

EGERTON PARISH COUNCIL

**The monthly meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 7 September 2010
in the Millennium Village Hall, Egerton at 8.00pm.**

Present: Tim Lee (Chairman), Roger Harper, Richard Hopkins, Pat Parr, Wendy Payne, Alison Richey and Bill Smyth. Lois Tilden (Clerk) Hugh Ellison (ABC Ward Councillor) and 6 members of the public were also present.

- 1. Apologies:** Richard King (Vice-Chairman), Viv Foulds
- 2. Declarations of interest:** None (although it was noted that the Clerk had made a listed building consent application).
- 3. The minutes of the meeting on 3 August 2010** were approved and signed as a true record of proceedings.
Proposed: Pat Parr; seconded: Wendy Payne

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed unanimously, that in view of the public's interest that evening, the meeting should be closed at 8.06 pm for:

4. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

The owners of Fairview bungalow at Pemples Cross wished to speak again about their proposals for a replacement dwelling. Following their attendance at the previous Parish Council meeting (which was reported in detail) they had discussed further revised plans with their architect and had given them to the Clerk for circulation to councillors. The owners had taken into account the Village Design statement and hoped that their revisions would complement the village scene. Parish councillors studied the plans and noted many positive points - the roof height was reduced by 2 metres, the dwelling would be set back further from the road and old bricks would be used. It was noted that no neighbours had objected previously and there was no indication that they would this time. Hugh Ellison added that ABC planners were keen that small properties should be retained small-scale in view of the shortage of modest homes. Parish Councillors took the view that if the plans were submitted to ABC as demonstrated that evening, when invited to comment EPC would be unlikely to object, but they would reserve judgement until formal notification (and taking into account any other legitimate planning consideration raised).

The public discussion closed and the EPC meeting resumed at 8.24 pm for:

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES 3 August 2010

a. Recreation ground:

Lower rec: Richard Hopkins had inspected the recreation ground and was due to meet Ben Hope about future action to managing the land more effectively. In the meantime, as agreed in principle by councillors and between the Clerk and Ben Hope, Viv Foulds had been arranging with the owners of Rock Hill House the depositing of silt from their pond to the lower rec. This was to be a mutually beneficial plan to help level out some of the unevenness and fertilise the ground, whilst providing a convenient and cost-effective way of disposing of pond spoil. Ben Hope's weed-killing contractor was due to submit an invoice for payment.

Action: Richard Hopkins, Viv Foulds

Football field and other rec areas: Heber had continued to keep the grass cut in line with the growing conditions.

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

Action: Richard Hopkins

Trees: Alison Richey had agreed with tree surgeon Jeremy Ault that on 19 October he would carry out further shaping of the fir trees and also carry out pruning of other trees on the recreation ground where they were overhanging gardens at the back of Rock Hill Road and the willows at the rear of the Hall. The Clerk had asked Andrew Hopkins to reduce the height of the trees in the hedge on the edge of the football field when he cuts the hedges. Kath Hilder would also be speaking to Michael Steed about the suitable species of trees for the lower rec. **Action: Alison Richey, Kath Hilder**

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Playground, Skatepark, Youth needs: Councillors were still considering how best to meet the needs of local youths including gauge interest in the KCC Youth Bus; they were in touch with schools about the numbers of teenagers in the village. Teenagers' views were essential before anything could be achieved. The cost of shelters could be investigated, making use of experience in KALC and ABC. For younger children, the existing playground equipment needed repainting. Bill Smyth reported that Stuart Pearson of the Cricket Cub had kindly offered to make a picnic bench, with no labour costs, if EPC funded the cost of materials. This was agreed. **Action: Pat Parr, Alison Richey, Bill Smyth**

Dog fouling: Bill Smyth had put up another sign as a reminder to dog owners about managing their dogs. The Clerk had spoken to the ABC Dog warden about dogs continuing to run loose and had asked him to make another undercover visit to catch the culprits. **Action: Clerk**

Benches in need of painting: The Clerk would chase up Anthony Hicks (an Egerton decorator) to quote for treating the benches with appropriate paint/preservative. **Action: Clerk**

Sports pavilion: The timetable was still on track - the old pavilion was about to be demolished and confirmation of the order for the new pavilion was imminent, with footings due to begin in October. Some grant applications were still outstanding and a number of donations had been received – from the Cricket Week, the open garden coffee mornings and other fund-raising activities. **Action: Bill Smyth, Richard Hopkins, Richard King**

b. Playgroup/play area: An isolator tap had been fitted to the water supply pipe.

c. Traffic calming/disabled people's bays in the car park: Bill Smyth was due to affix a new sign – “Please slow down – Children at Play” to the main car park sign. Richard Hopkins offered some clamps. Bill had also put up new posts for the disabled persons' parking bays which stood out well – despite this, able-bodied people had still used the spaces. The sign to the car park would also be straightened. **Action: Bill Smyth**

d. the Glebe and other land matters: Bill had engaged Green Thumb to start treatment of the grass on the Glebe to improve its quality; the effect so far was promising. If this proved conclusive then more treatment would be considered and, if proved necessary, agreed by the Council. Investigation on land titles for Pemples Cross and Stonebridge Green would be fitted in when time permitted. **Action: Bill Smyth, Clerk**

e. Highways: Pat Parr and the Clerk had continued to report potholes to KHS on-line. Stonebridge Green Road was still in a poor state and had been reported many times. Other roads in need of action were Link Hill and Coach Road. Elm Close was breaking out in kerbside patches again. The Clerk and Pat Parr were due to meet KHS on 23 September and would highlight all the concerns during a conducted tour of the village. The Clerk had sent a letter to KHS about the state of Field Mill Road and Stonebridge Green Road with the suggestion of designating the roads as “unsuitable for heavy vehicles” and/or width restrictions. The Clerk reminded everyone to use the KHS hotline 08458 247 800 to report potholes or problems instantly and add to the pressure. **Action: Clerk, Pat Parr**

At 9.21pm PCSO Paul Moorey, a PCSO colleague and Police officer arrived to speak about the Travellers' light and Light Festival at Charing Heath and the flytipping that had occurred at the same time. The Chairman re-ordered the Agenda to enable immediate discussion of this topic.

6. TRAVELLERS' FESTIVAL AND FLYTIPPING: The Chairman said there had been a lot of local concern about the amount of flytipping that had occurred while this festival was going on. The Clerk had been contacted by many irate residents and she had tried to get the relevant authorities to act in concert with each other at the time and be prepared for the future such as through a well-briefed task force. Richard King had agreed to set up a meeting with a number of his KCC colleagues and other bodies in pursuit of this aim. It was important to establish the legal position and to set out the rights and duties of citizens. PCSO Paul Moorey said that he had visited the site and had also discussed the situation

with other colleagues in Charing. The event itself did not cause many problems, other than the flytipping - and there was no concrete evidence to show that it had emanated from the festival. It was only circumstantial. Visits to the site and to the landowner revealed that four times the number of travellers had turned up than had been expected but the legislation governing events was not straightforward. The Clerk (as Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and Kent Waste Watch contact) said that there might have been Public Order infringements, other breaches of legislation or a lack of licensing but unless the authorities were clear about this, and were prepared to take action where the law had been transgressed, villagers would still feel aggrieved. PCSO Paul Moorey said that such festivals were rarely advertised and so it was not possible to be prepared. But if there was a disturbance, the Police should be called. Parish councillors said they had heard of trouble being caused in village pubs which one landlord had handled very commendably herself. Hugh Ellison added that there were increasing problems caused by travellers staying on sites illegally and setting up permanent camps. Whilst it appears there are not enough official sites, this becomes a greater risk. Any of those matters should be reported to ABC's Planning department.

Questions then arose about 5f. Frith Wood: The Police Officer said that several crimes had been committed in the area and individuals had been charged. But there were still low-level incidents involving alleged ghost hunters – warnings about creating litter and graffiti had been issued. The Police confirmed they had powers to deal with raves or suspected raves but recently the anti-social activity has been of a different nature. All concerns should be brought to the attention of the Police. Members of the public should be vigilant and report incidents immediately – if a crime is in progress dial 999 or if less of an emergency, 01622 690 690. If anyone hears in advance that a festival or rave is to take place, the Police should be contacted.

The Chairman thanked the members of Kent Police for their attendance and guidance and returned to the Agenda.

5g. Winter gritting and snow clearance: It was acknowledged that EPC needed to agree its own strategy for land in its ownership before the Winter. It was therefore important that Richard Hopkins should talk to Graham Palmer urgently about the practicality of a sweeper/spreader arrangement for clearing snow on the car park in future. The outcome of KHS' review of winter maintenance was due to be finalised – the Clerk reported that the possibility of direct use of KHS' contractor-farmers by parishes had been flagged up - and the request to KHS for a salt bin in Elm Close was awaited. Alison Richey undertook to re-circulate the earlier emails on this topic. **Action: Richard Hopkins, Alison Richey, Clerk**

h. Traffic Management forum: The Clerk had sent a letter to KALC, to campaign to the Government via NALC to reduce the speed limit on rural roads to 50mph. (This was apart from the KHS review of speed limits, the next stages of which had been shelved.) The next meeting was at Brabourne on 14 September – Alison Richey was unable to attend, but Bill Smyth offered to go in her place. **Action: Bill Smyth**

i. Bus route 523/new route to Headcorn The bus usage was still not very high although some people from Smarden were now using it. Richard King's enquiry about a minor change to the timing to connect with the No 12 bus to Tenterden was awaited. Bill Smyth had kindly cut back the overgrown hedge at the bus stop outside the garden of the George pub. **Action: Richard King**

j. Noise from M20: A response from the Highways Agency to more recent letters was still awaited.

k. Housing: i. Local Needs: Good progress in Chantlers Meadow, Forstal Road was noted; there had been no more complaints from nearby residents. The Clerk had forwarded ABC's paper on local needs housing criteria with her comments: it seemed odd that if someone just missed the "five years rule" that someone from an adjacent village with no Egerton connection should take priority. Councillors felt that a cut-off was needed but this could be raised with ABC. After the main public meeting, it was agreed that three councillors with long-standing Egerton connections should be named as those verifying Egerton residency for local housing applications: Wendy Payne, Roger Harper and Richard Hopkins. The Clerk would notify ERH. **Action: Clerk**

ii. Older people's accommodation in a "cluster" settlement to serve several villages: Pat Parr said that ABC was devising a project plan with a potential developer (Orbit) and would be considering the two sites - High Halden and Smarden - in more depth. A scheme of about 30 units is seen as the most viable. **Action: Pat Parr, Tim Lee**

iii. Older people's accommodation in Egerton: Richard King was still looking at options for a site in Egerton. He had seen how other, smaller warden-assisted units were managed elsewhere and which could be replicated in Egerton. New powers to parish councils to establish exception sites for local needs housing was constructive. **Action: Richard King**

iv. Sanctuary Housing: Charges to Harmer's Way residents: Roger Harper reported that he had held two meetings with residents; they discussed general complaints and lack of maintenance and he had asked for lists of specific points. Unfortunately only 3 households had responded. It was agreed that the others needed persuasion to complete their action otherwise it was not easy to take up the issues meaningfully with Sanctuary Housing. It was agreed that in the interests of the village as a whole and future residents, councillors should be proactive and visit the households themselves on a Saturday morning to compile a catalogue of concerns. Roger Harper, Pat Parr & Alison Richey undertook to do this. **Action: Roger Harper, Pat Parr, Alison Richey**

l. Red Telephone Kiosk at Stonebridge Green – EPC adoption: Pat Parr said that Steve Parr had started painting the phone box. Bill Smyth would get a stencil made for the wording. It had taken a lot of work - replacement glass and 3 litres of paint so far, according to the BT specification. After completion, Tim Lee would make contact with the other people interested in forming a preservation group, to seek contributions towards the cost of paint. **Action: Tim Lee**

m. EPC's role/ publicity/Newsletter/ Welcome Pack/ Parish Assembly on Wednesday 19 May /website: Alison Richey said that she had received only two draft articles for the newsletter – one about housing and one on ditches, drains and sewers written by the Clerk. Pat Parr made a number of suggestions for other articles but after some discussion it was felt that unless there were several more specific matters to bring to villagers' attention, or real news, there was little point in issuing a Newsletter this Autumn. It was agreed that a newsletter in March would be preferable. Hugh Ellison would contribute something about the role of a ward councillor as he was stepping down. The Clerk was 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. The Laurels, Rose Cottage and David & Hilary Robinson's houses were now sold; new owners would be given copies of the Welcome Pack as soon possible. **Action: Alison Richey, Hugh Ellison, Pat Parr, Clerk**

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

o. Footpaths and stiles: Pat Parr provided a monthly written report. To summarise:

- i.** The stile on the footpath in Stonebridge Green opposite Willow Farm was broken and unsafe. Awaiting outcome of KCC negotiations with landowner.
- ii.** Overgrown vegetation along the Stour Valley Walk from Tram Hatch towards Field Mill. KCC will try to get contractors out soon.
- iii.** Problem stile opposite Shirley Missing's house, leading across the sheep field and exits onto Rockhill Road opposite Buss's Farm Shop: KCC agreed with landowner to install a gate.
- iv.** Possibility of schoolchildren using footpaths from Crockenhill to Buss's Farm Shop: Pat Parr checked this route but did not think this was workable, as heifers are in the fields and may be too daunting. A number of stiles had no waymarkings or were worn out so Pat affixed some new ones.
- v.** Stile on the footpath on Mr Harmer's land from New Road across to the tumulus was again broken so Pat spoke to Mr Harmer, who promised to fix it. There was no fingerpost there to indicate a public right of way: KCC agreed to install one.
- vi.** The footpath along Greenhill just past Mundy Bois Cottages towards Joan and Roy Manuel's house (and on their land) had a sign on the kissing gate "Beware of the Bull" and there had been two bulls there. KCC Footpaths Officer said that the rules regarding bulls in fields where there is a public right of way were: "Dairy bulls over 10 months old are not permitted in fields with rights of way. Beef bulls are permitted but only if present with cows or heifers. Any signs advising bull in field should only be there when there really is a bull present as otherwise it may be considered a misleading sign potentially used to deter walkers." Consequently Pat Parr contacted the farmer (Mr Heathcote) and was told that the bulls were removed the day before.

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Pat advised him to remove the signs when the bull(s) are removed and he promised to do this. Joan Manuel also asked him to remove the signs, but with no response – Pat has now asked KCC to try. **vii.** Tim Lee was asked by Charlie Simkins if people could be stopped from wrongly entering his property when trying to follow the Greensand Way behind the Hall. Tim and Pat agreed that (1) the waymarker on the post was pointing people towards the front of the Hall and down to the cricket field and (2) the extra post KCC put in some months ago to help was obscured by silver birch trees and the background colour of one of the bungalow garages. Tim made an arrow marker and attached it to the post at the top steps to guide people behind the Hall. Mr Simkins was pleased with this action. **viii.** Bill Smyth reported that he had heard that the footpath in Ms Bissonette's property (Green Wickets Animal Sanctuary) was inaccessible. On inspection by Pat and Bill there was nothing amiss and the stiles were in good condition. **Action: Pat Parr**

p. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator & Police matters: Lois Tilden said that most activity related to Flytipping; other alerts were about occasional outbuilding break-ins and a spate of rogue traders. A Kent Police Committee meeting due to take place that week had been cancelled; any further information would be circulated. **Action: Lois Tilden**

q. 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, to discuss common concerns and try to reach conclusions on workable solutions across the three tiers of local government, would be set up. **Action: Richard King**

r. Survey of trees worthy of TPOs: The Clerk had sent a letter to 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. **Action: Clerk**

7. CORRESPONDENCE (emailed or circulated to all Councillors or both unless otherwise stated)

For action:

KCC Website and Information services customer survey – **Clerk responded**; options for other services (for a fee)
KCC/KHS Seminar Fri 29 Oct : **Clerk to attend** (Pat Parr not available)
KHS invitation to visit Egerton – **accepted by Clerk, date agreed 23 Sept with Pat Parr & KHS**
KCC Explore Kent Guided walks update – publicise walk for life and include local walks for KCC website – **Pat Parr**
KCC Emergency Planning group – **Clerk invited to participate (accepted, cleared with Tim Lee and Richard King)**
KCC procurement seminar Thurs 7 Oct (free) – **any takers? (not v. relevant) - None**
Kent Police Authority – Police reform consultation event Thurs 9 Sept; **cancelled**
ABC public consultation on budget allocations/cutbacks – **comment on line individually**
ABC consultation on affordable local needs housing guidance - **comments by 30 Sept (Clerk flagged up issues)**
ABC consultation on Govt Consultation on Localism Bill – **comments invited by 8 Sept**
ABC area - a Clerk's proposal for round-up/updates with ABC – **supported by Lois Tilden**
Natural England designation of AONBs – **any views?**
KALC Concurrent functions working group – more questions- **Clerk to respond**
KALC Finance Conference & Training Lenham Sat 25 Sept – **Clerk to go, any others?** Only the Clerk available
KALC meeting Weds 6 Oct ABC Civic Centre and prev minutes– **Viv Foulds to attend?**
ACRK AGM Weds 15 Sept Lenham – **any takers other than Richard King? None**
CPRE AGM Weds 13 Oct Charing – **any takers? None**
CPRE Sponsor a tile at Queen's Head Charing- **any scope? – None**
Private company offering print services etc for parish publications etc – **any interest? May be worth considering**
Save funding for playgrounds campaign – **wish to join it? - No**

For noting:

KCC/KHS Speed Limit review update: Curtailment; KCC KSCP Annual review
KCC Minerals and Waste LDF meeting; KCC bus updates
Highways Agency notice about M20 congestion; Kent Police Newsletter

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ABC information on planning terminology; ABC Forward Plan of Key decisions
 ABC half-year LDF Planning update; ABC Information about 2011 Census; ABC funding streams information;
 Kent Link Bulletin; KALC Parish News; ACRK Rural Newsletter
 NALC Govt plans for Community Right to Build – more powers for parishes; NALC events programme
 Clerks and Councils Direct; CPRE Kent Voice magazine; CPRE events programme 2010-2011 & Campaigns update
 No Need for Nuclear newsletter; Victim Support Newsletter

8. ACCOUNTS

Monthly Accounts @ 7 Sept 2010

£

Income:

Donation from Jan Dale/Len Lawrence coffee morning Hall extn 78.00

Expenditure:

Bill Smyth maintenance, repairs & sign materials 127.40

Heber Horticultural 350.74

Lois Tilden print cartridges 41.11

Green Thumb grass maintain Glebe 66.00

Lois Tilden phone reimburse Jul-Sept 15.00

Lois Tilden Clerk sal end Aug 491.78

HMRC Tax & NI end Aug 165.68

Approval of the accounts for the month, for cheques to be signed: Proposed: Alison Richey; Seconded: Roger Harper

9. 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/)

10/01049/AS	Full Planning Permission	3 The Forge, Forstal Road, Egerton Conversion of garage to living accommodation	No comment by EPC (vote taken; 4 - no comment: 3 - support)
10/01135/AS	Listed Building Consent	Potters Forstal Farm, Chapel Lane, Egerton Installation of satellite dish on south west facing wall	Supported by EPC
10/01104/AS	Agricultural Notification	Hazeldene Farm, Egerton House Road, Egerton Demolish damaged agricultural building and replace with new general purpose agricultural building	Supported by EPC

Decisions taken by ABC:

Permitted by ABC:

10/00788/AS	Cert. of Lawful Use or Dev (exist)	Existing Use/Development Is Lawful	Barhams Mill Farm, Barhams Mill Road, Egerton Application for Lawful Development Certificate - Existing Use - Storage of farm machinery, de-rigged microlight aircraft and general household fixtures, fittings, gardening and maintenance equipment. Storage of farm machinery and fully rigged microlight aircraft. Does not extend to runway use beyond 28 days each one.
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Refused by ABC:

10/00781/AS	Full Planning Permission	Rockhill House, Rock Hill Road, Egerton Erection of a single storey rear extension
10/00782/AS	Listed Building Consent	Rockhill House, Rock Hill Road, Egerton Demolition of existing brick outbuilding, erection of single storey rear extension, relocation of doorway to proposed kitchen and insertion of partition walls

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10/00761/AS	Full Planning Permission	Ragged Farm House, Mundy Bois Road, Egerton Erection of single storey conservatory/sunroom to dwelling house (grade II listed)
10/00762/AS	Listed Building Consent	Ragged Farm House, Mundy Bois Road, Egerton Erection of single storey conservatory/sunroom to dwelling house (grade II listed).

Other planning matters:

Fairview bungalow –see item 4

The Clerk reiterated the advice given by the Chief Planner at ABC on planning definitions and when PCs can comment. On request from the Clerk he confirmed he would be happy to run planning seminars after the 2011 elections.

At 9.45pm the Chairman again closed the meeting for

10. PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

Sheila Palmer said that **Flytipping and general litter** was an increasing problem; she and her husband regularly picked up rubbish along Bedlam Lane and Rosemary Lane. She also mentioned that she knew of other villages where a communal bonfire was set up safely each month to help people dispose of combustible material and wondered if this would be possible in Egerton. After some discussion it was not considered to be a realistic prospect in Egerton (lack of suitable site and likelihood of complaints).

Kath Hilder made an observation that the **Police** had been able to field three officers for this meeting but they did not seem so forceful at investigating suspicious activity.

Hugh Ellison said that he would be stepping down **ABC Ward Councillor** next May. He was happy to give information or advice to anyone interested in being a ward councillor. He added that Smarden primary School thanked **Egerton School** for the arrangements to loan their Head Teacher Lee Selby in a sharing arrangement this term. New arrangements were expected after Christmas. The senior management structures in both schools were coping well with this.

Ambrose Oliver pointed out that the **trees between the Rec and Jubilee Villas** and other trees were blocking out the view across the Rec and beyond. It was agreed that Alison Richey would look at these with him and seek advice from Jeremy Ault. EPC would not commit to any other action at this stage. **Action: Alison Richey**

At 9.57pm the Chairman reopened the meeting for:

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Pat Parr said there was a dead **tree above the Telecottage**. Alison Richey said she would add this to the list of those to be inspected (and as necessary cut) by Jeremy Ault.

Tim Lee reminded everyone that the **Egerton Music Festival** would be taking place next July. Jane Carr had asked him to provide a supporting letter to ABC for a grant; he had issued this. The Hall would be used for a number of events including a pre-festival Film (Fantasia) and talk on 23 June. If a marquee were also needed during the Festival, EPC agreed to permit its use on the recreation ground.

Local Needs Housing matters were discussed by councillors and the Clerk with no members of the public present at the end of the meeting and the notes were recorded separately on the paper files.

The meeting closed at 10.48 pm