

Malvern Wells Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Environment Committee** duly convened and held in The Committee Room of Malvern Wells Village Hall- commencing at 7.30 pm on **Thursday, 9th January, 2014**

Present: P Clement (Chairman), Cllr P Buchanan, Cllr S Atwell

In Attendance: David Taverner (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)
Steve Maund (Parish Lengthsman)
Cllr Mrs H Burrage (Parish Council Chairman)

Apologies for absence: Marilyn Millen, N Nimmo Smith, Michael Jupe, Tom and Ros Hayes, Pam Stanier and Richard Winterton

1 Appointment of a Chairman for the Meeting & Welcome

It was agreed that Peter Clement should Chair the meeting.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on **10th October, 2013**, having been previously circulated, were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

Replacement gate catches had now been fitted to the gate at the end of footpath **533** and the gate at the junction of footpath **553 and 536** has been removed.

The large fallen tree on Bridleway **511** had now been cleared but two metal supports were protruding from the fence at one point on to the path which could cause injury to users of the bridleway. Steve Maund was asked to see if it was possible to undertake the necessary repairs

A missing gate catch on footpath **502** had now been replaced

4 Report of the Parish Warden

Peter C drew attention to landowners' responsibilities for the maintenance of structures such as gates and stiles in the boundaries that cross public rights of way. At specific locations where the County Council wanted to improve access, for example by replacing a stile with a pedestrian gate, they had previously supplied the necessary materials and undertaken related work.

Where a stile had become irreparable the preference would be for them to be replaced by a gate. Cuts in the County Council budgets had meant that this particular service will be radically curtailed, and landowners were now required to carry out the installation themselves of stiles but gates will still be supplied and installed by the WCC Countryside Services in the current financial year.

This led on to a wide discussion on improving the accessibility information that might be provided to all users of footpaths and bridleways across the Parish.

It was suggested that, as a starting point, it might be practicable for each Parish Path Warden (PPW) to note the number of stiles, gates, bridges, steps and handrails on each

of the paths for which they were responsible. Once this had been done it might be possible to investigate the opportunity for adding geotags to the footpaths database - with the objective of making accessibility information easily searchable by users of the various rights of way.

Peter C agreed to set up an initial pro forma which would be circulated to each PPW so that the initial data could be collected

Peter also passed on the contact details for the new owner of Summer Hill Farm who had shown interest in maintaining the stiles on their land which contains **525**.

**5 To Review Public Rights of Way in the 'Care of Each Member'
Assistant Parish Path wardens reports were submitted as follows:-**

Michael Jupe had reported that overgrowth on bridleways **550** and **551** meant that the minimum width and height clearance was not being met in certain places. Steve Maund was asked to see if any further clearance work could be undertaken.

Peter Clement reported that a brook has burst its bank and was flooding the field by the junction of paths **525/526**. On footpath **526** the large tree that had fallen into the brook from the Local Nature Reserve is still to be cleared by the County Council.

Peter Buchanan had reported that a large tree had blocked footpath **531** at its southern end. This had now been cleared by Steve Maund

Norman Nimmo Smith advised that waymarker disc from footpath **535** has been removed which he would replace.

6 Date of the next meeting

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Thursday 10th April, 2014

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8 20 pm.

Chairman -----
Dated 10th April, 2014