



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Meeting of Recreation & Open Spaces Committee held on
Wednesday 27th November 2024 at 10.00am in the Henfield Hall

Present: Cllr G Perry (Chairman), R Kendall, F Ayres, D Grossmith, D Jemmett, A May and C Simmonds.

In Attendance: Mr J Bowes (Henfield Football Club - HFC) Mr J Willis (Tree Warden), Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager (OM)) and Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator (PA)).

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

There were none.

2. APOLOGIES

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 23RD OCTOBER 2024

These were approved, they were signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

Mr Bowes stated that there had been conversations between HFC and Grasstex and that he would be touring the playing fields the following day. He said that during the Leisure Centre (LC) works it was discovered that a water pipe hadn't been connected correctly near the LC and this had now been connected and it was hoped this would alleviate at least some of the flooding problems on the Kings Field. The Chairman said that the large tank being installed underground to collect rainwater near the new Padel Courts will also help. Mr Bowes said that HFC had requested some cabling be installed whilst the work was going on to provide power for future floodlighting. The Chairman asked that any flood lighting be those recommended by Dark Skies and Mr Bowes said he was aware of the types as he was aware of the differing lights and filters as he ran an electrical contracting business, he said that he would look at the same types of lights for the remainder of the Rothery Floodlights when they undertook replacement.

Mr Bowes confirmed that next year's Football Tournament would take place on 17-18th May.

He said that they were hoping to improve the look of the Eric Holder Pavilion and were considering removing the window grills and advertising hoardings, possibly using a digital board instead. They would also look to increase the size of front door for easier access for all and decorating inside. The Chairman asked that they contact the Access Henfield Group who are looking at access for all at various businesses, shops and venues around the village.

Cllr Jemmett joined the meeting at 10.10am.

Mr Bowes said that HFC wanted a space that could be used by others outside the football community. He said that they were considering grants for equipment which might help with maintaining the grass without the need for the matting as well as improving the appearance of the building. The Chairman said that seven trees had been purchased to go around the edge of the LC car park and wondered if HFC had any objections. Mr Bowes said that they would be fully supported and would provide shade which was welcomed. He said that pitches can be moved and space was not a problem. It had recently come to light that a French Drain was located to the side of the car park, Cllr Grossmith said he did not think this would be a problem to the trees which should be planted 1.5 - 2metres from the edge of the concrete anyway. Cllr May said it would be advisable to look at the site soon with a view to deciding on the location for the trees but was reminded that there was a lot of heavy vehicles there at the moment working on the Padel Courts which were predicted to be finished early in the new year. It was confirmed that a previous Tree warden had suggested this area as suitable for tree planting. The Clerk said there was already a tree there about 1.5 metres from the car park edge. The OM said that future plans for the Skate Park would mean an increase in its footprint.

Cllr May said that the Works Team had recommended that the holes for the new trees needed to be prepared well before arrival of the trees and Cllr Grossmith said that the holes should be twice the size of the root ball.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded everyone that there was a Tree Walk the following day and all are welcome although online booking is recommended.

6. PLAYING FIELDS

- 1 Wantley Field Licence – It was confirmed that three copies of the prescribed sign were purchased and placed on the three places requested by WSCC. These could be changed once the Signage Working Group had prepared a policy on signs if necessary.
- 2 Playing Field Strategy – Notes from Clerk after the tour around the village – The Chairman asked if there were any queries with this document and map and she said that the Basketball Court could be marked for other games. Cllr May said that the developments were now on the HDC website and there might be more updates in the future. It was agreed by all that this could be sent to Rob MacDonald at HDC.

ACTION POINT: PA to send a copy of both to HDC.

- 3 Damage to Memorial Field and Kingsfield by Contractor – Mr Bowes said that Grasstex would make good the damage to the two fields. He said that he would keep this Committee informed.
- 4 Damage to Swales – The Clerk said that there was very little left of the rails now. It was agreed that notices should be produced and put up indicating the danger of the water but that the rails would not be replaced. It was hoped that the Works Team could make sure that this area was kept as tidy as possible.

ACTION POINT: PA to prepare signs for near to the Swales for Works Team to erect nearby.

7. HENFIELD FOOTBALL CLUB

- 1 To consider request to use matting and shingle near Eric Holder pavilion for the storage of goals – This was covered in the Open Forum.

Mr Bowes also said that communications between HFC and Henfield Cricket Club (HCC) was much better now, and that communication problems between HFC and LC were all now resolved.

Mr Bowes left the meeting at 10.50am.

8. HENFIELD CRICKET CLUB

- 1 To consider repairs/renovation to Cricket Club car park – Cllr Jemmett said that HCC were prepared to fund £5,000 towards the renovation of the HCC car park, this being 25% of likely cost. Cllr Grossmith agreed to look at the area with HCC and find the best solution so that quotes could be sought.

ACTION POINT: Cllr Grossmith agreed to liaise with HCC about what was needed and likely costs and requirements. (eg - necessity of planning application)

9. TREE WORK

- 1 Trees for the Kings Field – to receive an update and consider quotation for Tree Guards.

IT WAS PROPOSED BY Cllr Simmonds, SECONDED BY Cllr Ayres and AGREED BY ALL to purchase the tree guards at a cost of £275.50 plus VAT.

- 2 Tree Survey – It was confirmed that this has been booked for 8th and 9th April 2025.
Mr Willis said that a tree had come down on the triangle on Broomfield Road causing a power outage nearby. He felt that the huge conifers there with overhang branches may still need felling or reducing.

10. COMMUNITY ORCHARD

- 1 Request from a resident to purchase a fruit tree and memorial plaque – Mr Willis agreed to speak with PA about this.

11. YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

- 1 Daffodil Bulbs – The Chairman confirmed that some of 500 bulbs had been planted on Manor Way CRV.
- 2 Biodiversity Exhibition 9th December 6.30-8.30pm in the Garden Room. The Chairman confirmed that posters had been printed and circulated as well as adding to HPC social Media posts. Cllr May agreed to look at some photos of the newly planted verge trees and pass on if appropriate for display. The Chairman said that it would be celebrating the Walk for Malcom, the work of iNaturalist and that HDC Rangers have been invited.
- 3 Youth project 29th October 2024 – It was confirmed that a small group of children and adults assisted Cllr Perry, Ms Campsey and Tree Wardens with this planting project around playground area and on the raised bank behind the goal at the Rothery Field.

12. VERGES

- 1 To consider final recommendations from Verge Management Working Group – Minutes and Policy circulated
Cllr Kendall said that he was impressed with the detail of the documents and that he had not realised how many variables there were with regards grass cutting. He noted that the verge at Wantley Hill and whether it be planted with hedging was outstanding as was the creation of a Community Road Verge (CRV) at Manor Way, both of which would be voted upon at the next full council meeting. There was some discussion about what changes to the village entrance might come about as a result of the new development at Parsonage Farm. The Chairman said that Henfield is a village which cares about Biodiversity and that the Parish Council should reflect that. She said that she was unable to make the meeting but hoped that others from this Committee would put this view forward. She also said that a common theme to come from the Working Group was in allowing the Works Team to use their knowledge and experience to make judgements on some of the work required and when. She stressed that a CRV did not mean leaving the grass unattended, but it allowed for the Parish Council to make decisions on the frequency of cutting, the height of the grass and the choice of other plants planted there. The Chairman confirmed that more CRV signs would be requested from WSCC.

ACTION POINT: PA to liaise with WSCC about these signs and request additional ones to mark the existing CRVs.

13. TRAILS AND SAFE ROUTES

- 1 Henfield Trails – The Chairman said that some of the walks previously noted on the website were no longer walkable and that there may be some changes to Hidden Henfield website. Mr Willis said he had walked the existing three walks and amended the details as necessary and hoped to create at least one but maybe two further walks. His work originally started by the late Cllr Malcom Eastwood. He hoped these would cover the East and North of Henfield and that Mr Ainscough had provided photos as well as input for the website, It was confirmed that the new maps could be printed possibly with the addition of the HPC Coat of Arms.

ACTION POINT: Cllr Ayres to liaise with Mr Willis about the maps and arrange for them to be printed and also discuss if Parish Council wants Coat of Arms included.

- 2 Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) Craggits Lane and Bishop Close - The Chairman said that Cllr Morgan has spoken to the landowners along this footpath and feels that it might be advisable to get this defined as a Public Right of Way PROW not just a footpath, he wagers to submit a DMMO to WSCC from Church Street to High Street. The Clerk said that WSCC provided a definitive map for us to use and that to qualify 20 people would have to confirm that they have known or walked this route for 20 years or more.
- 3 WSCC email about Public Rights of Way Planned Improvements – This was noted.
- 4 Chair – Don't lose your way routes –The Chairman reminded all that this project was to restore lost footpath routes and included several local routes previously suggested by the Parish Council's Safe Routes group. The committee noted that some of these routes had good evidence and some were still being researched.

14. BUDGETS

- 1 To discuss the Budget for 2025-2026
The Clerk confirmed that the budget had reduced to 95.7% of this year's budget partly as a result of HFC taking on more responsibility for the playing fields. He added that there was back up for Field Maintenance if needed. He said that the budgets had been discussed at FRC committee meeting the week earlier and will be on the agenda for Full Council Meeting next week, then back to FRC in December before final agreement in January at Full Council Meeting. The Clerk said that at the moment it looked like a 6.8% increase in Precept for the next financial year which equates to £8.00 per home.

15. BUSINESS PLAN

- 1 Outdoor Gym – The OM said this was likely to be on the Rothery along the fence and likely to be a fixed pieces of equipment such as Monkey Bars rather than those with moveable parts. Cllr Ayres felt that this sort of equipment was expensive and she was not sure it would be used very much. The Chairman said that it had been asked for by a number of residents over a number of years. It was agreed that this would be passed to CYP Committee for further discussion.
- 2 Cllr May asked when a new Business Plan would be needed and the OM said that the current one runs out next year.

16. WORKS TEAM

The Clerk said that the Works Team were checking the roads where flooding has occurred this morning and might be doing extra work on the Common.

17. CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk confirmed that 58.3% of the year had elapsed and expenditure was 45% of budget. He confirmed that he had applied for £1,000 for the service agreement from WSCC but was awaiting payment. Cllr May said that she felt that there was a history of underspending by this Committee over recent years, The clerk said that he believed there would be some expenditure on Biodiversity at the end of the year, he also said that generally this Committee spends more or less the budget and confirmed any money remaining went into General Reserves.

18. CORRESPONDENCE

There were none.

19. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

A reminder was given of the Late Night Shopping event on the High Street on 8th December. Cllr May asked about ownership of Cagefoot Lane and the Clerk said it was privately owned but no one was aware of the owner.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

22nd January 2025

The Meeting Closed at 11.39am.