

## STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN Mr Richard Coles

CLERK Mrs Jenny Hollington

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009 at 7.30pm at Steep Village Hall

Present: Richard Coles (in the chair) Terry Cook Charles Gibson  
Jenny Martin Fran Box David Llewellyn  
Nick Hurst

In Attendance:

Jenny Hollington (Clerk)  
Michael Cartwright (County Councillor)  
Jennifer Gray (District Councillor)  
Drake Hocking (Tree Warden)

There were 7 members of the Public present during the course of the meeting.

09/15 APOLOGIES – Caro Robinson, Jo Bell

09/16 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was pointed out that Minute 09/07 on page 2, paragraph 4, should read “.....the site in Ridge Common Lane (recently **visited** ....)” not “**re-visited**” as stated.

This was amended and the Minutes of the previous meeting dated Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2008 were then agreed as an accurate record.

09/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Richard reminded the Councillors that any interests should be recorded.

09/18 PUBLIC COMMENT

Questionnaire – It was queried whether, in view of the fact that EHDC have now shown an interest in sites in Ridge Common Lane and Steep Marsh, the results of the Questionnaire regarding land adjacent to the Village Hall are now invalid, as no mention of alternative sites was made.

Councillors pointed out that the Questionnaire asked “What would you like to see happen on the site in Church Road next to the Village Hall?” and was therefore **not** invalid. Jennifer Gray endorsed this.

David said that he was disappointed - he said that HARA guidelines should be considered and villagers kept in the picture the whole time. He felt that the best way forward would be for another questionnaire to be sent out setting out all options. The pros and cons of each site should then be assessed and fully advertised, and a formal meeting held to debate the matter.

The Chairman stressed that neither site is currently being considered by EHDC – Ridge Common Lane being too far removed from the village centre and more aligned to Stroud, and Steep Marsh having a number of problems, including contamination and power cables. David pointed out that the Ridge Common Lane site fits the criteria set out by EHDC for rural housing outside a settlement area and said that a study should therefore be carried out. Jennifer Gray stated that every option has been covered by EHDC, and the Church Lane site is considered the most suitable.

Pros and Cons of Alternative Sites – A guarantee was sought that of all the sites which were initially presented and assessed by EHDC, no oversights (as with the Ridge Common Lane site) had been made and that the pros and cons of each site has been fully explored. Jennifer Gray assured everyone that this has been done and undertook to ask the Head of Planning at EHDC to produce this information in a document to be sent to the Chairman a.s.a.p. in order to clarify the situation.

Plans for Affordable Housing – It was asked whether it would be possible for the plans from Hyde Housing to be displayed on the notice board and website so that everyone could be kept informed. The Chairman explained that the current plans are only an outline sketch and are already being amended. The up-dated plans are not expected to be returned for approximately two months but, once these are agreed by the Parish Council, they will be advertised.

Timescale for Public Comment – A question was received as to what stage the public could have their say regarding the plans for the Affordable Housing. It was confirmed that once plans are finalised, villagers will get a chance to put their view forward. David pointed out that John Lancaster, Rural Housing Enabler, said in his report that the next stage should be “a sketch scheme for Parish public consultation” and “that this is just the start of the process – now is the time for discussion”.

#### 09/19 COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Michael said he was pleased to report that work on Church Road has now been completed. Jenny Martin pointed out that horse riders are concerned, as the surface is slippery and consequently very dangerous. Chris White is aware of this and is meeting with those concerned in a couple of week’s time.

Following the recent HCC Budget Meeting, Michael reported an increase of 1.9% tax rate (the lowest for 40 years).

#### 09/20 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Jenny Gray reported a 0% increase in Council Tax following the EHDC Budget Meeting.

Attention was drawn to the Rights of Way and Countryside Access and Developer’s Contributions presentations at the Community Forum Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 6.30 p.m. at Penns Place.

#### 09/21 UP-DATE ON TREE WARDEN ISSUES

Drake Hocking outlined the role and potential activity of the Parish Tree Warden and proposed that a second Tree Warden be recruited to help cover the Steep Marsh area.

It was suggested that Drake join Terry and Charles in devising a scheme for the Common, which hasn’t had any management since the PC purchased it in 1962 – Drake said he would be happy to assist.

Fran asked if Drake would be able to advise on the Aspens at the Cricketer’s crossroads which were the subject of the Edward Thomas poem – unfortunately these have not survived, but it is hoped to plant some more.

David queried whether it would be possible to put a TPO on the Ash trees on Mill Lane which help to screen the new development on the corner – it was agreed that Drake would take a look.

A letter from Stephen d’Este Hoare had been received regarding the TPO on the Oak Tree on the Hangars Way – this was read out. It was confirmed that the tree is safe for the time being despite the decision not to issue the TPO.

Mark Taylor confirmed that Bedales would be interested in getting involved in Drake's projects and extended an invitation for Drake to join in with the school's tree planting activities.

09/21 UP-DATE ON PLANS FOR LAND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE HALL

A meeting had been held between Councillors and Chris Buchan-Hepburn of Hyde Housing to view and discuss the first draft plans. Several amendments were requested by Councillors and these are currently being addressed by Hyde Housing. The plans are due back in approximately 2 months time when another meeting of Councillors will be arranged. Once agreed, the plans will then be made available to the public.

09/22 OPTIONS FOR THE VILLAGE HALL NOTICE BOARD AND MAP BOARD

Mark Taylor confirmed that Bedales School would be delighted to make a new, waterproof, Notice Board for the Village Hall, as a student project. The Head of Design, a Church Road resident, will oversee the project which will be started now and finished by July. The Chairman thanked Mark and said the PC would be delighted to accept the offer. Bedales School will liaise with the Clerk regarding the design.

A Map Board to be positioned by the seat at the top of Mill Lane and showing sites of interest was discussed – it was agreed that a small grant should be applied for (which would cover 50% of the cost up to £2,500). The Parish Council will fund the remaining 50%. Jenny Martin agreed to follow this up.

09/23 UP-DATE ON PROGRESS OF THE PARISH PLAN

As Jo Bell was unable to be present on this occasion, it was agreed to carry this item over to next month's agenda.

09/24 REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

**Common and Hangers:** Terry reported that the Shoulder of Mutton has been trimmed back and is looking great.

**South Downs National Park:** Nothing further to report – a decision is due in June or July.

**Footpaths:** The closure of Footpath 3 and BOAT 31 was discussed.

Jenny and Terry are to meet with Justin Harvey (small grants) to try and get a group of volunteers to help clear Lutcombe Pond.

Terry reported that the Hangars Way Footpath (near Oakhurst Farm) is a complete bog and he is fighting to get some action on this – he hopes to be able to bring this up at the meeting with Justin.

**Roads and Traffic:** David said that the work on Church Road appears to be quite comprehensive (although the issue with horse riders needs to be addressed).

Repairs at the Northfield site will be done once the development is completed.

The "20 is plenty" signage is a HCC Scheme agreed directly between the School and themselves.

It was pointed out that there is a new 30 mph limit on Stoner Hill as it comes through Froxfield and queried why, if this is the case, the 40 mph limit on the C18 as it approaches Steep cannot be reduced. It was also suggested that perhaps a pinch point with a sign "You are entering Steep" as per the Village Design Statement could be considered. It was agreed that David should draft a letter to HCC regarding this.

It was also noted that the hedges on Stoner Hill, outside Stoner House, are completely overgrown causing trucks to drive in the middle of the road and obscuring the road sign. It was agreed that David should also write to HCC asking for help with this problem.

David reported that there is money in the pipeline for work to be done on the BOAT from the C18 (opposite The Island) to Froxfield.

It was pointed out that the fencing at Dunnhill Deane is causing a problem – David agreed to write to Bedales about this (Fran to e-mail him the details).

Roads in Steep Marsh are due to have a hot tarmac fill within the next two weeks and this will entail approximately 3 days closure, from Rock Pitts Hill down to the village and out to the A3. At the same time they will clear the ditches to try and get the water off the road.

With regard to Sandy Lane, the lower road has now been rated and it is hoped that this has been over rated so that there will be enough money left for the other side of the lane.

**Steep Village Hall and War Memorial:** A question arose as to whether anything can be done to discourage car drivers churning up the edges of the entrance to the Village Hall. It was agreed that once the hedges grow, the problem will resolve itself.

It was commented that the War Memorial is looking very nice.

09/25 UP-DATE ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Decisions made (12<sup>th</sup> January – 27<sup>th</sup> February)

<u>Planning Number</u>	<u>EHDC Deadline for Comments</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Parish Council Input</u>	<u>EHDC Decision</u>
50326/010	15.12.08	<b>Steel framed building for use as horticultural storage, admin and office</b>	Collyers, Ridge Common Lane, Steep	No objection	Refusal
27675/007	21.1.09	<b>Construction of 20x40m riding arena</b>	1 Steep Marsh Cottages, Steep Marsh	Objection	Permission
26741/005	28.1.09	<b>Two storey 5 bedroomed dwelling, annex and detached double garage following demolition of dwelling</b>	Pine Court House, The Island, Steep	No Objection with comment	Permission

Decisions New and Pending

32972/008	18.2.09	<b>New pitched roof over existing buildings and alterations to elevations.</b>	Tankerdale Farm, Tankerdale Lane, Liss	No objection
51614	9.3.09	<b>Prune 3 Beech and 2 Hawthorn trees</b>	Land rear of Meadowlands, Pratts Lane, Steep Marsh	No objection
39994/002	12.3.09	<b>Farm building to replace existing farm buildings</b>	Land north of Little Stodham House, Farnham Road, Liss	
50081/002	19.3.09	<b>Amendment to plans for two detached dwellings with access and landscaping</b>	53 Church Road, Steep	

It was noted that the Riding Arena in Steep Marsh has been granted permission.

09/26 FINANCE

Councillors were informed that the external audit was complete. Notice of conclusion will be put in place.

The Alliance and Leicester Account has now been closed. The Co-op account stands at £1,758.83.

Payments were made in accordance to the budget to Jenny Hollington, the Audit Commission, Hampshire ALC and South Downs Campaign.

09/27 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

A letter on behalf of Governors at Steep School regarding on-going car parking problems at the school was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The idea suggested, of increasing car parking facilities or creating a turning circle at the Village Hall within the new plans to accommodate parents from the school was discussed. It was agreed that, whilst this was a good idea, it would not be possible on safety grounds. The Clerk was asked to draft a letter to the Governors to this effect.

The following meetings were pointed out to Councillors:

- EHDATPC – AGM 11.3.09
- Community Forum – HCC Presentation on Rights of Way and Countryside Access

A consultation paper on the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity was also hi-lighted.

09/28 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**The AGM will be held on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 7.15 p.m.** (Terry gave his apologies)

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.