

EGERTON PARISH COUNCIL

**The monthly meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 5 January 2010
in the Millennium Village Hall, Egerton at 8.00pm.**

Present: Tim Lee (Chairman), Viv Foulds, Roger Harper, Richard Hopkins, Pat Parr, Wendy Payne, Alison Richey, Bill Smyth, Lois Tilden (Clerk) and 2 members of the public were also present.

- 1. Apologies:** Richard King (Vice-Chairman), Hugh Ellison (ABC Ward Councillor),
- 2. Declarations of interest:** None
- 3. The minutes of the meeting on 1 December 2009** were approved and were signed as a true record of proceedings. Proposed: Wendy Payne; seconded: Pat Parr

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE DECEMBER MINUTES

a. Recreation ground: Lower rec: The Clerk had again reminded Ben Hope to provide a quote for weedkilling next Spring, on the basis that the costs could be paid by EPC. He had also been reminded cut down the thistles and other weeds in the meantime but the bad weather was an obstacle. Richard Hopkins would also speak to Ben Hope about the best way of making good the broken fence alongside the football field and supply posts at EPC's expense (as previously agreed this was EPC's responsibility). **Action: Clerk, Richard Hopkins**

Football field- waterlogged area adjacent to sewage works: the water leak had been repaired by SW's contractors but the reinstatement of the ground still needed improvement; the Clerk had mentioned this to Southern Water. **Action: Clerk**

Fir Trees screening the sewage works: In consultation with Alison Richey, the Clerk had issued letters to those whose quotes were rejected; a draft to Jeremy Ault to accept his quote formally was to be finalised once Alison had confirmed the fine details of the task. **Action: Alison Richey, Clerk**

Drainage on the Recreation ground leading to the cricket field: Richard Hopkins was still assessing what material and equipment was needed, in consultation with Geoff Wickens, to ensure meeting EPFA's requirements. He would submit an invoice to EPC for his and any additional labour, using heavy machinery, and for materials – a lot of new gravel would be needed. **Action: Richard Hopkins**

Cricket net proposal between the football goal and sewage works boundary: EPFA had confirmed their approval of the Cricket Club's proposals. Southern Water had indicated informally they had no objection and that if the water supply pipe needed to be replaced, it would not affect the cricket net.

Muddy and slippery areas on the bank behind Jubilee Villas: Viv Foulds had sown grass seed on the areas; although there was some sign of growth it was at risk of being "scalped" by the grass mower. Heber will be asked to raise the blades to avoid this. **Action: Viv Foulds**

Larger rubbish bin: ABC had contacted the Clerk about the cost of supplying a new bin – one costing less than the one EPC had in mind was available from ABC's supplier "Broxap" at £149. However, ABC's advice was that if they were to arrange regular emptying of the bin, EPC would be charged; it was therefore preferable for EPC to carry on with its existing arrangements with Rob Hopkins. It was agreed that a new black bin costing £149 should be purchased by EPC and that EPC would arrange emptying. **Action: Clerk**

b. Sports pavilion: The Clerk had been advised by EPFA/Sports Pavilion Committee that they had been given charitable designation by HMRC, thus no VAT would apply to the cost of a new pavilion. Bill Smyth reported that the Pavilion Committee had drawn up a timeline for action, showing the old pavilion being demolished by March/April (allowing for the proper removal and disposal of asbestos) and the shell of the new pavilion in place by July 2010. The electricity supply was to be upgraded and the water supply would continue to rely on the pipe supplying Southern Water, by agreement. Jonathan Ellsworth was working on the details of the structure. Planning permission requirements for the revised building were to be confirmed by ABC, then the Committee would publicise details on the lines of the Headcorn Scouts' hut leaflet; Alison Richey was lined up to work on this. Efforts were still being made to secure more grant funding and the timeline was dependant on that and other factors. The fit-out did not rule out the Football Associations requirements. A further meeting was due to

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take place on Monday 11 January. Bill and Richard Hopkins would attend and report back. EPC had been advised by EPFA that a new turning area for vehicles (notably SW's lorries) would be required; the Clerk was asked to set up a site meeting with all interested parties.

Action: Bill Smyth, Richard Hopkins, Clerk

c. Parish land and boundaries: Bill Smyth had met the owner/occupier of No 4 Old School Court adjacent to the recreation ground and they had agreed the hedge should be cut back to re-establish the boundary in line with the back of the garden shed. This would be achieved in better weather. The overhanging and leaning tree would be removed. This positive outcome was welcomed. The Clerk still aimed to study the Land Registry guidance about land titles in respect of Pemples Cross and Stonebridge Green but other EPC priorities continued to overtake this.

Action: Bill Smyth, Clerk

d. Playgroup: The plan for putting up a removable fence for the playgroup around the Hall patio had faltered and new ideas were being considered. The situation was complicated because the playgroup's needs were very specific to meet OFSTED requirements. The playgroup's use of the Hall and outside area excluded other potential users from using any other part of the Hall (except the Telecottage) and this would also exclude use of the proposed extension for an Archives/Parish Council room at the rear of the Hall. Following on from earlier discussions, Alison said that she proposed to speak to the Hall Committee about the situation. Bill Smyth added that other options for the Playgroup, such as the Games Barn, with additional storage, and a designated outside play area could be considered; Tim Lee said that this might open up alternative, equally lucrative, uses of the Hall, such as by KCC and KALC who had expressed interest. This prompted some debate about the role of the Parish Council in such matters and questions about its intervention in other organisations' activities. The Clerk reminded Councillors that if EPC had decided to prepare a Parish Plan, this was the kind of overview EPC would be expected to take. It was appropriate for a parish council to facilitate integration between different organisations, to enhance the sustainability of the village as a whole. After further discussion it was agreed that the matter should be explored.

Action: Alison Richey

e. Ramps to car park: Wendy Payne had confirmed the satisfactory completion of the work by AK Paving. All agreed this been carried out swiftly and effectively. The invoice had been received as anticipated and paid.

f. Highways: It was acknowledged that adverse weather conditions had made some poor road surfaces worse but these would be reviewed once the snow had cleared. KHS had carried out more gritting in Egerton than in the past. Overall, roads had been gritted more frequently and over a wider area this winter than in previous years, in the face of particularly severe weather conditions. But some trouble-spots remained. The Clerk had asked KHS to ensure all the grit bins were replenished including the one in the car park. This needed chasing up, especially to help make Elm Close safer. Pat Parr had provided some shovels where they were missing (for which she was invited to submit an invoice for reimbursement) and Rob Hopkins had indicated he would help grit the car park and access road if the salt bin were kept full. Unfortunately some people had been seen taking grit and/or grit bins in the village. Only a partial registration number had been spotted on a suspect white van. The Clerk (as Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator) said she would report this to the Police and KHS. After much pressing, KHS had looked into the Stonebridge Green drainage problems between Court View and Court Lodge and finally agreed to contact the landowner of the ditches to seek clearing them. Pat Parr and the Clerk had continued to register potholes and faults to KHS, notably in Iden Lane, Stonebridge Green, Newland Green Lane, Crockenhill Road and Bedlam Lane. What had first started out as potholes at the foot of Rock Hill turned out to be a major sewer collapse, which SW were currently working on. The Clerk was in touch with SW about this – relevant to item 4i.

Action: Clerk, Pat Parr

g. Bus route 523/new route to Headcorn: The new timetable is awaited.

Action: Richard King

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h. Noise from M20: Viv Foulds was pleased to report that Charing PC was prepared to take the lead in drafting a joint parishes letter to put pressure on the Highways Agency to resurface the motorway with better sound-reducing properties, as several villages were adversely affected. **Action: Viv Foulds, Clerk**

i. Local Needs Housing: Pat Parr reported that the work had been due to start but Alison Thomson had said the finer details of design were still being finalised. In the meantime the Clerk had reported more sewerage overflow problems in Forge Lane and at SW's sewage pumping station in Forstal Road. Southern Water's regional engineer had said that a camera inspection revealed no fractures in the sewers in the Forstal, but the Clerk pointed out that residents had again been badly affected by sewage backing up as well as continuous disturbance from lorries pumping out and carting off sewage to the treatments works. SW's own records would show this. The Engineer believed the pumping station had not coped with excess surface water. After the Clerk had discussed this with him at some length, the engineer agreed to carry out a more detailed investigation. Councillors agreed that residents' concerns should be taken seriously and that the latest situation should be drawn to Alison Thomson's attention. The Clerk confirmed she was content to pursue SW and contact other bodies who could put more pressure on SW to resolve the situation in the short- and long-term. **Action: Clerk**

j. Older people's accommodation in a "cluster" settlement to serve several villages. ABC were still designing questionnaire for people over 50 in the participating cluster villages, to test demand. Tim and Pat would work out and arrange the distribution in Egerton. **Action: Pat Parr, Tim Lee**

k. Older people's accommodation in Egerton: 1. Richard King was taking the lead to identify a site solely for Egerton people, in parallel with the other project. 2. It was noted that one of the Haven bungalows in Elm Close was vacant; under the ABC choice-based lettings scheme it would be advertised to eligible people on the housing register, with priority to Egerton residents. Egerton people should register their interest, as set out in the recent EPC Newsletter. The Clerk would ask ABC for an update. **Action: 1. Richard King, 2. Clerk**

l. Sanctuary Housing: Charges to residents in Harmer's Way: The Clerk had been chasing up Sharon Shepherd at Sanctuary Housing for a response to her letter about the increase in service charges. **Action: Clerk**

m. EPC's role/ publicity/Newsletter/ Welcome Pack: Alison had circulated details of all the 55 responses received on the questionnaires about village gateways, playground equipment, lower recreation ground and church lighting. It was agreed that although the responses consisted of only 12 % of households, the views expressed would help inform EPC's decision-making. A further meeting of the full Council would be held on Tuesday 19 January to take this forward. **Action: All**

n. Risk management: The Clerk had updated the memory sticks, one being retained by Alison Richey.

o. Signposts: Bill Smyth was ready to paint the EGERTON sign when weather permitted. **Action: Bill Smyth**

p. Footpaths and stiles: Pat Parr had circulated a report on footpaths prior to the meeting; two new stile kits had been provided by KCC to a landowner in the Newland Green area and so far one had been fitted. Broken stiles at Poplar Farm and between Rock Hill and Link Hill had been reported to KCC. Pat will keep under review. **Action: Pat Parr**

q. Frith Wood - noise disturbance: The Clerk and Richard Hopkins had not been able to inspect the woods due to severe weather conditions. When this improves they would map out the areas giving rise to concern and to photograph evidence such as rubbish and other inappropriate use of the woods. Then ABC will be appraised. Any incidents should immediately be reported to Kent Police on 01233 611 055 and to ABC on 01233 330571 or 01233 330645. Viv Foulds said that she had flagged up the problem with Chief Constable Mike Fuller at a recent

KALC meeting. The Clerk would also raise the matter with Cl Frayne who covered “raves” in a recent Police Newsletter. **Action: Richard Hopkins, Clerk**

r. Red Telephone Kiosk at Stonebridge Green – EPC to adopt and BT to Decommission: The Clerk reported ABC’s confirmation that BT had agreed to EPC’s request to adopt the kiosk for £1; the next step was for EPC to enter into an agreement with edf energy for an unmetered electricity supply to light up the kiosk. Once that contract had been exchanged, a reference number would be allocated, for EPC to give to BT and enable BT to complete its paperwork. The Clerk was studying the edf contract and would send copies to councillors for approval before signing. The Clerk would display an update poster in the kiosk. **Action: Clerk**

s. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator & Police matters: More names had been added to the email circulation list; Lois Tilden would categorise them by road to identify gaps in the emailing list and gain further support from existing members, to encourage others to join or to provide paper information or calls. **Action: Lois Tilden**

t. Website: The Clerk had confirmed to KCC that EPC wished to proceed with the KCC website arrangement for its documents/news and asked KCC to activate it. This had been done and a formal contract was awaited from KCC. The Clerk would begin to upload documents to the site whilst the existing site remained, until the new one was ready to stand-alone. Alison would study the material and speak to Malcolm Laws about the full transfer of EPC documents in due course. A “Google” internet search would still show the two sites; one for Egerton Parish Council, the other for all other village activities; and each would have a link to the other. **Action: Clerk**

u. Christmas Lunch: The Chairman thanked those who had been able to attend the lunch on 17 December in the George pub for making it a success; it was acknowledged that others had been unable to attend due to their daytime work or other commitments. An evening event might be considered in future.

v. Playground and Skatepark inspection: Wicksteed would be conducting an inspection on Thursday that week, weather permitting, at a cost of £90. Their report would be submitted to EPC. **Action: Clerk**

5. CORRESPONDENCE

For action: (papers either emailed or sent on circulation to all Councillors or both unless otherwise stated)

KCC Consultation: Community infrastructure provision deadline 20 Jan
KCC Walking Festival 24 April onwards – to Pat Parr
KALC Ashford Area Cttee next meeting 3 Feb 2010 – agenda and prev minutes to Viv Foulds
EPFA email from Geoff Wickens about new pavilion: turning area, charitable status, and cricket net

For noting: (circulated by hand or email to all parish councillors)

KCC/KHS Provision of salt bins – now to be supplied and maintained by KCC
KCC/KHS New traffic regulations re obstructions to private access; KCC Brochure – Explore Kent
KCC Community Safety Unit Newsletter; KCC Kent Top Travel information
Kent Police Newsletter
ABC Standards Committee meeting 18 Dec; ABC Parish Forum Minutes 21 Oct; ABC Housing Newsletter;
English Rural Housing Newsletter; KALC Parish Newsletter; KALC Training information and survey
ACRK Parish plans case studies; Oast to Coast

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6. ACCOUNTS for the month ending 5 January 2010

Income (Monies Received):

£ Nil

Expenditure:

	£
AK Paving – Adam Keneally car park ramps	1250.00
L Tilden - reimburse telephone costs Sep-Dec	15.00
Lois Tilden Clerk end Dec sal	429.10
HMRC clerk tax and NI	125.86

The cheque for £1250 to Adam Keneally was signed and issued before the meeting, as the payment had been approved in principle at the previous meeting prior to receipt of the formal invoice.

The Audit Commission had notified the Clerk that a new district auditor was to be appointed to replace Alun Williams. Subject to EPC not submitting any adverse comments, from January 2010 to the end of the financial year 2013/14 the auditor will be Wayne Rickard who has worked with the Commission for 10 years, with previous experience in local government. EPC had no comments.

ABC had requested formal confirmation of EPC's precept for 2010-2011 and concurrent functions grant. The Clerk would notify ABC that EPC's precept would be £12,394, as previously agreed. The concurrent grant was fixed at £1481.15, but the Clerk would tell ABC that the actual costs for grass mowing, play areas, car parking and other functions that met the concurrent criteria were around £4,000.

As requested, the Clerk had found out that that Pluckley PC's credits for recycling from ABC at the end of March 2009 had exceeded Egerton's because of a higher tonnage of paper collected. A detailed note was circulated.

The accounts reconciliation for the month was handed to Alison Richey.

Accounts proposed for cheques to be signed : Bill Smyth; Seconded: Roger Harper

The Chairman closed the Council meeting at 9.36 pm, for item 7 public discussion, but there being none, he re-opened the meeting at 9.59 pm for:

7. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Sheila Palmer raised concerns on behalf of residents in Elm Close that the road and pavement were dangerously icy, with compacted snow. A local person was prepared to grit the area if grit were available but there were questions about insurance liability. The Clerk said that she had asked KHS to replenish all Egerton's grit/salt bins and that KHS now had responsibility for supplying, locating and replenishing bins on the highway, but their resources were stretched and no guarantees could be made as to when Egerton would be covered. KHS were recommending the use of sharp sand in the absence of salt grit. She had emphasised the plight of vulnerable residents in Elm Close and would press them again. KHS would not indemnify anyone who volunteered to disburse the grit. Bill Smyth and Tim Lee offered to help if grit were available but it was not appropriate for EP Councillors or Clerk to try and load up grit in their own vehicles from building merchants, as the operation was on too large a scale and beyond their personal capacity. The Clerk said she would contact ABC's Housing department to try and enlist their help since the residents were ABC's tenants. **Action: Clerk, Bill Smyth, Tim Lee**

8. PLANNING

Note: EPC is consulted by Ashford Borough Council about planning applications in the Parish and invited to comment. EPC considers such applications at its monthly meetings and passes comments to ABC before ABC decides the outcome. EPC also notes decisions recently taken by ABC. All details of past applications & decisions and live applications may be accessed on line at: http://www.ashford.gov.uk/online_planning/

Consideration of applications submitted to Ashford Borough Council and noting any ABC decisions recently taken:

09/01257/AS	New Stonehill Farm, Stone Hill Road, Egerton, Ashford, Kent, TN27 9DU Conservatory extension to detached swimming pool building	EPC comment: supported
09/01492/AS	Rockhill House, Rock Hill Road, Egerton, Ashford, Kent, TN27 9DP Single storey rear garden room extension of stock brick walls on a ragstone base, under a Kent peg tile roof (hipped). Insertion of a new double casement window in between the existing brick buttresses on the southwest flank elevation.	supported
09/01493/AS Listed building consent	Rockhill House, Rock Hill Road, Egerton, Ashford, Kent, TN27 9DP Demolition of existing brick outbuilding. Single storey rear garden room extension of stock brick walls on a ragstone base, under a Kent peg tile roof (hipped). Removal of part external wall to connect extension to existing house. Insertion of a new double casement window in between the existing brick buttresses on the southwest flank elevation.	supported

ABC decisions this month:

09/01069/AS	<i>Cert of Lawful use granted</i>	Wanden Barn, WandenLane garage & space
09/00197/TC	<i>Tree felling permitted</i>	Stonebridge Barn-Leylandii
09/01249/AS	<i>Planning Permission granted</i>	Ridgeview Cottage, Coach Road single storey side extension
09/01325/AS	<i>Planning permission granted</i>	Burscombe Oast, Coach Road New outbuilding for oil store
09/01326/AS	<i>Planning permission refused</i>	Burscombe Oast, Coach Road extensions and alterations to existing former oast house

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Alison Richey said that the School had plans to host a small circus for a day of fun and entertainment but the grounds were inadequate. EPC was therefore asked if the recreation ground could be used instead for the mini-Big Top. Questions arose as to the suitability of the land, in view of its slope; and if circus vehicles would also be expected to drive over the ground – in which case any damage would need to be made good. It was agreed in principle that, subject to Alison checking on more details and getting satisfactory answers, this would be acceptable.

The meeting closed at 9.56 pm