

# EGERTON PARISH COUNCIL

**The monthly meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 2 November 2010  
in the Millennium Village Hall, Egerton at 8.00pm.**

**Present:** Tim Lee (Chairman), Richard King (Vice-Chairman), Viv Foulds, Roger Harper, Richard Hopkins, Pat Parr, Wendy Payne, Alison Richey and Bill Smyth. Lois Tilden (Clerk) and 6 members of the public were also present.

**1. Apologies:** Hugh Ellison (ABC Ward Councillor)

**2. Declarations of interest:** Tim Lee, Pat Parr (planning items)

**3. The minutes of the meeting on 5 October 2010:** The Clerk had received a call from Mr Northcroft just before the meeting to say he did not believe that the minutes recorded accurately what was said at the meeting under Item 4a and he had suggested alternative words for the last paragraph. Those points were put to Councillors, who considered them but concluded unanimously that the minutes were a true and accurate record of what was discussed and agreed. Tim Oliver (member of the public) later confirmed his view under Item 10 that he had witnessed the previous meeting and that the record was a correct reflection of what was said. The minutes were therefore approved and signed as a true record of proceedings. **Proposed: Bill Smyth; seconded: Alison Richey**

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES 5 October 2010**

##### **a. Recreation ground:**

**Lower rec:** The Clerk had written to David Northcroft of Rockhill House to set out in detail the way in which he should manage the improvement and reinstatement of the lower rec as discussed in the previous meeting. He had arranged for a soil test, the results of which showed there was a lack of magnesium in both the silt and the existing soil; the Ph value of the soil was very low and the pond silt high, so the pond silt would marginally improve the Ph level overall. The phosphorous content of the existing soil and the pond silt was low; the potassium level in each was normal. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Ben Hope for his views on the best way to improve the low chemical levels after the ground had been ploughed and re-tested. The Clerk had made a donation of £25 to the Sports Pavilion fund via John Fraser in respect of the old field gate she now possessed. She had also placed "No access" signs on the new gate and the side gate to ensure public safety. It was agreed that the broken down fencing should be repaired/replaced before the land was ready for sheep grazing again next the summer; Richard and Andrew Hopkins had been unable to fit in the work as originally planned. It was agreed that Viv Foulds would contact Roger James and seek a quote, including a stile. The Clerk said that Ben Hope was due to receive an invoice for his contractor's weedkilling and it was approx £380 – higher than the estimate of £220 because of the difficult terrain, taking 10 hours' work and copious amounts of chemicals. It was agreed that the Parish Council should settle the whole account. **Action: Viv Foulds, Clerk**

**Trees:** The recreation ground & trees sub-Committee (Bill Smyth, Viv Folds, Tree Warden Michael Steed and the Clerk) had met to discuss the number and types of memorial trees that could still be planted in the lower rec. They concluded that over the next 10 years or so there was just scope for 2 or 3 more memorial trees a year, to be granted to people meeting strict criteria - in memory of Egerton residents who had lived here over 20 years; one tree per family unit - a plaque could be added to commemorate additional family members; Michael would speak to Kath Hilder and agree a list of about 10 suitable small species of tree, allowing for colour, height, spread, native or not; and that the information on all aspects of memorial trees in the lower rec and the plan of trees should be placed on the EPC website for the public to access. Michael also pointed out that he knew there was still some scope for memorial trees in the Churchyard. He had kindly offered to inspect the lower rec trees twice a year and carry out basic pruning where needed and was happy to extend this survey to all trees in the recreation ground as a whole. The Committee's conclusions, and Michael's offer, were accepted. Jeremy Ault had carried out the finer trimming of the fir trees and would carry out other outstanding tree pruning on the boundary with Old School Court. **Action Clerk, Michael Steed**

**Football field and other rec areas:** The Clerk would ask Heber to continue to mow & strim in line with the exceptional growing conditions. Councillors had inspected the recreation ground and concluded there was no need for weedkilling.

**Action: Clerk**

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**Drainage on the Recreation ground leading to the cricket field:** Richard H was still due to submit an invoice for the drainage work he had carried out. **Action: Richard Hopkins**

**Playground, Skatepark, Youth needs:** Councillors had still not been able to pinpoint the number of youths in the village, let alone gauge the interest in something like a shelter. Richard King repeated views expressed before about the need for youths to have ownership of anything set up. After more discussion it was reluctantly concluded that unless any youths came forward and requested something specific the idea would be shelved. The existing playground equipment was being re-painted by Bill Smyth and Stuart Pearson of the Cricket Cub was making a picnic bench. **Action: Bill Smyth**

**Dog fouling:** The Clerk had put up another sign as a reminder to dog owners about managing their dogs and had again spoken to the ABC Dog wardens about dogs continuing to run loose and had made undercover visits to catch the culprits. This had not so far achieved anything – dog owners were still acting irresponsibly and blatantly disregarding the warning signs. The Clerk was asked to contact the Dog Warden again and she suggested that car registration numbers of irresponsible dog owners should be taken by witnesses and passed to the Clerk. **Action: Clerk**

**Benches in need of painting:** Anthony Hicks had produced great results in refurbishing the benches. His invoice would be submitted when the work was complete. **Action: Bill Smyth, Clerk**

**Sports pavilion:** The timetable was still on track. Grant applications were still outstanding to provide funds - and donations had been received - for fit-out. **Action: Bill Smyth, Richard Hopkins, Richard King**

**b. Traffic calming/disabled people's bays in the car park:** The sign to the car park was yet to be straightened.

**Action: Bill Smyth**

**c. the Glebe and other land matters:** The grass would be inspected again over the next few months before a decision would be taken to re-engage Green Thumb for more treatment. Investigation on land titles for Pemples Cross and Stonebridge Green would be fitted in when time permitted. **Action: Bill Smyth, Clerk**

**d. Highways:** The Clerk had attended a KHS seminar and reported back the key points: KHS' new tender for highways work was underway – the Clerk had submitted EPC views on what could be included; KHS budget reduction 20% over next 4 years; worst winter for 30 years: winter damage worse in South East – clay and chalk subsoil breaks up easily under the road surface as a result of water and ice action, whereas it is stable rock in Scotland; 2,500 roads repaired, 150,000 potholes fixed; winter service review- there will be 66 lorries for salting plus smaller vehicles for narrow roads; Egerton is in the pilot project for 1 ton salt bags, details of which are to be clarified but Elm Close did not merit a slat bin under KHS criteria; the Government have issued a new Snow Code based on common sense; details of farmers' contracts for snow clearance and scope for parishes to engage them on behalf of KHS will be clarified; John Burr (KHS Director) will speak at the KALC AGM 13 November.

More potholes had now been filled in large tracts along Stonebridge Green Road but there were still some potholes in Field Mill Road and ruts in the passing places. The Clerk was asked to add those points to KHS' list for action. Hedges had been cut at KHS' request along field Mill Lane but hedging along New Road was in need of cutting back. Richard Hopkins would confirm details of the land owner and report to the Clerk for any follow up. The Clerk passed a letter to Richard King to follow-up John Burr's response more specifically about establishing HGV restrictions from the A20.

**Action: Clerk, Richard Hopkins, Pat Parr**

**e. Winter gritting and snow clearance:** The Winter sub-Committee (Richard Hopkins, Pat Parr, Alison Richey) had met to determine EPC's duties and devise a strategy for EPC to manage its own land in time for ice & snow. The Government's Snow Policy would be taken into account & copied to all. **Action: Richard Hopkins, Pat Parr, Alison Richey, Clerk**

**f. Traffic Management forum:** In place of Alison Richey, Bill Smyth offered to attend the next meeting on 18 November at Singleton Environment Centre. **Action: Bill Smyth, Alison Richey**

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**g. Bus route 523/new route to Headcorn:** Richard King's enquiry about a minor change to connect with the No 12 bus to Tenterden was awaited. **Action: Richard King**

**h. Noise from M20:** It was agreed that in the current economic climate there was no expectation that this matter would be addressed and it would be removed from the matters to be pursued.

**i. Housing: i. Local Needs:** ERH was expected to invite new tenants and councillors to visit the premises soon. Residents in Forstal Villas opposite the site had asked the Clerk if ERH would ensure their damaged parking bays and grass verges would be reinstated once the work was complete. It was agreed the Clerk should seek this. **Action: Clerk**

**ii. Older people's accommodation in a "cluster" settlement to serve several villages:** There was no news to report. **Action: Pat Parr, Tim Lee**

**iii. Older people's accommodation in Egerton:** Richard King believed he had found a potential exception site and had engaged support of Mary Silverton at KCC to sustain the KCC policy of helping elderly people stay in individual sheltered accommodation in their own communities rather than in residential homes elsewhere. **Action: Richard King**

**iv. Sanctuary Housing: Charges to Harmer's Way residents:** Councillors had visited Harmer's Way tenants and had given the Clerk an assortment of complaints about faults. The Clerk had written a stern, detailed letter to Sanctuary Housing, copying it to ABC, with a list of all their concerns and had asked for a meeting with SH's manager and surveyor. She had also written to the residents to tell them the aim. Richard Hopkins reported that the surveyor in question had visited his daughter's house following the flooding incident referred to in the Clerk's letter, and the surveyor (George Allen) had already offered to attend a meeting and investigate all complaints. The Clerk suggested that a response first from SH HQ was more appropriate since the surveyor might not have authority or budget to proceed alone and this could raise expectations or confuse the plot. However it was agreed that Richard Hopkins would pass on the surveyor's telephone number to other councillors so that they could arrange a meeting with the surveyor, irrespective of the formal request to SH. **Action: Richard Hopkins, Roger Harper, Wendy Payne, Alison Richey, Tim Lee, Clerk**

**j. Red Telephone Kiosk at Stonebridge Green – EPC adoption:** Steve Parr had completed painting the phone box, with splendid results. The Clerk had written to thank him when sending him the cheque for materials he purchased. Tim Lee had contacted those interested in forming a preservation group, to seek volunteers for cleaning, ideas for its use and contributions towards materials. They were due to meet on 15 November. **Action: Tim Lee**

**k. EPC's role/ publicity/Newsletter/ Welcome Pack/ Parish Assembly on Wednesday 19 May /website:** The Clerk was still trying to find out which household still had the paper version of the minutes of the Parish Assembly for amendment so she could issue a revised version. Pat Parr was to deliver the Welcome Pack to new residents at The Laurels and had given one to new tenants at Weeks farm cottage. **Action: Alison Richey, Hugh Ellison, Pat Parr, Clerk**

**l. Risk management/Clerk's successor:** The Clerk had updated the memory sticks, one being retained by Alison Richey. The Clerk had had issued councillors with a draft (more full) job specification and advert for the Clerk's post, with an appointment target date of 1 April, to allow overlap at a critical and demanding time of the year until her departure on 31 May. It was agreed that the advert should be published in early January. The Clerk asked for comments on the drafts. **Action: All**

**m. Footpaths and stiles:** Pat Parr provided a monthly written report. The overgrown vegetation along the Stour Valley Walk from Tram Hatch right along towards Field Mill had been inspected by KCC and it appeared there were some discrepancies in the line of the footpath at Tram Hatch, plus a missing bridge. KCC will investigate and Pat will report back. Viv Foulds asked if KCC could replace the marker posts on the 2 footpaths across Canon Houston's orchard off Stonebridge Green Road; Pat agreed to take this forward. **Action: Pat Parr**

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**n. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator & Police matters:** Lois Tilden said that there had been a theft of lead from the Church roof during the previous week. No-one had spotted anything suspicious. She had spoken to Church Warden John Lumley and the Police about ways of preventing this kind of theft: apart from the public being more vigilant she suggested a sign be placed on the gates stating there was no official work going on there – if anyone was seen acting suspiciously the matter should be reported to the Police. If a crime appeared to be in progress, 999; otherwise, 01622 690 690. More reports had arrived from the internet about scams; members of the public should be on their guard.

**o. Local Authority consortium:** Richard King's proposal for a group of, say, six local parishes, plus the relevant local Borough Councillors and the local KCC Member was going ahead with its first meeting on 6 December at Smarden. They would discuss common concerns and try to reach conclusions on workable solutions across the three tiers of local government. Tim Lee appeared not to have received an invitation, so Richard King undertook to get one to him.

**Action: Richard King**

**p. Survey of trees worthy of TPOs:** The Clerk was awaiting a response from ABC's Trees officer following her and Michael Steed's survey of trees outside the Conservation Area, with a view to establishing more TPOs. ABC would be consultation with the owners on whose land the trees were situated if they wish to go ahead with more TPOs. This would be chased up.

**Action: Clerk**

**q. Agricultural buildings on land east of orchard nurseries, Stonebridge Green road:** There had been some confused messages going around the village about how this matter now stood. The Clerk had spoken to Hugh Ellison and the case planning officer at ABC a few hours before the meeting. She had established that although ABC had advised the people who had complained that ABC had made an error in that the road was C classified after all (which then called into question the validity of ABC's decision that planning permission was not required) ABC had not notified the landowner. Hugh Ellison and the Clerk had therefore ensured that the landowner was updated with the same information as the complainants. It was not the case that ABC had advised the landowner to halt the development nor that enforcement action would be taken. ABC's legal advice was awaited and was expected by the end of the week; this would then form the basis of next steps, which could include the landowner being asked to make a full planning permission application. There was no role for EPC at this stage other than to keep abreast of the facts.

**Action: ABC**

**r. Village sign** Refurbishment or replacement of the sign was still under consideration.

**Action: All**

**s. George Inn:** Bill Smyth said that the new landlord was seeking views of locals about new signage and motif for the pub. It was thought that the pub had been named after King George III.

**t. Village marquees:** Alison Richey reported that, as custodian of these, she had now purchased a new marquee 6x4m. Its first use would be the following Saturday by the school – if EPC agreed that it could be placed on the recreation ground. This was agreed and Alison would tell the School to go ahead.

**Action: Alison Richey**

### **5. CORRESPONDENCE (emailed or circulated to all Councillors or both unless otherwise stated)**

#### **For action:**

KCC Medium Term Plan to 2014/15 consultation draft comments by 16 Dec

ABC Single grants Gateway guidance – deadline for expressions of interest was 25 Oct -none

ABC Countryside project – any interest? no

KALC AGM Sat 13 November at Ditton – any takers? –Richard King only

CPRE AGM Friday 19 Nov 2pm Lenham –any takers? no

Ambulance Service public governor election process – any interest? no

Kent Free trees Scheme – any interest eg to fill in gaps in hedging? No, deadline passed now

Mr & Mrs Gomez- request for a marquee on rec 7 May 2011 –yes, agreed

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**For noting:**

- KCC Second Rail summit 21 October – summary of outcome
- KCC Summary of bus route changes (523 not altered yet)
- ABC Forward Plan of key decisions
- ABC Community Safety partnership report considered 26 Oct
- KALC Ashford Area Committee minutes 6 Oct – to Viv Foulds
- ACRK Parish Plans Newsletter & publicity
- NALC Events Bulletin
- Kent Link update
- CPRE Update
- English Rural Housing assoc Annual report 2010
- Clerks & Councils direct
- Society of Local Council Clerks publicity
- Maidstone YMCA sports & community centre opening soon
- Dorman – publicity for road signage, speed signs etc
- Kompan, Wicksteed Play ideas
- Porchlight – posters about homelessness and research – for noticeboards
- Business week exhibition 10 November – for noticeboards

**6. ACCOUNTS**

***a. Monthly Accounts @ 2 November 2010***

£

**Income:**

**50% Precept and concurrent grant from ABC**

**6911.07**

VAT reclaim

28.93 (to transfer to Telecottage account)

**Expenditure:**

Steve Parr paint & glass for red phone box

141.91

Jeremy Ault fir tree reshaping

280.00

Lois Tilden Clerk sal end Oct

491.78

HMRC Tax & NI end end Oct

165.68

**Approval of the accounts for the month, for cheques to be signed: Proposed: Alison Richey; Seconded: Bill Smyth**

***b. Mid-Year audit and budget review and preparation for 2011/12 budget and precept***

The Clerk produced the cashbook reconciliation with the bank account for councillors’ inspection and had submitted the mid-year accounts to EPC’s internal auditor, Colin Newnham, for scrutiny. He had confirmed in writing that the accounts were in good order. The position for EPC, Telecottage and Games Barn was:

	<b>Balance</b>	Income	Expenditure	<b>Balance</b>	Bank	Uncleared	<b>Reconciled</b>
	<b>31/03/2010</b>			<b>30/09/2010</b>	Statement	Items	
Parish Council	<b>16947.19</b>	18788.2	13721.46	<b>22013.93</b>	23732.78	1718.85	<b>22013.93</b>
Games Barn	<b>8218.85</b>	1057.42	345.97	<b>8930.3</b>	8834.37	-95.93	<b>8930.3</b>
Telecottage	<b>10741.73</b>	1237.43	1224.91	<b>10754.25</b>	10754.25	0	<b>10754.25</b>
total	<b>35907.77</b>	21083.05	15292.34	<b>41698.48</b>	43321.4	1622.92	<b>41698.48</b>

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The Finance sub-committee had met on 26 October and reached preliminary views on the budget and precept for next year; it would meet again to fine-tune the figures and present recommendations to EPC at the meeting in December, in time for the precept request to ABC in early January. All Councillors had been given the earlier data and were invited to give some thought to expenditure this year against the budget and what should be in the budget for next year, to aid the deliberations of the Finance Committee. The only observations were to cover the cost of more repairs to the access to the car park from Elm Close and to keep an eye on the position with the concurrent functions grant from ABC.

**At 9.30pm the Chairman closed the meeting for:**

**7. PUBLIC DISCUSSION:** Tim Oliver commented positively on the **minutes of the last meeting** (see item 4) and said that EPC should take full responsibility for the **fencing** on the lower rec as it had been in a bad state for several years before Ben Hope's lease for grazing. He added that EPC should ensure funds were set aside for this. **Action: All**

**At 9.35pm the Chairman reopened the meeting for:**

**8. PLANNING:** (Consideration of applications submitted to Ashford Borough Council and noting decisions recently taken: all details may be accessed on line at: [http://www.ashford.gov.uk/online\\_planning/](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/online_planning/))

New applications:

<a href="#">10/01311/AS</a>	<b>Unit 1, Willow Farm, Stonebridge Green Road, Egerton, TN27 9AN</b> Carpentry workshop	EPC objection on grounds of existing restrictions on development; concerns about over-development on an incremental basis and possible business use in contravention of planning legislation; recommendation that planning officers visit the site and check planning history for all Willow Farm (query about name of Unit 1)
<a href="#">09/00657/AMND/AS</a> First Submission - Non material change	<b>The Halt, Forge Lane, Egerton, TN27 9EJ:</b> Enlarge carport to the front by 1.5 metres on approved application 09/00657 - replacement chalet bungalow & car port	EPC : No Comment
<a href="#">10/01430/AS</a> Full Planning Permission	<b>Woodside Bungalow, Coach Road, Egerton, TN27 9BB</b> Pitched roof side & rear extension and improvements	EPC : No comment
<a href="#">10/00552/AS</a> Amended plans	<b>Fairview Bungalow, Egerton House Road, Egerton, TN27 9AN:</b> replacement dwelling and garage	EPC: Supported, following detailed study of proposed revisions to earlier plans and in discussion with applicants about setting the dwelling further back; design, size and height complementing scale of nearby dwellings; and sympathetic to principles in village design statement

**Decisions taken by ABC: Permitted:**

<a href="#">10/01090/AS</a> Full Planning Permission	<b>Fairways, Rock Hill Road:</b> Entrance lobby to side elevation
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**Decision taken by KCC: Permitted:**

<a href="#">10/00975/AS</a> (ABC) & AS/10/975 (KCC) Reg 3 County Deemed Permission	<b>Egerton CP School, Stisted Way:</b> Replacement/extension of fencing, additional outdoor activity play areas, replacement windows to kitchen area, alterations to bin area and replacement cladding to various areas
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**Planning policy:**

The Clerk had forwarded to Councillors a new on-line arrangement set up by ABC on 1 November to enable individuals (EPC, and members of the public) to receive alerts to new planning applications in self-selected parishes, wards or postcodes. Alerts would be sent to subscribers immediately at each stage of the planning process, tailored to meet individual needs. The Clerk had already subscribed on behalf of EPC. This would speed up the process and save parishes from having to plough through long lists of applications across the whole borough.

KCC had written to parish councils to set out proposed changes to the planning application validation process (whereby the local planning authority has to decide whether it has appropriate and adequate supporting information to understand properly and decide fairly on a planning application). The Government advised planning authorities to review their validation documents and consult interested parties on any proposed changes. These are:

- Updating policy references to reflect demise of Kent & Medway Structure Plan & South East Plan
- Updating reference material with pointers to further information for applicants
- Clarification of waste development proposals
- Streamlining information requirements
- Addition of coal mining risk assessments where relevant
- Clearer guidance and examples
- A composite/generic validation checklist for use by applicants all this was on the KCC website, and comments invited by 13 December: [http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_in\\_kent/planning\\_applications/validation\\_of\\_applications.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_in_kent/planning_applications/validation_of_applications.aspx)

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Richard Hopkins said that there had been more disturbances in **Frith Wood** and in the nearby lanes, including a rave, speeding cars, “ghost hunters” and the sound of gunshots. He had not reported this to the Police but Lois Tilden (as NW co-ordinator) said that it was imperative he & neighbours did this, especially if someone was using a gun. The Police could not be expected to act if they were unaware or did not have data to reveal the extent or frequency of anti-social or criminal behaviour. **Action: Richard Hopkins**

Bill Smyth asked if there was interest in a **Christmas lunch** at individuals’ expense and if so, he would book a table at the George in the week before Christmas. It was agreed he should try to book for 22 December. **Action: Bill Smyth**

Alison Richey said that the playgroup children had done some **weeding** in the Hall patio area near the doors when they play there; but not all weeds would come up. Bill Smyth said he would remove the remaining weeds. **Action: Bill Smyth**

Alison Richey reported that the **acoustics in the Hall** were being improved on 20 December.

Viv Foulds said that **molehills** were appearing in the recreation ground. At this stage it was agreed to take no action unless this worsened.

***The meeting closed at 10.10 pm***