

**DRAFT**

**STEEP PARISH COUNCIL**

**CHAIRMAN:** Jim MacDonald

**CLERK:** Jenny Hollington

**Minutes of a Meeting of Steep Parish Council held on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> July 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:** District Cllr. Nick Drew,  
Jenny Hollington, Clerk

There were 2 members of the public present at the meeting.

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
22/107	<u>APOLOGIES</u> – Apologies had been received from County Councillor, Russell Oppenheimer	
22/108	<u>MINUTES</u> – The Minutes of the AGM and the Parish Council meeting of 6 <sup>th</sup> June were approved as correct records of the meetings and duly signed.	
22/109	<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 of the Parish Council role as Sole Managing Trustee of the Village Hall and of the possible conflict of loyalties between the two roles. None declared.	
22/110	<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> – <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Church Road resident requested that land at Church Road remains a Parish Council agenda item despite the suggested shift of emphasis of the group towards the Village Hall land.</li></ul>	
22/111	<u>LAND AT CHURCH ROAD</u> – A report from the Working Group had been circulated to Councillors before the meeting and copies were available at the meeting (Appendix A). The following points were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Website - the new website page is up and running and is aimed at keeping residents informed about the work of the Church Road Working Party – the web page can be accessed via the Steep Parish Council website – <a href="http://www.steep-pc.gov.uk">www.steep-pc.gov.uk</a>.</li><li>• Consultation Events – Two consultation events organised by the Village Hall Trustees to show options for the use of the Village Hall land will be held – the first is on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September and the second during the evening of Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> September.</li><li>• Exhibition – Stuart Wilson was pleased with attendance at the first of his Exhibition events and is aiming to share feedback soon.</li><li>• Planning Application – The Working Party have queried how an application by Wilson Designer homes would be dealt with by Steep Parish Council? Cllr. Hurst noted that the Planning Committee Terms of Reference state that any large or controversial planning application should be discussed at a full Parish Council meeting and he felt that this would be appropriate in respect of an application by Wilson Designer Homes.</li><li>• Working Party Objectives – With the first exhibition by Wilson Designer Homes having been held and communication lines established, it was suggested that the objectives of the group have been achieved and that the group should be suspended (at least for the time being)</li></ul>	

and a new group established to support and accelerate the Village Hall Trustees in developing a range of options for the Village Hall which would include an equal mix of Steep residents and Village Hall Trustees. The new Working Party would be expected to report to the Parish Council as previously.

The full report from the Church Road Working Party is appended to the Minutes and can be found via the Parish Council website.

22/112 ASHFORD HANGERS – There has been no feedback yet from HCC about regeneration or repairs to Lutcombe Pond.

22/113 WEBSITE – A list of requirements for a new website has been produced. Cllr. Andrew Martin will obtain 3 quotes for further discussion at the September meeting. AM/  
JG

22/114 ROADS AND TRAFFIC –

- (a) Village Gates – Cllr. Holmes continues to liaise with Joe Folland at HCC who is in the process of drawing up plans incorporating designs for the new Village gates. The safety audit for the proposed crossing opposite the Cricketers is also being progressed.
- (b) Road Maintenance Issues – Cllr. Holmes reported that several issues have been addressed (including the potholes on Mill Lane) following a village drive-around with the new local HCC Engineer. If residents are aware of any road maintenance issue, they should let Cllr. Holmes know as well as reporting on-line. Cllr. Cook will liaise with the Engineer about drainage issues in Mill Lane as these need to be resolved urgently before repairs are carried out (Mill Lane corner is a case in point). Cllr. Holmes was thanked for her perseverance with the roads issues and for establishing a relationship with the new Engineer.

FH  
TC

2/115 FINANCE –

- (a) Bank Reconciliation – The bank reconciliation to beginning of June had been circulated and was approved.
- (b) Cheque payments – A list of cheques to be paid had been circulated prior to the meeting and these were approved as follows:

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100464	£1,755.00	Hart Landscaping & Tree Services Ltd	Lengthsman
100465	£746.90	Jenny Hollington	Clerk
100466	£139.91	F. Law-Turner	Refund - Adobe Design programme + Peta Print printing cost
	£2,641.81		

22/116 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr. Oppenheimer’s monthly report (Appendix B.) had been circulated prior to the meeting and included the following items:

- Petersfield Eco Fair – The first Petersfield Eco Fair is being held on Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> July – 10.00 a.m. – 4.30 p.m. on Petersfield Heath – all welcome.
- Closure of the A32 – The road has been closed due to flood alleviation works and work is scheduled do last for approximately 15 weeks.
- River Rother Flood Plans – Feedback is being sought from parishes within the River Rother catchment on HCC policies to improve flood risk. Whilst flooding is not an issue that would affect residents of Steep, the Chairman said he would sign up to one of the on-line webinar on community preparedness.

Chair

- Tackling Loneliness with Libraries – Cllr. Oppenheimer is keen to promote Libraries as community hubs which bring people together and help combat loneliness.

Cllr. Oppenheimer's full report will be made available via the Parish Council website.

22/117 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Cllr. Nick Drew gave a report on the following items:

- Compliance – Cllr. Drew continues to chase Steep's on-going compliance issues with relevant officers.
- Grass Cutting – Cllr. Drew has hi-lighted to Officers that the current contract is clearly not working and queried whether there has been a change of practice as grass cuttings are being left on the ground? If this is the case, it hasn't been communicated.
- Grant Applications – Cllr. Drew is receiving a higher number than usual of applications from larger charities and has advised them to approach individual parishes direct.

22/118 STEEP COMMON – The new trees are growing well despite the lack of rain.

22/119 LENGTHSMAN – The Lengthsman will be asked to clean road signs around the parish which are looking very grubby – especially in the Marsh. He will also be asked to cut the verge on the corner of Mill Lane. Cllr. Graham noted that he had done a great job of cutting the hedge back to keep the pavement clear on Stoner Hill but that this work should have been carried out by Radian as the houses belong to them. Nick Drew undertook to find out who the invoice should be sent to via EHDC officers.

Clerk

22/120 FOOTPATHS – Cllr. Jenny Martin advised that she has tried to chase Countryside Services about the help they promised with maintenance issues on Steep footpaths. However, it appears that they are having a complete staff reshuffle and she has been advised that they will be in touch once they have a new Ranger in post. In the meantime, Chris Budd has been asked to up-date his quotes for the work.

JM

22/121 COMMUNITY PROJECT – Cllr. Graham explained that he had been advised that legal fees for a lease on the land at Hayes Cottages would cost in the region of £3,000 but that EHDC agreed that this sum could be added into the grant application EHDC will advise on whether the grant application has been successful during August.

JG

22/122 STEEP WAR MEMORIAL – There haven't been any offers of help with the planting area at the War Memorial. Cllr. Holmes will follow up with local gardeners to see if she can find one to take it on.

FH

22/123 STEEP VILLAGE HALL – The Trustee decision to raise hire fees and to charge the Parish Council for their use of the main hall from September was noted.

22/124 MEETINGS ATTENDED

- Compliance – The Chairman reported on the meeting arranged by Cllr Drew, with Simon Rowberry, Interim Head of Planning, and Gill Kneller, Chief Executive Officer at EHDC, as well as representatives from Sheet and Froxfield Parish Councils. The purpose of the meeting had been to discuss planning issues across each of the parishes and it was noted that there is very definitely a common thread in a lack of communication and feedback from EHDC. The training sessions for Town and Parish Councils promised some years ago have never materialised and will be chased up. In respect of compliance issues at the Brickyards, they accepted that EHDC are under resourced and lack "teeth". However, they are now to receive additional funding and are in the process of recruiting more personnel. The Chairman felt it had been a useful meeting and thanked Cllr. Drew for facilitating.

- EHAP&TC – Simon Rowberry had also attended the recent EHAP&TC (East Hants Association of Parish and Town Councils) Meeting held at Steep Village Hall, to introduce himself and to talk about general compliance/planning issues. Russell Oppenheimer also attended to talk about his new role at HCC which includes Cabinet Lead for Parish & Town Council relations. The on-going issue of the condition of the BOATs was also discussed and it was noted that it is not just parishes in the National Park that are suffering.

22/125 CORRESPONDENCE

- Review of the SDNPA Local Plan – The Local Plan came into existence in 2019 and is now undergoing a review process – details were noted.

22/126 RESIGNATION OF THE PARISH CLERK – Standing Orders were suspended to allow an additional item to be discussed in view of urgent action required. The resignation of the Parish Clerk that day was noted and is a result of the current heavy workload across the Parish Council and the Village Hall which she is unable to keep up with. It was agreed that the Parish Council would start the process of recruiting a new Clerk as soon as possible.

22/127 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – There is no Parish Council meeting in August due to the summer break. The next meeting of Steep Parish Council will be held on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT  
TO  
ALL PARISH COUNCILS  
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS**

**1 JULY 2022**

1. Petersfield Ecofair to be held on Sunday 17 July – 10.00 to 16.30

The first ever Petersfield Ecofair takes place this month. There will be a multitude of stalls and activities on the Petersfield Heath and it promises to be a fun, informative day-out for all the family. Please come along and help spread the word! Here is the spiel about the fair:

*Get tips and ideas for reducing your carbon footprint whether it be by saving energy in your home, upcycling those clothes you no longer want or by getting back on your bike. Learn how you can help increase biodiversity with good gardening practice or by letting your garden grow a little wilder. There will be talks, an art exhibition, children's activities and live music throughout the day, with a choice of food and drink and things to buy, all ethically-sourced and using minimum packaging. Entrance is free so come along on 17 July and have fun.*

**Stallholders:**

East Hampshire Community Rail Partnership, Future Shoots, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Hampshire Bat Group, Hepworth Cycles, Juniper, Liss Men's Shed, Petersfield Area Nappy Library, Petersfield Bicycle Buddies, Petersfield Town Council, Alton Climate Action Network, Proud Mary Soaps, Refill and Replenish, Shine Radio, Southern Water, Wild Candles

**Food and drinks provided by:**

Jo's Kitchen, Earth to Oven, Langhams Brewery

2. Flood Alleviation works and closure of A32

I am very conscious that the closure of the A32 has caused great inconvenience for residents in many parts of the Hangers. I use the route through Farringdon frequently as I have children at school near Alton so I can personally testify to the annoyingness of this closure.

I would acknowledge that engagement with Parishes prior to the commencement could have been better. The reality is that the team did not have a long lead-in time and so they did not have the opportunity to do a more proactive engagement. They are now working hard to develop that dialogue with Parishes.

The aim of the flood alleviation scheme is to improve the management of both surface and groundwater conveyed by ordinary watercourses adjacent or near to the A32 highway through the village of Lower Farringdon, and by a main river to Chawton village. The scheme will achieve this by ensuring that the existing drainage system, which consists of ordinary watercourses (ditches and pipes), less well-defined overland flow paths, the main river and highway drainage can function to its maximum capacity. The flood alleviation scheme will benefit the communities of Farringdon and Chawton and enable a major highway to remain open if a similar flood event to that which occurred in the winter of 2013/14 were to occur again. This will of course bring benefits to a much wider area.

Hampshire County Council has appointed Milestones to carry out the drainage works and the work began on Monday 27th June. The construction phase is scheduled to last up to 15 weeks. Due to the nature of the work and for safety reasons it is necessary to close the A32, Gosport Road during this time. Some weekend working may be required to complete certain elements of the work.

There will be 24hr/7day road closure however there will be a period from 5th-16th August when the road will be open to allow increased traffic movements associated with the Jalsa Salana and Boomtown festivals. A signed diversion route via A31 and A272 is in place and a diversion route plan is available on the scheme website (see link below). Further details and updates on the progress of the scheme are available on the County Council's webpage:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/flooding/strategies/scheme-a32-farringdon>

A letter was sent out to residents and businesses prior to works beginning. Subsequent to those, a meeting was held with the local Parish Councils to look at concerns about the volume of traffic that may occur through their villages from those drivers that choose not to follow the official diversion. The project team is carefully considering each point that has been raised and, where possible, implementing actions immediately. The effectiveness of the diversion routes will be closely monitored.

### 3. Rother River Flood Plans: Feedback sought

Councillors may be aware that flood management is now undertaken on a “catchment” basis. There are 12 catchments in Hampshire and here in Petersfield Hangers we are all within the Rother catchment area.

Policies have been identified to tackle flooding issues and information has been provided for producing more detailed Action Plans in the future. The [draft Catchment Plans](#) are now available for view on the County Council’s website and the Authority is inviting people to comment on those plans via an [online survey](#) before it closes at midnight on Thursday 21 July.

The proposed policies that could be applied in priority areas involve stricter measures for consenting works on rivers, ditches and streams and surface water drainage in planning applications; lowering the threshold for significant flood investigations (known as Section 19 Reports); and identifying where new flood defences could be needed. We aim, with the final plans, to establish an efficient, effective, and consistent approach to address flood risk within Hampshire.

### 4. Tackling loneliness with our Libraries

In my new role as Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage and Rural Affairs I am keen to promote Libraries as community hubs which bring people together and reduce isolation. Our libraries offer a welcoming environment where people can meet, relax, or learn in a safe and welcoming environment. Some examples of the services from Hampshire libraries include:

- Book Clubs and [Digital Readers](#) - keen readers can join groups that meet in person and online.
- [Classes and courses](#), including wellbeing classes, baby rhyme time, story time, baby play, construction club, yoga, computer skills, knit and natter, scrabble club, craft clubs and more.
- The [Home Library Service](#) for those who can’t get to the library due to ill-health, disability or caring responsibilities - books are delivered to homes on a regular basis.
- Ukraine connections - local libraries are hosting events where Ukrainians can meet for a friendly chat and find out about library services.
- [Volunteering](#) opportunities.
- Free public Wifi and [help to get online](#)

Loneliness is an important issue that can affect both mental as well as physical health and affects people of all ages. Being able to connect with others can help enormously and our libraries offer a fantastic way to do this. If any resident or someone they know is feeling lonely or isolated, I would urge them to contact their local library or go online to find out what is available.

I was delighted that Emma Noyce, Hampshire County Council's Assistant Director of Culture and Information Services, was awarded a British Empire Medal in The Queen's Jubilee Honours in recognition of her role in how public libraries supported communities throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### 5. Community preparedness

Councillors may be interested to learn more about local incident response during emergencies. There are three free Zoom webinars taking place this month which I would like to bring to your notice. These take place at the following times:

6.00pm Monday 4 July

2.00pm Thursday 14 July

6.00pm Thursday 21 July

This module is an introduction to what you can expect from the emergency services when responding to emergencies in your community. You will gain an overview and understanding of the structure and roles that are undertaken, to allow you to understand where your role fits in and who you should be communicating with on the ground. This module also provides tips and guidance on setting up procedures for community volunteers to cope with a variety of scenarios.

This free training comes thanks to funding from Scottish & Southern Electricity Network's (SSEN) Resilient Communities Fund.

To Register for one of the events please visit this link:

<https://www.communitiesprepared.org.uk/online-events/>

**RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER**  
**County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers**

## **CHURCH ROAD WORKING GROUP REPORT TO STEEP PARISH COUNCIL – 4 July 2022**

The Working Group recently held its ninth meeting.

Amongst other topics, we finalised our website material following a small technical issue. The site is now working well, although we continue to refine it and welcome any feedback. I gave the group feedback from the Trustees' AGM discussions on Church Road and we agreed to draft a leaflet to give residents early notice of the September consultation event about the Hall. This has now been printed and is in the process of being circulated.

We discussed our experience of the Wilson Designer Homes consultation event on 15 June and felt that it had gone fairly well. We understand that there was a reasonable amount of feedback from the 84 attendees. WDH will share feedback with us in a couple of weeks' time (and we will share with them any feedback arising from our website).

One question on which we will need help from the trustees, is the question of car parking spaces. It would be useful to have a revised statement of the required number of spaces in the next couple of weeks. I'm hopeful that trustees will be available to provide this.

The current proposal by the developer for the Steep in Need site includes 9 houses – 4 affordable/almshouses and 5 market homes. This appears to be in line with the SDNPA Local Plan policy for the site and overall planning guidelines. It has also been a consistent position for some months (having reduced from an original proposal of 10). Noting that there had been some community feedback expressing a preference for fewer houses, the Working Group undertook to explore this again with Stuart Wilson. He was sensitive to the preferences expressed but reminded us that four affordables out of nine homes exceeds the policy guidance; a reduction to eight would reduce the affordable element to three; a reduction to seven would reduce it to two (see attached policy note). He anticipated that this would be a significant discussion with SDNPA when his next pre-app was submitted and proposed to leave things unchanged until then.

The Working Group also discussed and welcomed a substantial statement of feedback on Stuart's earlier testing options document from Genevieve Hayes and the Steep Together group. We are in the process of arranging a further meeting to establish as much common ground as possible.

I think – after all of that - that now is a good moment to stand back and look at where we are and what should happen next.

The Church Road Working Group was established as a sub-committee of the Parish Council at the beginning of March 2022. Since then, it has had nine formal meetings and worked to improve communications and relationships with key partners. It has established a new website to strengthen communication with the community on this topic and has provided advice to Stuart Wilson where possible. We are very grateful for the work of all the members of the group – both Councillor/trustees and residents.

Having now passed the first formal consultation event on the Steep in Need development, with communication channels established, and with the next steps in the consultation processes clear, I think that it is appropriate for the Parish Council to step aside in order to be able to take a more detached view of any planning application. The one task in the Working Group's terms of reference that we have not addressed is how the Parish Council should fulfil its responsibilities in handling any such planning application. I suggest that this task should be handed to the Planning Committee to make a recommendation to the full Council in due course. I and other members of the Working Group would be happy to contribute to that discussion.

Against that background, I therefore feel it is time to recommend that the Church Road Working Group should be suspended (at least for the time being) and a new group established to support and accelerate the work of the Village Hall Trustees. The primary objective of this group will be to ensure the preparation of a range of options for the Hall and its surrounding land; to manage the highest quality consultation about such options in September; to analyse feedback arising from that consultation and to manage the many processes that will be needed if any changes to the Village Hall building or site are adopted as a result. This is a significant volume of work and we would like to continue to involve some residents in the group. It is obviously important that members of this new group understand and fully endorse the direction of travel and are prepared to commit time to the project.

My initial proposal for membership of this group – the Hall Working Group – which will be responsible to the trustees has yet to be confirmed but as a starting point I suggest:

Jenny Martin – Trustee & Chair

Freddie Homes – Trustee

Andrew Martin – Trustee

Fran Box – Resident

Jill Manson – Resident

Peter Cruttenden – Resident

All of these have expressed their willingness to be involved in the new group.

We may involve one or more additional residents in the work, and we will certainly need to involve individual trustees from time to time in the various tasks. I would also propose that the trustees meet as a whole group monthly over the next six months to ensure that the Hall Working Group is supported and guided appropriately.

The Hall working group will continue to report to the Parish Council at the monthly meetings.

Having established the new web page, we will continue to keep this up-to-date with all the news related to Church Road including any additional thinking on the Hall site.

I would welcome Councillor's views on this proposal to suspend the Church Road Working group after the next meeting at which the feedback from WDH's consultation will be available and to launch the Hall Working Group with immediate effect.

Jenny Martin

Vice Chair

## APPENDIX

### SELECTED SDNPA POLICIES on AFFORDABLE HOMES

#### SDNPA Policy SD27:

##### SITE SIZE

3 homes	Meaningful financial contribution, to be negotiated case-by-case
4 – 5 homes	1 affordable home
6 – 7 homes	2 affordable homes, at least 1 of which is a rented affordable tenure
8 homes	3 affordable homes, at least 1 of which is a rented affordable tenure
9 homes	3 affordable homes, at least 2 of which is a rented affordable tenure
10 homes	4 affordable homes, at least 2 of which is a rented affordable

**SDNPA Policy SD28:** Affordable Homes sets out a requirement for residential developments of 3 or more homes to provide for affordable housing. This provision should be on-site on sites with capacity for 4 or more homes. The level of provision is determined by the overall capacity of the site in terms of potential number of homes, with a minimum 50% of the total to be affordable on sites of 11 or more homes. The policy also sets out how many affordable homes should be provided as either social rented or affordable rented tenure (as opposed to shared ownership or other forms of low-cost ownership). It should be noted that the provision of affordable homes in the South Downs National Park is a priority for the Authority. Planning proposals should start from the position that the provision of affordable homes is paramount. Given the recently examined and adopted Local Plan, which includes an assessment of its viability, any planning applications that do not comply with Policy SD28 will be refused and the decision will be defended at appeal.