by road closures, to identify any special needs, or even to circulate in advance what the closures would mean and who would be affected. The first that residents in the Bridge End and Eldersfield Marsh areas knew about this event was the erection of yellow signs a few days before. No indication was given as to where car parks would be. For example, at Bridge End there was a queue of spectators' cars from 8am that prevented people even walking a few yards to check on neighbours and also prevented farmers and others tending or moving livestock. In a 40 minutes period from 1pm I counted nearly 100 cars (spectators and organisers) driving rapidly past my house, over the stone bridge and up Hoggs Pitch. This continued to be the case at intervals up to 8pm - by which time most of the cars were speeding at up to 50/60 mph (in a 30 mile limit area). From a visual inspection of the road surface on the corners near Pigeon House/Old School House there has been considerable erosion of the surface (with

consequent risk to normal users as winter approaches). No doubt other damage to walls and hedges will be noted.

To add insult to injury, when I phoned the organisers' Control Hub, the gentleman to whom I spoke gave the typical response used by large companies when they want to demean the complainant. His response was that 'if there had indeed been any inconvenience' he would be sorry. I wonder what the organisers would concede counted as 'inconvenience'?

It was clear from the organisation of the event that they regard 'the countryside' as a playground and that there was no awareness of or respect for us being a living, working rural community.

I ask that the Parish Council takes account of the fact that the lanes in and around Eldersfield are totally unsuitable for this kind of event; that it is unacceptable to take over public spaces with the result that residents are locked in for 14 hours to the detriment of their social and work commitments; and that on this particular occasion the organisers lamentably failed to honour the advance assurances given on their website and to Parish Councils about communication with those affected. The Council (along with other Councils in the area) has been seriously misled. I also ask that the Council resists any proposal that such an event is allowed to take place in the future.

With thanks and kind regards,

Lorna Hardwick

Email from Three Shire Stages Motor Rally

It's honestly been difficult knowing where or how to start to reply to the 'complaint' because there are simply so many inaccuracies and incorrect claims in it. So I will work my way through them one by one ...

"There was a lack of prior liaison between the organisers and those most likely to be affected".

- Every property that was on the closed roads where the competitive action was to take place were sent a letter in April 2021, which gave a mobile number and an email address for any queries with regards the contents of the letter which explained in great detail about our event.
- A Residents Handbook with vehicle passes was then supplied two weeks before the date of the event for each of these properties.
- Additional properties which were on a section of closed road but not on the competitive route (i.e. Church Lane or Coles Lane) were supplied with a letter explaining about the event and also vehicle passes to enable access past the security stewards on the road closure points.
- In addition all farmers on the route were contacted and some assisted us with the provision of areas for spectators where people could watch the event from and also the supply of straw / hay bales for safety purposes on the competitive route.

"There was constant noise and air pollution".

- There were three one hour periods during the day when the cars came through - a total of three hours not the suggested 14 hours.
- In addition the top 30 cars were the most technologically advanced rally cars costing in the region of 250 thousand pounds. In terms of air pollution this was probably less so than your average road cars.

"(People) were ... confined to their homes with doors and windows closed".

- As per the above answer people were not allowed onto the competitive route for three hours. At no time were they confined to their homes with doors and windows closed and definitely not the case for people living at Bridge End or Eldersfield Marsh.

"This impacted severely on 'essential activities' such as care of livestock and accessibility for carers".

- As above ... all property owners could get access or egress out of their properties on the closed roads when the cars weren't competing. Our Resident Liaison Officers on the closed road stages worked with a number of residents to ensure carers could get into the community at various times during the day. If any resident needed carers to get in they simply had to contact us and we went to great lengths to ensure times of visits were met.

"Church attendance was precluded ... children couldn't get to sports practices or other activities, family visits were prevented".

- The church was well aware our event was happening and we have made a donation to them for the inconvenience on the day. Indeed the Church Choral Concert was very kindly moved dates so that it didn't clash with our day. The rest of the claim is answered by my comments on above and simply not true.

"People were locked in their homes for 14 hours".

- That is simply not true - please see my answers above,

"A take-over of Public Space, enforced by private marshals who are not accountable".

- All the closures for the roads were properly applied for by temporary traffic orders and a Section 12 Motor Race Order through both Worcestershire and Gloucestershire County Councils for this particular stage.
- The road closure points were managed by security staff from two different companies to prevent the general public from accessing those roads where the competitive action was taking place.
- The event itself is run and managed by fully trained and accredited Motorsport UK marshals who look after the running of the event and the safety of spectators in the areas where they were allowed.

"Most marshals at least attempted to be polite as they were taking the brunt of criticism that should be directed at the organisers".

- In addition we had Samaritans and Rotary Club officials manning the car park entrances. It was two of these officials who we believe this resident shouted angrily at, in front of spectators and the road closure security staff. Some

spectators were so shocked by this persons behaviour that they have also made contact with us after the event.

"An elderly gentlemen who lives well outside the route was told he had 10 minutes to get back inside or be shut out of the whole area until 8pm".

That is again simply not true and would not be necessary for the reasons stated above.

"A marshal attempted to prevent a local resident from fulfilling her business commitment to care for livestock for her clients."

- One of our security stewards or indeed the Motorsport UK marshals would have stopped anyone without a vehicle pass onto the closed road section, or those with a pass whilst the cars were competing for safety purposes. I don't believe we have the full story on this claim.

"The first residents in Bridge End and Eldersfield Marsh knew about the event was the erection of yellow signs a few days before".

- The road closure signs were put in place on August 23rd - two weeks before our event on September 5th.
- Any road closure only needs to put signs in place one week before the closure.
- The idea behind us putting them out two weeks before was so that anyone could phone or email us enquiring about the road closures. Many residents in Eldersfield Marsh (and indeed also some folks on holiday) contacted us to ask about the closures.
- They were all notified the same thing that they had unrestricted access all day via Hoggs Pitch upon to the B4208.
- None of the residents in Bridge End or Eldersfield Marsh had their access restricted or were confined to their homes at any time.

"No indication was given as to where car parks would be".

- There were black on yellow signs indicating the route where spectators had to go. This was backed up with maps and directions on the event website and in the event programme.

"From 1pm I counted nearly 100 cars - spectators and organisers - driving rapidly past my house".

- I'm not denying there were probably more cars than normal on this road but many of those were the general public who were ignoring the road closure signs and trying to get through. They were then turning around just beyond Bridge End and going back again in a great rush
- How the complainant could differentiate spectators and organisers from the general public is a mystery.

"It was clear from the organization of the event that they regard the countryside as a playground and that there was no awareness of or respect for us being a living, working rural community".

- We do not regard the countryside as a playground and we fully appreciate the communities that we run the event through.

Eldersfield Parish Council

- We make no profits from our event and any monies we do make we pass back to the communities we run through - in the case of Eldersfield both the Parish Council and the Church have received donations from us this year.

I hope that answers the majority of the comments raised by the complainant.

If any further elaboration is required on any point please let me know.

Kind regards

Jeff Wheeler
Event Organiser & Resident Liaison Officer
Hills Ford Three Shires Stages
Cheltenham Motor Club

LETTER FROM THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

7, Poolhay Close,
Corse Lawn,
Gloucester,
Worcestershire.
GL19 4NY.
14th October 2021.

Mr. J. Gabbott,
Clerk, Eldersfield Parish Council,
12, Harbourside,
Tewkesbury,
Glos.
GL20 5DT.

Re. the purchase of the Dancover marquee & storage boxes

Dear Joseph,

I would be grateful if you could forward this letter of thanks to members of Eldersfield Parish Council at their next meeting.

On behalf of Eldersfield Parochial Church Council I would like to thank members of the Parish Council for agreeing to purchase the large Dancover marquee and allowing our Fundraising Group to use it for the Concert on 19th September last. Most of the marquee arrived in time for the Group to erect it in the grounds of Eldersfield Court and to seat 160 people, which was excellent. The missing components have now arrived and we are in the process of purchasing storage boxes in order to protect the marquee until it is next required.

The Concert was our most successful to date attracting 180 people, the feedback from whom has been extremely positive; we also managed to raise £2850 for Eldersfield Parish Church enabling the new path to be paid for in full. Other projects are 'queuing up' in order to maintain this stunning, ancient building and we hope to stage other community events in the future.

Insurance for the marquee has been arranged with E.I.G. who are prepared to include it in the Church's existing cover as long as they are notified of each time it is used and where it is securely stored. Unsurprisingly, should the Council wish to use the marquee for activities which are not Church related then they would not provide cover as these activities would, I imagine, fall under the Parish Council's existing insurance. The marquee does require a number of people to erect it safely and I believe it is worth noting that, if and when it is used for Parish Council activities, additional volunteers will be required.

It is rewarding for members of the local community in Eldersfield to know that the Parish Council has made such a significant financial commitment to activities within the Parish. The marquee is a major asset which will enable medium and large groups

Eldersfield Parish Council

to meet together and our Fundraising Group will be planning events – on at least an annual basis – to bring the community together.

Once again, many thanks for your ongoing support of our work on behalf of our local community.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Holt

A.W.Holt.

Deputy Churchwarden.

TREE PLANTING WORKING GROUP REPORT

We have now had two meetings in respect of the above and have summarised our main points in preparation for discussion at the next council meeting on the 9th November.

- □ Working party set up to look into possibility of Eldersfield Parish participating in the Green Canopy for the Queens Jubilee in 2022.
- □ Woodland Trust taking applications now for planting in March but other sources available.
- □ Working party Currently trying to identify suitable locations for trees/hedges but must be accessible to public.
- □ Contact has been made with some landowners within the parish that have footpaths going through their land. Further contact being made.
- □ Also looking into possibility of locations on the common to replace dead trees, the parish field (next to the school) and the triangle at Bridge End.
- □ Suggestion also made to identify a suitable location to plant an oak tree with a commemorative plaque.
- □ If community based planting, discussion on possibility of a grant of £350 from council.
- □ Promotion of parishioners to plant their own trees. Guidance from Working group/council but responsibility up to individual parishioners to obtain and plant.
- □ Next step is to finalise locations for community based planting in order that grid references can be obtained at next meeting so that trees can be ordered in preparation for planting in March. Also discussion will be needed to decide on suitable trees for chosen locations.
- □ Next Working group meeting to be held on Wednesday 17th November @ 7.00pm - 4 Pool Hay Close.

I trust the above provides an outline of progress so far.

Kind regards

Wendy
Chair Working Group

LENGTHSMAN Invoice & Worksheet 2021-22

WCC official use only - Please do not write in this shaded box	
Framework Order No:	Customer & Community
Amount Payable:	Worcestershire County Council
Authorised by:	County Hall, Spetchley Road
Date:	Worcester, WR5 2NP

Parish Council: Eldersfield PC
Clerk's Name: Joseph Gabbott
Address: 12, Harbourside, Tewkesbury, GL20 5DT
Telephone: 01684 439948
Email Address: eldersfieldpc@yahoo.co.uk
Period Ending: 17th August 2021

hh:mm e.g.
07:15

Date	Task Code	Road Location	Task Description - if not covered by a Task Code (see Key)	No. of Hours: Minutes
17-09-21	A1 B1	Moorend Road	And trimmed other street furniture	01:30
17-09-21	A1 A2 B1	Lime Street	And trimmed other street furniture	01:45
17-09-21	A2 B1	Bridge End	And trimmed other street furniture	01:00
17-09-21	B1	Eldersfield Marsh	Strimmed other street furniture	01:00
17-09-21	B1	Hardwick Green	And trimmed other street furniture	00:45
17-09-21	A1 A2	Nash End	And trimmed other street furniture	00:45
17-09-21		Hillfield House	Strimmed other street furniture	00:30
17-09-21		Drinkers End	Strimmed other street furniture	00:45
<i>Continue overleaf if required - include subtotal here</i>				

Total no. of miles:		Total Hours:Minutes	8:00
Rate per Hour:	£14.75	Total Labour Cost £	118.00
Rate per Mile:		Total Mileage Cost £	0.00
			118.00

I, the undersigned, agree that this worksheet is a true and accurate record of the work undertaken and that this work has been completed to the satisfaction of the Parish/Town Council under the Terms of the Lengthsman Scheme Annual Agreement.

Clerk Signature: Date: 20/9/21

Please email this form, fully completed & signed, to: lengthsmanscheme@worcestershire.gov.uk
By 13th of the month to ensure prompt payment

KEY:

- A DRAINAGE:**
 - A1 Clear gully grates
 - A2 Clear verge grips
 - A3 Clear headwalls, outfalls
 - A4 Advise landowners and frontagers when their ditches need cleaning
 - A5 In especially difficult circumstances clear ditches – only with prior agreement of the Manager
 - B VEGETATION CLEARANCE:**
 - B1 Remove vegetation obstructing signs
 - B2 Remove vegetation at junction visibility splays
 - B3 Removal of basal tree growth from highway trees
 - B4 Pulling/ cutting of noxious weeds following site specific approval from the Manager
 - B5 Side out footways to normal width and spread arisings on verge where possible
 - B6 Negotiate with frontagers for them to cut back overhanging vegetation
 - C MISCELLANEOUS HIGHWAYS WORKS:**
 - C1 Rotation and charging of mobile Vehicular Activated Signs (VAS) following site specific approval and authorisation from the Manager
 - C2 Clean dirty signs and/or retighten brackets, reposition signs which have been knocked out of place where no excavation is required (except illuminated signs)
 - C3 Painting of heritage cast iron direction signs
 - C4 Snow clearance and gritting/ salting by hand
 - C5 Removal of illegal fly posting
 - C6 Maintenance and repainting of highways approved visibility fencing
 - C7 Cleaning of subways
 - E ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES - Refer to Section 6c. of the Agreement**
- All other works with specific approval of Manager.**

.....Continued from previous sheet				hh:mm e.g. 07:55
Date	Task Code	Road Location	Task Description - if not covered by a Task Code (see Key)	No. of Hours Minutes
18-08-21	B1	Frogsmarsh	And strimmed other street furniture	00:45
Add the total of this page to the total on the 1st page:				0:45