

Malvern Wells Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on 24th February 2021 at 7:00pm via Zoom

RESIDENTS COMMENTS – One of the residents had a number of detailed questions regarding the Neighbourhood Development Plan, planning and the AONB and was asked to submit these to the Clerk for proper consideration.

Present

Cllrs. B Knibb, C O'Donnell (Chair), C Gates, T O' Donnell, J Black, P Stanier, G Turrell, D Preece
Cllrs K Wagstaff, M Dyde

In Attendance

Mrs S Hart (Clerk), 3 members of the public

1. Apologies were received and accepted for the following Councillors:

H Burrage, J Baker, County Councillor Lucy Hodgson

2. Declarations of Interest

- a) Register of Interests: there were none.
- b) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: there were none.
- c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature: there were none.
- d) Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation: there were none.

3. Minutes

To consider for adoption the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on:

These were amended for accuracy and will be signed by the chairman at a later date convenient to the Chair and Clerk whilst observing social distancing guidelines.

4. Progress reports and other matters arising from these minutes:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Jubilee garden sign to be erected.</i>	<i>Being arranged by Cllr Burrage. Written quote has been received, we're just waiting clarification on whether the quote includes fixing as well as manufacture.</i>
<i>Updating signatories on the Natwest bank account</i>	<i>This is now complete. The next stage will be to change the address.</i>
<i>Updating signatories on the HSBC account</i>	<i>This will be sent to the bank after Cllr O'Donnell signs the Nov minutes - which are due for approval at the Jan 2021 meeting. These were approved and the Clerk will arrange signing along with the Planning minutes.</i>

The progress reports were **noted**.

5. Daniel Booker was co-opted to the Council.

6. The Gas Lamps Working Group update was **noted**. (See Annex A)

7. Council considered the following recommendations from the Gas Lamps Working Group to:

1. To source quotes for glazing - **approved**
2. To source quotes for repainting - **approved**
3. To Cost (and seek alternative sources of funding) for refurbishing and re-siting 3 disused lamp posts - **approved**

8. Public Rights of Way Working Group update was **noted**. (See Annex B)

9. Financial Matters

a) The payment of accounts was **approved**

PAID DEBIT CARD	03/02/2021	HMRC	PAYE and NI	1,678.90
DD	28/12/2020	BT Wi Fi	BT WIFI Dec	15.00
DD	23/01/2021	NEST	Pension Dec	79.04
BANK TRANSFER	08/02/2021	EON	Cemetery electricity	27.53
PAID DEBIT CARD	09/02/2021	Defib UK	Replacement charging sticks	253.12
BANK TRANSFER	22/10/2020	David Taverner	Final clerks phone bill for Jul/Aug	7.22
DD	11/02/2021	Lloyds Bank	Bank charges Jan/Feb	7.00
DD	28/01/2021	BT Wi Fi	BT WIFI Jan	15.00
BANK TRANSFER	08/01/2021	Brookside Fire	Extinguisher service	47.80
PAID DEBIT CARD	23/02/2021	Hedges Direct Ltd	Hedging for cemetery	71.85
BANK TRANSFER	23/02/2021	M Thomas	Outdoor work Feb	218.79
BANK TRANSFER	22/02/2021	M Alexander	Cemetery management Feb	354.25
BANK TRANSFER	21/02/2021	S Maund	Outdoor work Feb	995.84
BANK TRANSFER	16/02/2021	S Maund	Bird boxes and roses for cemetery	126.95
BANK TRANSFER	24/02/2021	S Hart	Clerk salary Feb21	1,171.33

b) The internal auditor for the end of year internal audit was **approved** as Iain Selkirk.**10. Planning****To consider the following applications:**

21/00065/HP	Construction of a wooden platform in the fork of an old Oak tree.	15 St Wulstans Drive, Malvern, WR14 4JA	Decision postponed to the next planning meeting.
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20/01892/CU	Change in design of proposed building Erection of holiday log cabin to support agricultural holding with riding stables	Hillview Stud, Blackmore Park Road, Welland, Malvern, WR13 6NN	This is outside the boundary of Malvern Wells Parish Council. Council noted the application but had no other comment to make. Council resolved to make no comment on the application revisions.
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11. The District Councillor report was noted. (See Annex C)**12. Any other matters to report or for future consideration.**

A member of the public has raised concerns regarding the installation of LED street lighting. The Clerk was asked to consult WCC and the AONB to establish whether there are any regulations regarding the type of posts used to replace old ones in the AONB.

13. Date of the next meeting is 31st March 2021.

There being no further business the meeting finished at 8:03

Annex A

MALVERN WELLS PARISH COUNCIL

**Gas Lamps Working Group
9 February 2021
Zoom @ 5.00pm**

Notes of meeting and basis for report to next Council meeting (24/02/21)

Present: Jim Black, Helen Burrage, Simon Freeman (Chair) and Geoff Turrell

Clerk: Sarah Hart

1. Survey of gas lamps

Members to conduct survey and monitor functioning of all gas lamps prior to Council being asked to approve repairs and repainting.

2. Repair glazing

Broken glass needs to be replaced with laminated glass with suitably bevelled edges to fit lanterns. Full specification to be prepared. In addition to Sight Designs estimate of 27/05/20, Members to source 2 further contractors to give estimates/quotations to fit and supply. Possible contractors:

Mark Johnson Glass & Windows

<http://www.malvernwindowsanddoors.co.uk/>

Fusion Glass

<http://windowssuppliersworcester.co.uk/>

Malvern Glass

<https://www.malvernglass.co.uk/>

AMB Glass & Malvern Windows

<http://www.amb-glass.co.uk/>

3. Repainting columns

Lamp posts need to be repainted. Full specification to be prepared. In addition to Sight Designs estimate of 27/05/20, Members to source 2 further contractors to give estimates/quotations. Possible contractors:

Caroline Ellis
01684 562066/07980 657943

MH Painting & Decorating
<http://www.mhpainting.co.uk/>
07807 464233

4. Re-tendering contract

Current Maintenance Agreement (MA) with Sight Designs Ltd (SD) expires September 2021. Over the term of the Agreement, the Parish Council has been invoiced:

13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
4679.6	4944.2	6441.5	6515.69	6985.92	7562	5212.9	4410.9

These figures do not include the cost of gas.

Issues to be considered:

Does the current provider have sufficient resources to discharge a new maintenance agreement in an effective manner? Little monitoring of past performance has been carried out other than anecdotal reports of whether lamps are working or not. Some level of dissatisfaction expressed from time to time by residents. Do the current terms properly reflect the level of service that the PC would wish to contract for?

S D created and developed the current control units as described in the M A (Schedule 4). They are considered innovative and, subject to questions of reliability, fit for purpose. SD are likely to have IP rights in relation to the design which could raise difficulties if there were any attempt to reproduce/copy by a third party.

What alternatives to renewing the M A with S D are open to the PC?

- A complete break with SD and contracting with a 3rd party could be problematic in terms of procuring spares for any elements within the lanterns designed by SD. In any event would this be desirable in terms of access to S D for future developments of control units and other equipment as well as local reaction/reputational considerations.
- Is a middle ground open to the PC to negotiate a new maintenance agreement on a different basis with SD whereby they subcontract the routine maintenance to a “preferred sub-contractor” basis subject to suitable training which, coupled with revised maintenance obligations/more rigorous performance monitoring by the PC, could provide a more reliable

standard of maintenance? J B to make initial enquiries with S D about the feasibility of this course as soon as Covid 19 restrictions permit.

5. Replacement of missing columns (reduced scheme)

Three existing disused lamp posts (no. 27, "Seatstone" Upper Welland Road and "H of G S" Chase Road) to be uplifted, refurbished and re-sited at points of maximum need along Wells Road. 1 lantern immediately available, 2 to be acquired. Revised costs to be obtained. Sources of funding (other than National Lottery Community Fund formerly Big Lottery Fund) to be investigated with possible assistance from Malvern Hills AONB (David Armitage). Consideration to be given, subject to cost and funding, on a staggered programme of replacement.

Annex B

Minutes of the Malvern Wells Parish Council PROW Working Group held via Zoom at 7.30pm Wednesday January 20th 2021

In attendance: Norman Nimmo-Smith (Parish Paths Warden), Cllr Pam Stanier, Richard Winterton

1 Apologies: Peter Clement, Not able to attend: Steve Atwell

Richard Winterton chaired the meeting

2. The minutes of the previous meeting were amended to spell Peter Clement's name correctly and then agreed. There were no matters arising.

The group wanted to record its appreciation of the work Jackie Smethurst had done for the group during her time here and wished her well for her future life in France.

3. Her departure had created a vacancy on the group and Cllr Stanier had approached John Stiggers of Wells Road who has agreed to take over Jackie's paths. We welcome him to the group and hope to meet him at a future meeting

4. Report of the Parish Paths Warden – Norman Nimmo-Smith

The paths continue to be busier than previous years owing to the number of people using them for their daily exercise during the ongoing pandemic. Now that it's winter, many of the paths have become very muddy as a result of their popularity.

In mid-September, a member of the public reported a damaged stile on footpath MW-532 at its junction with Hanley Road. The lower step had become rotten and was replaced in early November. Also in November, a new handrail post was installed at the ditch-crossing on MW-518 to replace the previous one that had become rotten. The handrail no longer wobbles dangerously.

Boggy conditions still persist along a short section of bridleway MW-511 as a result of surface water flowing across the pathway. The WCC Countryside Service have now referred this problem to the Land Drainage Partnership. The local authority has legal powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 to undertake enforcement action against the landowner where appropriate. Flooding on footpath MW517 from an adjacent stream has also been referred to the Land Drainage Partnership.

A flight of steps on MW-555 at its junction with Holywell Road had become covered in compacted soil and other vegetation, making the steps very unsafe. They were cleared of all debris in December, and thick

vegetation encroaching along the full length of this narrow footpath was cut back.

Despite many attempts over the years to re-set the waymark post at the junction of bridleways MW543 and MW-544 on Brickbarns Farm, it has now become quite rotten and needs to be replaced. The post is sited in an awkward location close to a gate where livestock and farm machinery repeatedly knock it over. It will have to be re-located to a more suitable position close-by to prevent future problems of damage.

A branch that had fallen across footpath MW-531 in December has now been removed.

Whilst cutting back brambles and nettles on footpath MW-533 in December, the landowner at Chestnut Hill, Green Lane (Mrs Copland) shouted at me repeatedly to stop what I was doing and move on. I tried to explain that I was the parish path warden, but to no avail. This unfortunate incident was reported to both the parish clerk (Sarah Hart) and the WCC Countryside Service. From now on we will have to rely solely on the landowner to maintain this section of the footpath and keep it clear of vegetation.

Two wooden fences, each with a stile step, on footpath MW-546 were wilfully damaged by person(s) unknown at the end of December. The fences were installed over 25 years ago to prevent motorcyclists, cyclists and horse-riders from using this narrow footpath. There was a gap in each fence that allowed walkers to pass through with ease. The remains of the fences and stiles have been temporarily placed out of harm's way and will be removed when lockdown restrictions are relaxed sufficiently. The incident has been reported to the WCC Countryside Service.

Two cyclists were reported using the footpath on 16th January, which they are not allowed to do; such use on this narrow footpath poses a safety risk to walkers.

5. Reports from assistant wardens:

Peter Clement:

523b OK but muddy

524b OK passable but waterlogged and muddy in places

525f OK.

526f Requires vegetation cleared and the silted stream bed dug out as previous reports.

Gate post to stile support has rotted at ground level making stile unsteady. Repair of gate post required. Reported in October 20.

Hammered in some pegs to stiffen post but still not firm

527f crop of Maize now removed but stubble makes path difficult to walk. Passable with care.

528b Waterlogged and muddy for full length

529b OK

554f OK slightly muddy

Pam Stanier and Richard Winterton:

We have walked all our footpaths in the last month and apart from wetness where there is usually overflowing water along 517 and 666 and quite long grass on 502, everything is in good form and passable. Richard cut back some brambles on 555. The new handrail on the bridge at the end of 518 is magnificent! It's clear the paths are being used more, we meet more people when we're out.

In the heavy rain earlier over the winter a lot of loose stones etc were washed down 501 onto Hanley Terrace itself but given there is a handrail the path is still useable if a bit uneven.

We think there is a need for a new direction sign on 531 where it goes away from 530 and we'll do that when we can.

AOB

A) 502 needs a waymark on the upward path and Pam and Richard will do that. The golf course hedge also needs cutting back to allow the gate to open easily

B) It will be useful to recruit more assistant footpath wardens, so Cllr Stanier will write a short piece for the next Wells News to see if more parishioners who use the paths will take a turn in maintaining them

The meeting finished at 8.25 pm

Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 21st April

Annex C

District Councillor Report – Feb 2021

The main points to note since my last update:-

MHDC precept on council tax is going up by £5 p.a. As parish councillors will appreciate, it is important to apply reasonable increases every year otherwise the effects of inflation can quickly erode a council's finances.

The Three Counties Showground was supposed to have become a vaccination station a few weeks ago. However GP surgeries were able to administer the quantity of vaccines that have been made available locally, so there was no need to open it. There is still talk of opening it on 1st March.

The 2021 census is coming. A number of temporary jobs are being available locally, see : <https://www.censusjobs.co.uk/>

Local authority elections are due to go ahead later this year. There had been doubts originally whether this was possible/desirable given the restrictions on personal movement and social interaction (which would affect campaigning). So door-to-door canvassing and leafleting has been frowned upon. Some smaller political groups see this as giving an unfair advantage to the larger (established parties) who can draw on funding to pay for postal distribution.

The council are trying to help save the local college from closure and our local MP (Harriet Baldwin) has been recruited to the cause. There is a covenant on the building requiring its use for educational reasons. A task force made up of several organisations is currently looking at options.

The county is a few traveller pitches short of the target set by government. There is to be a consultation on possible sites. At the time of writing, no sites have been suggested for the parish. Malvern Hills District needs to provide 19 Traveller pitches and 8 Travelling Showpeople plots. A motion was passed to look into sites including one near Upton-Upon-Severn (Hillbee farm). This does not mean that the site has been chosen, merely that it will be considered as a possibility. There is a fair amount of opposition locally to that site and it has a history of being rejected.

The Malvern Adopt a Street volunteer litter picking scheme has been recognised by Keep Britain Tidy after winning their Litter Campaign of the Year award. The scheme encourages residents to take responsibility

for litter picking small areas of land and in return they receive free litter picking kit and support from MHDC. The scheme has signed up more than 300 people.

After a delay, Age UK are trying to get their "Good Neighbour" scheme off the ground again by recruiting local volunteers. The concept is to provide telephone support to the parish so that if a parishioner is in need of help there is someone there for them to talk to. The person at the end of the line may just have a chat, may direct the caller to another source, or may contact other sources on the callers behalf. It could be that a team of local volunteers are available to offer practical help (e.g. shopping), although this is not necessary. It's a case of "someone being there" in time of need.

If any of the parish councillors are interested in co-ordinating this initiative there is a Zoom meeting on Thursday 25th Feb at 13:30 (Meeting ID: 864 4990 1195, Passcode: 345242) that they could join in and listen to.

Other council business continues to tick along.

DRAFT

Malvern Hills Trust Report

Most of the trustees time has continued to be eaten up discussing the internal workings of the Trust with regards to its operation and modernisation. I look forward to a time when we can get back to normal and volunteers can re-engage and provide their invaluable help to conserve the natural environment.

A fair amount of tree safety work has been undertaken over the last few weeks. This is a costly exercise for the Trust because they have to bring in external contractors and we will be looking at how we can control costs going forward. Some of you may have been aware of the work at British Camp car park recently.

DRAFT