

# Little Hadham Parish Council

Minutes of the Thirty-seventh meeting of the Little Hadham Parish Council (2007 – 2011 Session) held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010 at 8.05 p.m. in the Village Hall, Little Hadham.

**Present:**        **Mr A Morris**                    **Chairman**  
                       **Mr J Forgham**                **)**  
                       **Mrs C Piccolo**                **) Councillors**  
                       **Mr J Purvis**                    **)**  
                       **Mrs M Wilkinson**           **)**

Mr B Evans – Clerk, and 8 member of the public including HCC Cllr Mrs Leanda Newlyn.

## 37.1 Public session.

A resident asked about a pothole on the C15 new the A120 traffic lights. The Chairman advised him to report it to Herts Highways. Cllr Newlyn gave him the contact details.

**37.2 Absent.** Cllr Williamson [unwell] and Cllr Gregory [family commitment].

**37.3 Declarations of interest.** None.

**37.4 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2010 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Piccolo and seconded by Cllr Purvis.

**37.5 Matters arising from the minutes.** None.

## 37.6 Financial matters for 2011/12

**37.6.1 Budget for 2011/12.** The Chairman referred to the draft budget prepared by a Council working party at a meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> November and previously circulated to councillors. He proposed that the budget be accepted for the next financial year. Agreed.

**37.6.2 Precept for 2011/12.** The Chairman proposed that the precept for the next financial year be unchanged at £13,500. Agreed. The Chairman, two councillors and the Clerk signed the ‘Precept upon billing authority’ form.

## 37.7 Playgrounds.

**37.7.1 Programme of work to correct matters arising from the latest playground inspection.** The Chairman said he would ask Cllr Williamson to prepare a schedule. Action  
GW

**37.7.2 Hedge cutting.** The Clerk reported that the playground hedges had been finally cut. The cutting was carried out using a flail mower mounted on a large tractor. The contractors had cleared most of the clippings from the footpaths but there were many clippings left on the play area and the Clerk said he had received a late night complaint about clippings on the road near the Ridgeway. The Clerk had swept the road the next day. The Clerk said that the flail mower gave a very rough finish and the tractor left deep tracks in the soft ground. He wondered if another contractor might make a better job. It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Wilkinson would obtain some quotations. Action  
MW

## 37.8 Road matters.

**37.8.1 List of outstanding repairs.** Cllr Purvis said there was nothing to report. However he encouraged residents to report road damage to Herts Highways as soon as it appeared. Cllr Mrs Piccolo said she would mention it in the Newsletter. Action  
CP

- 37.8.2 Refurbishment of the A120 bridge over the Ash.** The Chairman said that the work appeared to be completed. He was disappointed by what he considered to be the very poor visual design of the bridge – the parapets were simple brick walls. From the floor, a resident said that he lived next to the bridge and he was in consultation with Herts Highways about the vibrations from traffic crossing the new bridge that he was concerned would damage his home.
- 37.9 Affordable homes.** Cllr Mrs Piccolo said that she had spoken to Ms Heather Farrely at EHC concerning what would happen should one of the affordable homes at Ashcroft Farm come vacant. Ms Farrely had informed her that EHC had a register of local people to whom any vacant home would be offered first. The Clerk referred to a booklet from The Rural Housing Alliance that gave a practical guide to rural councils on affordable housing. It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Piccolo would circulate the booklet to councillors. Action  
CP
- 37.10 Parish Plan Group.**
- 37.10.1** Cllr Forgham said that a meeting to plan the Fun Run had been arranged. The run was provisionally planned for June 12<sup>th</sup> but they wanted to avoid a clash with the Stortford Running Club run.
- 37.11 Replacement of the Village Hall notice board.** Cllr Mrs Piccolo said that Mr Tim Mearing had given a quote of £54 for replacing the doors on the notice board with a single top hinged door. It was agreed that she would ask Mr Mearing to carry out the work. Action  
CP
- 37.12 HCC consultation on school transport.** Cllr Forgham said that he intended to discuss the matter with some local head teachers. He would circulate a draft response to councillors before the deadline. Action  
JF
- 37.13 HCC consultation on Minerals and Waste Disposal.** Cllr Mrs Wilkinson proposed that the draft she had previously circulated be sent as the Councils response. Agreed. [Appendix 1]
- 37.14 HCC consultation on Rights of Way Improvement Plan.** Cllr Forgham proposed that the draft response he had previously circulated to councillors be sent to HCC. Agreed. [Appendix 2]
- 37.15 Airport.**
- 37.15.1** The Chairman proposed that the Council donate £100 to SSE. Cllr Purvis asked why as the proposal to build the second runway had been dropped. The Chairman said that SSE was very concerned with the impact of the airport on the local environment. The proposal was agreed.
- 37.15.2** The Chairman noted that SSE had reported that NATS was to hold consultations on its core flight path strategy. This strategy would influence local flight paths.
- 37.16 Chairman's report.** The Chairman noted that the Environment Agency had started a new flood warning procedure. There were three levels of warning – alert, warning and severe. Many local residents had signed up to receive automated phone calls. Cllr Purvis asked for the new procedure to be described in the Newsletter. Agreed. Action  
CP

### 37.17 Clerk's Report

#### Period ending 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010

Barclay's Bank C/Acc	£13,423.88
StepSaver BP Acc	£5.19
BP Acc	£169.98
Petty cash	£37.77

**Total** £13,636.82

#### Included above

#### Received

LJ & SM Harris - donation to war memorial repair	£100.00
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#### To be agreed for payment

Mr B Evans	P/Clerk - (November & December))	£631.42	
	Exp (October)	£38.40	£669.82
Mrs K Green	Grass cutting & bins (Nov&Dec)		£88.80
Mr A Purvis	Litter picking (half November)		£50.80
HM Revenue & Customs	Paye Oct to Dec		£237.40
SSE	Donation		£100.00
SLCC	Subscription		£95.00

**Total payments** £1,241.82

**Total in all accounts and petty cash after payment of this month's bills £12,395.00**

#### 37.17.1 Financial statement

**37.17.2** Proposed to accept payment of accounts. Agreed.

**37.17.3** Proposed to accept the accuracy of the financial statement. Proposed Cllr Mrs Wilkinson, seconded Cllr Mrs Piccolo. Agreed.

**37.17.4 Litter picker.** The Clerk reported that he had appointed Mr Adam Purvis as litter picker. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson asked if the post should not be advertised. The Clerk said that there had never been any great interest shown in the past. He reminded Cllr Mrs Wilkinson that he had asked the views of the councillors before making the appointment and that she had not raised any objection. It was agreed to confirm the appointment.

#### 37.18 Democratic 10 minutes.

A resident asked about liaison with local police concerning speeding through the village. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson invited him to join her at the next meeting with the police at the Manor of Groves.

**37.19 Planning matters.** The transactions of the Planning Committee were noted.

**37.20 Correspondence.** The Clerk distributed items of correspondence to relevant members.

SSE newsletters	AM
HALPTC newsletters	AM/CP
EHC 'New Guide to Council Funding' leaflet	AM
CPRE Countryside Voice magazine	MW
CPRE Fieldwork magazine	CP
Rural Housing Alliance 'Affordable Rural Housing' A practical guide for parish councils.	CP

**37.21 Any other business.** Cllr Mrs Piccolo proposed that the Council should send a letter, previously circulated to councillors, to Harlow Council's consultation on Harlow North [Appendix 3]. Agreed.

**37.22 Date of the next meeting Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011.****37.23 The Chairman closed the meeting to the Public and the Press at 8:52 p.m.****Appendix 1. Consultation on the HCC Minerals and Waste Development Plan**

This document was discussed at the Council meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

The Council have been through this document and feel it is on the whole a very good document; it informs us that we produce 3million tonnes of waste in Hertfordshire per year. This tells us we can no longer bury our waste as we generate too much, 1.5 tonnes of which are associated with the building and renovating of new homes, factories, etc. Your strategy sets out dealing with this at source so that Planning Permission is dependent on waste reduction, i.e. at the point of preparing the site and building. (Perhaps EHDC should consider this before they knock down the Charrington's building in Bishop's Stortford. The Council think that, because of the waste that this proposal would create, in the sense of depriving the Community of this iconic building and the actual waste materials from its demise, it would be an act of vandalism if it were to go ahead.)

The Council feels the document is comprehensive in that it sets out not just methods of dealing with waste but actually reducing the amount we produce. HCC also deals with 0.5 million tonnes of rubbish from London, which the Council presumes is a money earner for HCC. However the Council wonders if charges could be increased to encourage the London Boroughs to deal with this themselves. This would then reduce the transportation of waste which is one of the aims of the strategy.

However, the Council feels there should be more emphasis on strategies to reduce waste, i.e. working with supermarkets, hospitals, etc. People who produce little waste should be rewarded. However, the charge for rubbish collection should not be increased as this is likely to encourage people to dump rubbish – this would be worse than making sites that can deal with it.

The Council considers that emphasis should be placed on the need to educate people that we are using precious fossil fuels which are not replaceable – what will we leave the next generation if we selfishly use these up?

HCC, we are pleased to note, are considering employing thermal waste incineration plants, such as the one in Vienna. This is a small thermal waste site that has been in use for several years, it is perfectly safe and is a local attraction, producing heat for the community, so beneficial as well as useful. We wonder if the Council could use this successful venture to reassure people that energy producing sites are valued by local people in that they enjoy the free electricity etc produced from such sites and do not experience them as a danger that some people portray them as.

(See : <http://www.wtert.gr/downloads/Spittelau.pdf>)

Thank you for affording us the opportunity to comment on your proposals for dealing with our waste in the future.

**Appendix 2 Response to RoWIP Consultation Document**

RoWIP = Right of Way Improvement Plan

Document received: 18.11.10

Response: 27.11.10

Date for submission of response: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011

HCC Contact: Julia Clarke (RoWIP Officer)

01992588473

[julia.clarke@hertsc.gov.uk](mailto:julia.clarke@hertsc.gov.uk)

Response by: Jonathan Forgham (Little Hadham Parish Councillor) 07805571551 [jforgham@hotmail.com](mailto:jforgham@hotmail.com)

**Proposals:**

The original RoWIP research found that in Herts. people had common issues and demands which were condensed into 12 core actions which the RoWIP intends to deliver. They are listed here for discussion and deliberation.

- 1.) Develop routes that cater for the needs of people with limited mobility.
- 2.) Develop the network from significant public transport connections.
- 3.) Reduce the number of unnecessary physical barriers on the network.
- 4.) Promote Hertfordshire's countryside to residents and visitors.
- 5.) Develop appropriate and well maintained links into the countryside.
- 6.) Create and develop off road routes linking communities with places of work, schools and other local facilities.
- 7.) Extend the network currently available to cyclists and horse riders.
- 8.) Help people wishing to improve or maintain their health by developing a range of circular off road routes.

- 9.) Ensure the opportunities to protect, extend and enhance the off road network are included in proposals for new developments.
- 10.) Where the off road network is affected by busy transport routes work to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to improve the safety and attractiveness of the routes for users.
- 11.) Address problems of fly tipping, litter and dog fouling in partnership with appropriate local and regional agencies.
- 12.) Identify and address potential demands for access to the countryside amongst those who currently do not use the network.

**Required Information:**

- A detailed description of the location, which must include either a map, a road name or Rights of Way reference number, or grid ref.
- A description of the problem and/or our proposed solution. This can have very little detail or a lot of detail if this will help the project be investigated.

**Response:**

For ease of understanding, I intend to tackle each proposal as a separate entity, giving specific map references where appropriate. There will be issues that overlap and these will be marked as such, where perhaps 2 or more proposals may well be linked within one response. i.e. limited mobility issues (prop 1) and physical barriers (prop 3)

**General overview**

On the whole the footpath network throughout the parish of Little Hadham is well maintained, with local farmers respecting the rights of way and making clear and permanent cuttings wherever footpaths cross crop fields. Many of the bridleways are used frequently by local horse riders whilst the footpaths are used less frequently. However, all remain clearly marked and are easy to follow.

“The Natural History of Little Hadham 2008 – 2010” outlines a series of local walks that when put together in a whole chapter of the book, cover almost every path within the parish. This chapter has been reproduced at the end of this response.

Access to the paths are, on the whole, easy with a collection of both kissing gates and stiles demarcating field boundaries and where hedges need to be crossed. Stiles are in good condition, with the exception of several, detailed below, and the metal kissing gates have only been fitted within the last 18 months are therefore, in good working order.

It must be noted here, that several of our paths are uneven in their surface and although access is straight forward, people with mobility issues would find certain paths virtually impossible to traverse. Examples are outlined below. Frequently, the uneven surface is just through lack of regular use and so hedges have encroached, rabbits have dug burrows and general wear and tear from local tractors, combines etc has left a rough and difficult surface on which to walk. For everyday ramblers these issues are not a problem but with limited mobility, I would not advise people with difficulties to try such paths. Other paths are on inclines that become water logged during the wet months, and again these may be impassable for those with wheel chairs. However, I feel there are enough routes within the parish that are already perfectly accessible to those with limited mobility and these are also highlighted in this response. In many cases, I cannot suggest an easy or cheap solution to these issues and perhaps they will remain difficult to use for certain people with disabilities. In this case, would some form of signage be a useful addition?

**Issues regarding Proposal 1:**

- TL 431205 – TL431206  
Very uneven ground on field boundary leading to a stile at the latter grid reference. Difficult for limited mobility.
- TL 438214 – TL434203 Good access for all.
- TL435218 – TL442217: Steep incline, frequently muddy making access for all difficult.
- TL 448219 – TL451219; Very rough and uneven ground on a seldom used path.

**Issues regarding Proposal 2:**

There are several bus stops within the parish on the Trusty bus service No. 351. This is the Hertford to Bishop’s Stortford route, stopping at the Nag’s Head (TL435218,) The Smithy (TL 439226) The Bridge (TL 441227) as well as Cradle End (TL459222) There are paths that run adjacent to these request and fare stage stops, so walkers are well catered for with the local transport network. Circular walks lend themselves well to these stops, with residents from Hertford and Stortford being able to access parish paths easily.

Paths from the Nag’s Head and Cradle End are within a short distance of the bus stops.

It would be useful to alert local Ramblers’ Groups of these bus stops, offering guidance on the proximity of the footpaths.

**Issues regarding Proposal 3**

There are a few physical barriers within the parish that bar the way. However, frequent movement of horse enclosures around the path at TL443209. Here the signage is very poor due to the movement of fences to suit the adjoining stabling. On one occasion an electric fence was fastened across the top of a wooden kissing gate. The owner of the livery was contacted and the wires were consequently moved. This is the only area where there are

issues with signposting within the parish. However, a stile at TL431206 although in good condition, is set very high and would cause difficulties to the elderly and those with limited mobility.

It needs to be recorded that farmers from Bridgefoot Farm (TL 443212) and Home Farm (TL433219) are diligent in carrying out their responsibilities towards keeping paths open and accessible.

There are on going issues with the farmer responsible for the upkeep of the path found between TL 440228 and TL439232 where a rabbit fence has been erected actually on the path. This follows on from the path being ploughed up early in the autumn 2010. These issues have already been reported to relevant authorities, in particular Mr. Nicholas Maddex.

**Issues regarding Proposal 4:**

The Little Hadham Parish Plan Group is most proactive in promoting the locality with residents. Dawn chorus walks, day nature walks, annual fun run using footpaths are all organised on a regular basis, often encouraging groups in excess of 15 to experience local and rarely used paths.

A bio-diversity action plan has been written which hopes to involve parishioners in getting out and about to record local bird, butterfly and plant species as well as a planned orienteering course for a fund raising initiative.

An annual talk is given to residents and visitors at the village hall. This offers illustrated views of the locality as well as reporting on the natural history. It is hoped that this will encourage further usage of local footpaths.

**Issues regarding Proposal 5:**

Through the aforementioned talks and day trips links with the local community are kept. Signage is good throughout the parish so no issues here. A book “The Natural History of Little Hadham 2008 – 2010 offers all readers detailed facts on local walks. (Appendix 1)

**Issues regarding Proposal 6:**

- From TL 435218 there is a footpath that leads to the local primary school. In the warmer months this is used by several families walking their children to the school. Indeed, the sign states that the path ends at the primary school (TL442226) a good, well maintained path.
- Another path from Hadham Hall (TL 451227 – TL447228 “The Causeway”) is also used on a daily basis for children to access the primary school and bus stop at The Bridge (TL441227) The industrial estate at TL447228 is also well served with footpaths for those who live within the village and work here.

**Issues regarding Proposal 7:**

All bridle ways are regularly used by local horse riders, keeping the paths well worn and easy to follow. Few paths locally lend themselves to cyclists and another transport report from the Parish council deals with the implementation of local cycle paths. However, it needs to be pointed out that cyclists frequently use local lanes, especially Chapel Lane (TL 436218 through Westland Green/Wellpond Green to Standon at TL396222) This lane is used as a “rat run” during rush hour. This behaviour seriously restricts the use of push bikes. Several footpaths may well lend themselves as being upgraded to cycle routes. Other routes that could be attractive to cyclists are Cradle End to Ford Hill (TL 459222 – TL435216) Again fast cars restrict usage for cyclists.

A particular track that would also be beneficial if upgraded to a cycle route would be the wide bridleway from Danebridge Lane (TL440194 – TL 453209 at Lower Farm)

**Issues regarding Proposal 8:**

See appendix 1 which will be available to parishioners in early 2011. The parish council could promote these routes but there are plenty of walkers, dog walkers and joggers that are already aware of local paths and consequently it is not thought to be a burning issue to the PC to convey the benefits of walking/jogging locally.

**Issues regarding Proposal 9:**

No new developments are planned at present, but the PC does monitor the footpaths that maybe affected by future developments.

**Issues regarding Proposal 10:**

Paths at TL457222, TL 455223, TL 446226 TL 443227 all end on the busy A120 With these there are no paths directly opposite and so the pavement suffices for all in a safe manner. However at TL 428230 and TL432229 do indeed join the busy A120 . Here the issue is that there is no pavement and walkers have to walk on the uneven verge so they can access the path on the northern side of the A120 at TL 431230 or

TL 434228. Here, the signage could be improved.

All other paths exit on to local village lanes and can be deemed safe and attractive. Verges near the start to the green lane at TL439215 are frequently cut up by off road vehicles entering and exiting Hoecroft Lane. This lane, that runs to TL448217, can become damaged and churned by these vehicles. Previously there have been parish issues with off road vehicles using tracks and green lanes around Westland Green (c TL 423220) Presently, however this does not appear to be an issue for local residents.

**Issues regarding Proposal 11:**

Dog fouling has been an issue on local footpaths in the area around TL 436218 have been on-going for the parish council. Presently this doesn't appear to be an issue following a campaign to highlight the problem in the well distributed parish magazine.

There are several road side verges that have attracted fly tippers in the past, especially at TL 432218 and TL 448217.

**Issues regarding Proposal 12:**

The aforementioned bio-diversity action plan will be distributed to all parishioners through the parish magazine. It is hoped that this will attract further users to our local paths. A proposal is outlined below.

**Proposals from Little Hadham Parish Council**

- HCC official to visit the site at TL 443209 to inspect the footpaths that are frequently moved. The parish council monitors these on a regular basis, but support would be helpful if the paths are poorly signed as they are moved.
- To look into improving safety where the footpaths adjoin the A120 and where there is no footpath directly opposite. This is outlined regarding proposal 10.
- To publish a short pamphlet regarding local footpaths that could be posted to all parishioners emphasising as well as posting to local ramblers' groups in nearby towns. The circular walks and local public transport links could be highlighted here. Costing for such a publication would be an issue. Any assistance with printing costs?
- Parish Council to become proactive in the "walk to school" initiative that takes place every year. Councillor Forgham is also the school/council liaison person so it would be good to discuss possibilities for using footpaths during this week.

**Appendix 3 – Letter to Harlow Council concerning 'Harlow North'.**

Re. EHC Issues & Options Consultation

With reference to the recent Issues & Options Consultation lead by East Herts Council the Council wishes to convey its support for the Stop Harlow North campaign. In particular, the Council would like to forward its answer to Question 26 to the Harlow Council Forward Planning Team.

The Council's position remains unchanged – it is not in favour of any further development to the areas north of Harlow. The Council feels that more growth would increase the congestion and pollution suffered by Little Hadham and the surrounding villages caused by vehicles en-route to areas north of Harlow. The Council believes that these developments would have detrimental effects on the rural ambiance, not only of Little Hadham but of all the villages and hamlets in the surrounding area.

We trust our response will be taken into full consideration as part of Harlow Council's consultation.

Yours sincerely