



Claydon with Clattercote

## CLAYDON WITH CLATTERCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 14th May 2024  
at 7:30pm in Claydon Church Room**

**Start:** 07:30pm      **End:** 21:50pm

**Council:** Cllrs Gary Denham, Mark Ames & Rebecca Meyrick

<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>		
NA		Complete	All Cllrs

<b>Open discussion with Network Rail representatives regarding the safety of the Claydon Crossing</b>			
<p>Four members of staff from Network Rail attended the meeting, to discuss safety of the crossings at Wormleighton, Claydon and Clattercote, with particular focus on Claydon following the tragic fatality of March last year. Network Rail representatives included Mark Jones (Level crossing Manager, Banbury maintenance depot), Alex France, Anthony Bonell and Natalie Stretton.</p> <p>Discussion outcomes also to be published on the Parish website (claydon.org.uk).</p> <p>Key outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network Rail expressed sincere condolences following the fatality, particularly as a close friend of the deceased was present at the meeting.</li> <li>• Parishioners reported that the train drivers are not consistent in sounding the approach of the train as they approach the crossing, sometimes no warning is given. Mark Jones requests parishioners inform him on these occasions, <a href="mailto:Mark.jones9@networkrail.co.uk">by email on Mark.jones9@networkrail.co.uk</a> or by telephone through the National helpline (on 0345 711 4141) as he can check via a record on the train and follow this up. We should be as accurate as we can be on the time the train passes, and which direction it is travelling in.</li> <li>• The right balance needs to be found between enough signage for safety and information (e.g. in relation to contact details for reporting) at the crossing, and not diluting the essential safety instructions with too much else. Natasha and Mark agreed to think that through further.</li> <li>• A feasibility study is underway regarding introducing a new safety method using red and green lights at the crossing, to inform pedestrians when it is safe to cross. Depending on the outcome of the study this system may then be installed within the next 1-3 years, or if problems encountered 4-5 years.</li> <li>• Concerns were raised regarding the safety of the gates as children can easily push them open. It was explained there is no catch system on the gates so that a rapid exit can be made for pedestrians escaping the tracks. Several suggestions were made of alternatives, and Natasha undertook to give this further thought.</li> <li>• Regarding the Armco on the Fenny Compton Road - this has recently been repaired. When problems occur due to traffic damaging the barrier, parishioners are encouraged to report this to the National Helpline</li> <li>• Request was made that bins be placed close to the line. Network Rail stated they are unable to do this as they don't own the surrounding land.</li> <li>• If the footpath requires maintenance at the Fenny Compton Armco area, ring the National Helpline as Network Rail are responsible for this.</li> </ul>			Following that

**Community** - Support our local communities, encourage inclusion and diversity.

**Environment** - Protect and enhance our local environment.

**Governance** - Promote participation, good management, and efficiency.

To maintain and enhance the quality of life and sense of community within the Parish of Claydon & Clattercote.  
To safeguard the individual character of our village and protect its rural environment whilst supporting sustainable development that meets the needs of residents now and in the future.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For litter problems at the crossings, again report via the National Helpline.</li> </ul>		
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<b>2.</b>	<b>Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda</b>		
NA		Complete	All Cllrs

<b>3.</b>	<b>Election of Chairman</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mark Ames elected as Chair, proposed by Garry Denham, seconded by Rebecca Meyrick</li> <li>Garry Denham elected as Vice Chair, proposed by Rebecca Meyrick, seconded by Mark Ames</li> </ul>		Complete	

<b>4.</b>	<b>Parish Council Annual Business</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Adopting policy documents for 2024/2025.</b></li> </ul> <p>All policies have been agreed and adopted as fit for purpose for the year going forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Approve accounting statement for 2023/2024</b></li> </ul> <p>Approved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Approve governance statement for 2023/2024</b></li> </ul> <p>Approved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Approve certification of exemption from external audit for 2023/2024</b></li> </ul> <p>Approved</p>		Complete	All Cllrs

<b>5.</b>	<b>Public participation session</b>	
<p>These sessions have been increased in time to be used by the public to raise points for the agenda of the next meeting. These points will generally not be discussed in the current session.</p> <p><b>1) Parish Clerk update</b></p> <p>It was commented that the appointment of the clerk was not on the agenda. Agreed to add this as an item for discussion at this meeting.</p> <p><b>2) Flooding around Church Lane</b></p> <p>Update from Cllr Denham: We repeatedly report this and send photos in to Highway Maintenance (Cherwell) but frustratingly the issue remains un-progressed. Cllr Denham explained other than reporting this we have no influence or control on it being remedied.</p> <p><b>3) Milk Churns</b></p> <p>Cllr Ames clarified this refers to the request the PC are making to the developers of the Hillside Farm barns site: The Parish Council are requesting some sort of planting or seating area be installed outside the development to acknowledge the history of the site as a dairy farm.</p> <p><b>4) Questions raised regarding accounting of reserves and VAT</b></p> <p>Cllr Denham explained the rationale regarding how the accounts are laid out. This remains difficult to clarify due to the inherited system of accounting, but Cllr Denham and the Auditor have been working on improving/simplifying the method going forward.</p> <p><b>5) Nest box by sewage work trees and clearing of allotment debris</b></p> <p>Recent audit of the village Container on the Playing Fields identified 3 bat boxes that could be put to use in the area.</p> <p>The village Volunteering Group have offered support with this.</p> <p>Cllr Denham to organise working party to help clear allotments.</p> <p>Cllr Denham to put the bat boxes up on the trees in the Playing Field.</p> <p><b>6) Damage to the salt bin outside Bignolds Close</b></p> <p>The PC are aware of this and plan to empty the bin out, repair and replace the salt.</p> <p>Cllr Denham to arrange.</p> <p><b>7) Safety concern regarding lack of footpaths</b></p> <p>Safety concern was raised regarding the lack of footpaths particularly from Bignolds Close; and a suggestion of a Frail, Elderly or Disabled people sign was suggested somewhere between Bignolds Close and the Playing Field. Cllr Ames explained that Oxfordshire County Council have been asked about this but are very unlikely to provide funding for a footpath; hence this would be dependent on potential funding from the HS2 grant and the village prioritising investment in paths. PC to check regarding the status of the HS2 application. Reducing the speed limit to 20mph through the village may also impact the safety of the roads within the village.</p> <p><b>8) Dog Lane</b></p> <p>Discussion regarding the footpath status of Dog Lane. Cllr Meyrick has checked with residents bordering Dog Lane: they clarified Dog Lane has always been on their house deeds as a footpath; however, OCC state Dog Lane is not recorded on the Footpath map. It is likely the overhanging branches are the responsibility of the empty property bordering Dog Lane. Without clarity no one is taking responsibility for maintenance of the trees.</p> <p>Cllr Denham to arrange a Land Search on this area.</p>		<p>Cllr Denham</p> <p>Cllr Denham</p> <p>Cllr Denham</p> <p>Cllr Denham</p>

<b>6.</b>	<b>To approve the minutes of the Parish Council [PC] meeting held on 19th March 2024</b>	
Two amendments were identified so the minutes will be agreed and signed at the next regular meeting.		Cllr Ames

<b>7.</b>	<b>Report from the District Councillor</b>		
NA. Of note the newly appointed District Councillor is Chris Brant from the Liberal Democrat party ( <a href="mailto:chris.brant@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">chris.brant@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a> )			Cllr Ames
Cllr Ames to invite Mr Brant to the July meeting or for a written report			

<b>8.</b>	<b>Report from the County Councillor</b>		
Parish Council to confirm who the current county councillor is (since the recent elections) and ensure we invite them to future meetings.			Cllr Ames

9.	Actions from previous meetings		
a)	<b>Cherwell DC Local Plan Consultation</b> This item to be removed until response from CDC received.	To be removed	Cllr Ames & Cllr Denham
b)	<b>Lottery licence</b> Cllr Ames has clarified the legal situation regarding the need or not of a licence to hold raffles: raffles may be held, without a licence, if the funds are being reinvested in the village.	Complete	Cllr Ives
c)	<b>Flooding around the church</b> see discussion in Public Session minute	Ongoing	Cllr Denham
d)	<b>Milk Churns</b> see discussion in Public Session minute	In Progress	Cllr Ames
e)	<b>Nest Boxes by sewage work trees</b> see discussion in Public Session minute	In Progress	Cllr Denham
f)	<b>Co-option Policy</b> Cllr Ames clarified regarding the legality and policy requirements around Co-option of Councillors. Policy is very loose around procedure, however having checked with Democracy at CDC, the PC has been assured legal requirements have been met in recent Co-option’s.	In Progress	Cllr Meyrick
g)	<b>Tree Survey by Landarb Solutions</b> Frustration regarding the tardiness of response by the Surveyors. No survey yet undertaken. Acknowledged this may cause delay to village planting plans. Concern also expressed over the size of the horse chestnut on the village green which is now overcrowding adjacent trees. Suggestion regarding contracting further contractors to be pursued.	In Progress	Cllr Denham and Cllr Meyrick
h)	<b>Allotments - clearance of rubble</b> Cllr Meyrick reported back that the CDC Bulky Waste option was not going to resolve the issue. Cllr Denham to arrange bonfire and clearance of the debris over the next 2 weeks. Payment may then be needed to remove broken glass and rubble left by former tenants. Deposit scheme now in place which should hopefully mitigate against this happening in the future.	In Progress	Cllr Ames
i)	<b>Funding a local event</b> Cllr Ames clarified section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972 entitles funding a local event.		

10.	<b>Agenda</b>		
	<p><b>a) Village 'Claydon Community Group' updates</b></p> <p>i) Successful day was held for the Bee Kind event. The day was well attended and £75 donated to the charities</p> <p>ii) The picket fence around the playground has been painted but some further work needs completing. Huge thanks to all involved in that effort.</p> <p>iii) With the current Lead Coordinator of Asset Maintenance Task Force of the Village Community Group leaving the village next month it is hoped to recruit a replacement.</p> <p>Church Floristry is scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> May at 15.00 hrs - all invited to help. Further floristry on Saturday 31st June, 15.00 hrs</p> <p><b>A presentation for future planting for the village was given</b>, explaining the urgent need to raise biodiversity on the village agenda. Full presentation available on claydon.org.uk</p> <p><b>Outcomes agreed as follows:</b>  Allocated budget of £500 to be spent on bulb planting alongside the Blue Brick path in Main Street as first stage of project.</p> <p>Grant application to be made to Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment  Website development to include promotion of biodiversity agenda and to engage villagers in the project.</p> <p>Villagers to be encouraged to add their wildflower patches to the Bugslifes National B Line <a href="https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines">https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines</a>  Cllr Denham to provide a current map of CWC PC owned areas to inform the future planting strategy.</p> <p>Advice to be sought regarding tree selection for planting on the Playing Field Consultancy services to be reviewed that may inform future budgeting and plans</p>	In Progress	Cllr Denham
	<p><b>b) To consider and agree regarding purchase and planting of Quercus Coccinea (Scarlet Oak).</b></p> <p>Cllr Meyrick updated the meeting on advice from 3 tree specialists regarding purchase of the chosen tree to mark the Kings Coronation. An oak processionary moth is currently spreading through oak trees in the UK which may potentially cause problems (risk to anyone touching one of the caterpillars). PC agreed to monitor the situation, seek advice, and consider possible alternatives. No decision needed until September if the tree is to be planted in the autumn.</p>	In Progress	Cllr Meyrick
	<p><b>c) Biodiversity Policy</b></p> <p>Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan have been written and are to be reviewed and approved at the next meeting</p>	In Progress	All Cllrs
	<p><b>d) Parish Clerk Appointment progress</b></p> <p>PC has agreed Job Description for the Clerk role.</p> <p>To arrange date to meet and interview candidate in the hope of having her in post by the next meeting.</p>	Ongoing	All Cllrs

<b>11.</b>	<b>Finance</b>		
<b>a) Confirmation of the total bank balances as at 14 May 2024 of £41,362.79 and £81.49.</b>			All Cllrs
<b>b) To note and approve payments:</b>  <b>None</b>			All Cllrs
<b>c) To note the following receipts:</b>			
10-Apr-24	CDC	Precept	£4,828.50
11-Apr-24	OCC	Grass cutting grant	£538.94
09-Apr-24	Lloyds Bank	Interest	£37.17
09-May-24	Lloyds Bank	Interest	£38.49
14-May-24	M Ferdani	Allotment	£3.00
<b>a) Spend against budget &amp; reserves:</b>  <b>None</b>			All Cllrs

<b>12.</b>	<b>AOB</b>		

<b>14.</b>	<b>Agree date of next meeting</b>		
Annual Parish Meeting 30/5/24 at 7.15pm; to be preceded by a brief extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council to Coopt new Councillors 7pm.			
Playing Field Meeting Tuesday 9th July 2024, 7 pm.			
Next full Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 9th July 2024, 7.30 pm			