

DRAFT

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Jim MacDonald

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

**Minutes of the Steep Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 7th February 2022
at Steep Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs. Jim MacDonald (in the Chair) Terry Cook Charlotte Duthie
Jeff Graham Freddie Holmes Nick Hurst
Andrew Martin Jenny Martin Jonathan Turk

In Attendance: Russell Oppenheimer, County Councillor
Nick Drew, District Councillor
Paul Garstin, Chairman of Steep Bonfire & Firework Committee
Jenny Hollington, Clerk

There were 8 members of the public present at the meeting.

Minute	Item	Action
22/22	<u>APOLOGIES</u> – None	
22/23	<u>MINUTES</u> – The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 th January were approved and signed.	
22/24	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in any matter on the agenda. He also reminded Councillors that the Parish Council is Sole Managing Trustee of the Village Hall and of the possible conflict of loyalties between the two roles.	
22/25	<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllrs. Andrew Martin and Charlotte Duthie were congratulated on election.• A question was asked relating to the history of the transfer of the land now owned by SIN.• It was suggested that the Parish Council should engage proactively with Wilson Designer Homes.• Details of the Village Hall financial situation were requested.• It was suggested that the Parish Council should facilitate a meeting with representatives of SIN and the developer, to engage and share the vision for land on Church Road.• It was pointed out that the Village Hall consultation analysis is still not available on the website• It was noted that the Village Hall land has not been included within the Pre-App and queried whether SWMVC has decided not to sell the land?• It was queried whether the developer’s undertaking on consultation had been verbal or written and whether the Parish Council had been aware of the date of the Pre-App submission? It was also noted that currently the open space, which is crucial to the village, is not clear in the Pre-App documents.• Concern about the allocation of houses (8-12) was expressed and suggested that it would be more appropriate for 3 or 4 large houses to be built on the land.• It was noted that the article in the newsletter about the Village Hall finances showed a £7,000 increase in spending in 20-21 and it was queried what the reason for this increase was?	Clerk

- The Parish Council were reminded of the community-approved Steep Parish Plan of 2012 and the priority for a modest development of affordable homes and an improved village centre. It was pointed out that this could not be achieved unless the Parish Council and SWMVC worked with the developer in considering an option for the whole site. It was suggested that a volunteer working group be appointed to work constructively with P.C. representatives, SIN, Eames Almshouse Trust, and the Developer to achieve an alternative vision to that which utilises only the SIN land.

22/26 REPORT ON THE STEEP BONFIRE & FIREWORK EVENT 2021 – Paul Garstin, Chairman of the Steep Bonfire & Firework Committee reported on the very successful 2021 event. The event has now been running for 30 years and has evolved from a very small affair to what, this year, had been the biggest crowd they'd ever had. This year Friends of Steep School came on board and helped with bonfire building and the running of the sweets stall, and this had been a great success - it is hoped that FOSS may consider taking over the catering for future events. The Committee will now look at whether numbers could be raised to 1200 for the 2022 event - safety and access in Church Road will be the main concerns. Money raised in 2021 was donated to Steep School, the Rosemary Foundation and Naomi House – all local and very worthy recipients. Paul and his team were congratulated and thanked for providing such a professional, well organised and fabulous community event.

22/27 COUNCILLOR ROLES – With the welcome addition of two new Councillors, a re-alignment of responsibilities was approved, as follows:

Planning Committee - Nick Hurst (Chair) – Charlotte Duthie, Freddie Holmes, Jim MacDonald, and Jonathan Turk

Finance Committee Terry Cook, Jim MacDonald, Jonathan Turk, Andrew Martin

Steep Common Terry Cook, Jeff Graham, Andrew Martin, and Jim MacDonald

Footpaths Jenny Martin and Charlotte Duthie

Ashford Hangers & Lutcombe Pond Terry Cook and Charlotte Duthie

War Memorial Volunteers - Suzanne & Tony Knights

Village Hall Management Committee Jeff Graham, Terry Cook, Jonathan Turk, Jenny M

I.T. Nick Hurst

Roads & Traffic Freddie Holmes & Jonathan Turk

Lengthsman Clerk

Communications/Social Media Freddie Holmes

It was queried whether a Working Party should be created to take forward suggestions made during public comment re the land at Church Road and agreed that this should be discussed further.

22/28 LAND AT CHURCH ROAD –

- (a) The Chairman said that he had met with both Anthony Littlejohn, Chairman of SIN, and Stuart Wilson, Wilson Designer Homes, to make clear the Parish Council concerns re lack of consultation. Stuart Wilson remains firmly of the opinion that there can be no dialogue until the SDNPA parameters for the site are known. Stuart Wilson has agreed to come to the March meeting to address the Parish Council - unfortunately, Anthony Littlejohn is unable to make it.
- (b) Correspondence – Concerns were expressed about the nature of the correspondence received by individual Councillors from a village resident – it was agreed that the Chairman would write to the resident stating that all future correspondence should come through the Clerk and not be sent to individual members of the Council.

Chair

- (c) Correspondence from the ICO – The ICO has received the Parish Council’s submission and a response is awaited.

22/29 FINANCE

- (a) Interim Internal Audit – The Internal Auditor’s interim report (April – December) was noted - the overall internal control procedures are adequate to meet the needs of the AGAR Practitioner’s Guide 2021 and the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended). It was agreed that Cllr. Hurst would look more closely at whether the recommended cyber insurance is necessary. NH
- (b) Accounts Package – It was agreed to sign up to Scribe a purpose-built accounts package for Parish Councils at a cost of £288 + £197 initial set up fee.
- (c) Clerk’s payment – Payment of an additional 10 hours’ salary for work connected to the ICO correspondence was approved. Councillors also paid respect and thanked the Chairman for his very significant input.
- (d) Bank Reconciliation – The bank reconciliations for December and January were noted and approved
- (e) Cheques for February payment were approved:

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100430	£75.00	T. Morgan	Website up-dates (Nov-Jan)
100431	£185.00	Fair Account	Interim Internal Audit (April-Dec)
100432	£3,924.00	Sequoia	Ash - Steep Common
100433	£328.50	HiViz.Co.Uk	Refund - Jeff Graham - Speedwatch Jackets
100434	£1.80	HMRC	Tax & N.I. - Clerk
100435	£745.10	Jenny Hollington	Clerk
100436	£4,035.67	EHDC	Election cost (breakdown requested)
100437	£2,143.22	ElanCity	Speed sign
	£11,438.29		

22/30 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr. Oppenheimer’s monthly report had been circulated prior to the meeting and the following items were discussed:

- Government Response to Landscapes Review – The item on the protection of Green Lanes was noted as it is particularly relevant to Steep residents.
- Motorbike Noise and Nuisance – Police & Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones, is very supportive of plans to tackle motorbike noise on East Hants roads and has agreed to spend £0.5m on average speed cameras for the A32 and A272 focussing on the vicinity of the Loomies motor café.
- BOATS – Cllr. Oppenheimer continues discussions with SDNPA to consider TROs to protect BOATS, and this will be discussed further at a public meeting of SDNPA either in March or May
- Non-crete Bollards – These are made from an eco-friendly sugarcane-based plastic which reduces carbon emissions. The bollards are being trialled across Hampshire.
- Highway Code Changes – Changes are now in effect and motorists need to understand the implications. Concerns were expressed that pedestrians should be respectful of motorists.

Cllr. Oppenheimer’s full report is appended to these Minutes and can be found on the Parish Council website.

22/31 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Cllr. Drew reported on the following items:

- Cllr. Drew said how impressed he was with the report on the Village Bonfire and Firework event and confirmed he would be happy to consider grant support for the next event.
- Motorbike Noise and Nuisance – Cllr. Drew expressed concern that the new average speed cameras will have the effect of displacing motorbikes to surrounding villages and said he would like to see a medium- and long-term plan considered.
- Brickyards Planning Application – The Planning Officer is still considering a response.
- Cllr. Drew reminded everyone that Councillors are volunteers – in the past he has been threatened and had his property vandalised. More recently he has received a letter from a Steep resident which appears to be accusing him of fraud - he has forwarded it to the Legal Department at EHDC for comment.
- Green Funding – Cllr. Drew reminded Steep P.C. to submit the grant application asap for the trees for Steep Common.

22/32 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO GLOVER REVIEW – Cllrs. Holmes, Duthie and Jenny Martin have drafted a response to the consultation which was approved with an addition in respect of small farmers.

22/33 FOOTPATHS – Cllr. Oppenheimer agreed to investigate the issue of the overgrown hedges outside Hayes Cottages with the appropriate Officers.

22/34 ROADS AND TRAFFIC

- (a) **Meeting with Principal Engineer** - Cllrs. Holmes, Cook and Turk had met with Tom Waldron from HCC to show him Steep's most pressing roads issues, including drainage issues in Ashford Lane, potholes in Ridge Common Lane and the condition of the verges and signage on Steep Hollow – Tom has agreed to action these issues asap. Residents are reminded to keep reporting road problems online via the HCC website as this helps HCC prioritise issues. FH
- (b) **Motorbike Noise and Nuisance** – Cllr. Holmes attended the Teams meeting on behalf of Steep P.C. and it was agreed that she should draft a letter to be sent to the District and County Councillor setting out the Parish Council's concerns. FH
- (c) **Speed Indicator for C18** – Following discussion with Stroud Parish Council, it was suggested that Steep P.C. consider the same speed sign as has recently been installed on the A272 in Stroud. The purchase of an Evolis Radar speed sign as per the quotation from Elancity in the sum of £1786 + VAT was approved. The Clerk was asked to liaise with Ian Janes at HCC to request the installation of the ground sockets in the approved locations. Clerk
- (d) **Speed** – Correspondence from the East Hants Co-ordinator of the 20 is Plenty campaign and a resident of Church Road was noted – Cllr. Holmes will take this issue forward. FH
- (e) **Signage Report** – The report is very nearly finalised and will be discussed in more detail at the March meeting. FH
- (f) **Church Road hedges** – The Clerk was asked to write to 2 residents in Church Road whose hedges are obscuring sight lines for traffic. Clerk

22/35 STEEP COMMON – Cllr. Graham will complete the EHDC grant application form for trees to replace the felled Ash. A local landowner has offered 12 Beech trees, which is much appreciated.

22/36 ON-GOING ISSUES – The following items were noted:

- Adhurst St Mary – As previously agreed, a letter will be sent to SDNPA. Clerk
- Ashford Hangers re-planting – A response from the Countryside Rangers will be chased. Chair
- Leak at Lutcombe Pond – Cllr. Oppenheimer is chasing this issue via HCC.
- Lengthsman – The Lengthsman will be asked to tidy up hedges around road signs and footpath signage. Clerk

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- Speedwatch – The Team are very pleased with their new hi-viz jackets (purchased via Cllr. Drew’s District Councillor grant scheme).
- Community Project – Swing at Hayes Cottages – The ad hoc swing has been cut down again by EHDC operatives.
- Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – An advert for volunteers to help organise an event has been included in the February parish newsletter – it is hoped to bring together a committee to organise an event on Steep Common.

22/37 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – The next meeting of Steep Parish Council will be on Monday 7th March 2022 at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS
1 FEBRUARY 2022**

1. Government response to Landscapes Review

I usually put National Park items at the end of my report; but this month something very important has happened so I am putting it at the front! The Government published its response to the Glover Review of Protected Landscapes on 15 January 2022. The response can be read at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-government-response/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-government-response>

Of particular interest to Parish Councillors in Petersfield Hangers Division is a long section in the Government response relating to the protection of Green Lanes in National Parks. I was very pleased about it and hope you will also be pleased. I have included it in full below:

Some country public rights of way and unsealed unclassified roads known as ‘green lanes’ allow for the legal recreational use of motor vehicles. Whilst many users make use of these rights in a responsible way, we have become increasingly aware of damage and disturbance caused by excessive use of off-road motor vehicles on some unsealed routes. This can result in impacts on local wildlife, the special qualities of an area e.g., tranquillity, and make the route

less accessible for other users such as those on foot, bicycles, horseback, or in vehicles used by disabled people. In protected landscapes, these impacts could undermine the statutory purposes of the area.

We are also aware that these unsealed routes often provide essential vehicular access for local residents and businesses, and recognise that many people enjoy using motor vehicles responsibly on green lanes without causing damage or disturbance. Vulnerable groups such as disabled or elderly people are also likely to be particularly reliant on vehicular access in rural areas including via community transport.

We therefore would like to explore the options available for protecting our green lanes while maintaining most public and private access rights, particularly for residents or businesses. This could be achieved by giving greater discretion for National Park Authorities and local highway authorities to use existing powers to restrict use on a case-by-case basis. Alternatively, the government could consider restricting the use of certain motor vehicles on unsealed roads through legislation, but only if this could carefully balance the needs of all users including motorised vehicle users, horse riders, cyclists and walkers, whilst also protecting private access rights.

The response goes on to say that the Government will consider giving National Park Authorities enhanced powers to make Traffic Regulation Orders and Public Space Protection Orders. This would be welcome.

I believe that the Government plans to strengthen the statutory purposes and create a National Landscapes Partnership are also to be welcomed.

There is now a public consultation on the response which runs until 9 April. I would encourage Parish Councillors to consider making collective PC responses as well as individual responses to the Government. We have an opportunity here to highlight the damage done to our byways by vehicles and to encourage the government to make good on its intention to give NPAs more powers to protect green lanes. You can respond to the consultation at this link:

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/future-landscapes-strategy/government-response-to-the-landscapes-review/>

2. BOATs

Following on from the above, Members of the National Park Authority discussed BOATs at a workshop on 27 January. This was an important milestone. The specific problems in East Hampshire (chalky lanes, population density) have been understood and acknowledged. The relevance of this issue to the SDNPA's statutory purposes (to conserve the park and to safeguard access) have been explained. The relevance to the duty to communities has also been appreciated.

I spoke about BOATs in the morning because I had to depart for a Decision Day but I believe my contribution had an impact. The key points I made were the SDNPA can act: it has the power to make TROs and it has the right skills to ensure that the correct admin procedures are followed and that the signage and gate features installed are appropriate to the setting. I also explained why the County Council does not have the resources to fix this issue due to funding demand pressures in social care and children's services and inflation.

The outcome of the workshop was that a paper would come to a public meeting of the SDNPA either in March or May. I look forward to having a full, transparent discussion on this issue with other Members and will report back again after that.

3. Motorbike Noise and Nuisance Parish Forum – reporting back

On 13 January Police and Crime Commissioner Donna Jones hosted a Parish Forum to set out the plans to tackle motorbike noise on roads in East Hampshire. Thank you to all who attended. The two key measures to report on are;

- Two sets of Average Speed Cameras will be placed on the A272 and A32 at the approach to the Meon Hut.
- During the Summer season, prominent signs saying “Meon Valley – Keep Noise to a Minimum” will be displayed along the length of the A272 and A32.

In addition, the police will be undertaking enforcement across East Hants using new tactics such as unmarked police bikes with cameras to record offending. There will also be publicity campaigns on social media to improve compliance.

It is hoped that this package of measures will start to reduce the attractiveness of the area to inconsiderate bikers and will encourage more responsible driving by those bikers that do continue to come here. At the meeting it was agreed that District Councillors will explore the use of Public Space Protection Orders to tackle noisy bikers in our area. We will be taking this forward.

4. Non-crete bollards

I was surprised and pleased by the national coverage for my non-concrete bollards initiative. Instead of ghastly concrete, the bollards are made from an eco-friendly sugarcane-based plastic. This reduces carbon emissions involved in concrete production. Carbon is also captured by the sugarcane as it grows. This is a UK first and it was picked up by the Times, the Telegraph, Daily Mail and BBC. We are trialling the bollards across Hampshire.

5. Mast in Hawkley

The new EE mobile phone mast in Hawkley has been commissioned. I believe that this has improved mobile phone coverage in the Hangers area for both the EE and O2 networks. It also means that mobile broadband over the 4G network may become a good option for those rural houses awaiting better fibre broadband.

6. Highway Code Changes

The changes to the Highway Code, which came into effect last Friday, are good news for our area. Many of our country lanes are regularly used by pedestrians and cyclists. It is welcome that these road users will now be at the top of the hierarchy and motorists will be obliged to give way to them. To avoid confusion and confrontation it is important that motorists understand the changes and adjust their driving habits.

Parish Councils may wish to consider publicising the changes to the Highway Code in their newsletters to raise awareness. The full changes can be read [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29-january-2022>

7. Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations

Hampshire County Council is putting in place plans to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee this year. These will provide opportunities for residents across the county to participate, including through schools, libraries, care homes, and outdoor sites. The primary focus is during the extended bank holiday weekend of Thursday 2 to Sunday 5 June 2022. Two initiatives I would like to highlight are:

- The Queen's Green Canopy in Hampshire – a £0.5million initiative to support tree planting in line with the County Council's wider climate action plan. Advice, guidance, and practical support will be made available to assist schools, organisations, and communities to plant successfully – with the right tree in the right place across Hampshire, and during the planting season (October-March). Activity will include a new woodland at River Hamble Country Park. Commemorative trees will also be planted at Queen Elizabeth Country Park.
- Licoricia statue in Winchester – a life-size bronze statue of Licoricia, an influential medieval Jewish woman, will be unveiled outside The Winchester Arc (formally Winchester Discovery Centre) on 10 February marking the start of Hampshire's Platinum Jubilee programme. This will be a major interfaith event, a key theme of the Jubilee. The County Council is supporting the Licoricia of Winchester Appeal Trust to

develop educational materials about Winchester's medieval Jewish community, its role in society and its royal connections, and to promote religious tolerance and understanding.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER

County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers