

Greatham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Greatham Parish Council held at Greatham Village Hall
on Monday 1st December 2008 at 7.30 p.m.

Present Cllrs A Bridgman, A J Booton, P J Larner, C A Rudd. D Redman
Also present Mrs A Rozario (clerk)

151/08 Apologies for Absence A J Ascherl, A Fellows

152/08 Chairman's Announcements
The Chairman pointed out the fire escapes in the event of a fire.

153/08 Declarations of Interest None

154/08 Public Question Time
It was **RESOLVED** that the meeting be adjourned for 15 minutes in order for the Councillors to discuss topics with members of the public.
No points of interest. Standing orders were then reinstated.

155/08 Approval of Minutes of meeting held on 3rd November 2008

RESOLVED: Proposed by Cllr Booton, Seconded by Cllr Larner, with all in favour, the Minutes of the meeting of the Greatham Parish Council held on 3rd November 2008 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

156/08 Matters arising from the Minutes. No matters arising from the Minutes.

157/08 Reports from County and District Councillors

District Councillor, Mrs Judy Onslow was not present to make a report.

County Councillor Michael Cartwright was present. He thanked the clerk for sending him details of the meeting which he had not received before and said he would come to meetings when he could.

There were two points he wished to make. The first was with regard to the footpaths issue. He said the Parish Council might find it useful to obtain a copy of the Countryside Access booklet available from Hampshire County Council.

The second point was with regard to the parking at Woodland Cottages. He has spoken to the Highways Department and been advised that there is no restriction at the moment and the residents of the cottages are able to park on the road outside their homes. To try and get double yellow lines instated would be a lengthy process and would need to have reports carried out by Highways and the Police.

Cllr Booton agreed but said that 50/60% of villagers would say that it was an accident waiting to happen. It is a serious problem and needs action taking. It was also noted that when planning permission was sought the Parish Council did object on the grounds that there was not enough parking at the cottages, but the District Council still permitted the development.

County Councillor Cartwright will ask that this matter be put on the agenda at the next Highways Council meeting.

A member of the public then added that the traffic calming in Greatham is not working. Selborne was given as an example, whose traffic is far worse. Apparently the villagers of Selborne park in the road to stop people driving too fast. The point was put that by having the cars parked in the road outside Woodland Cottages, they were naturally slowing people down.

Cllr Booton pointed out that because of the layout of the village, it was not the same. It was also pointed out that the traffic calming outside the village hall was a hazard.

Cllr Cartwright did point out that EHDC was not in the wrong by allowing this development through as the Government standards state that only one parking space per house was needed.

Another member of the public, who stated they lived close to where the cars are parked, said that they quite often heard wheels locking up when drivers had to brake heavily to avoid an accident.

158/08 Current planning applications:

There were no current planning applications.

Cllr Booton confirmed that an application had been received for a storage barn at Forest Side Farm. This was received after the last meeting and the consulting time was 10 days from when it was received, therefore there was not enough time to discuss.

Springwood Stables – This was discussed at the planning meeting on the 13th November and a letter had been written to EHDC. The owner commented that EHDC have visited the stables and they are happy with the lighting.

159/08 Financial Report

Cllr Bridgman presented the report prepared by RFO.

- a) **Bank Reconciliation** – The balance on 30/11/08 for the reserve account was £34,008.55. The balance on 30/11/08 for the current account was £340.57. The balance for the Old Church account was £10,909.95.

b) **Schedule of Payments**

Kebur (rope playground)	£95.50
Petersfield CAB (grant)	£200.00
Clerk's fees	£324.00
Clerk's expenses	£37.64
HMRC (PAYE tax)	£81.00
NJH Landscapes (Sept and October)	£120.00
Total	£858.14

- (i) Transfer of £1000 to cover the above expenditure
Proposed by Cllr Rudd. Seconded by Cllr Redman
- (ii) The clerk's fees, expenses and payment to HMRC were agreed.
- (iii) A grant application had been received from Petersfield CAB. Cllr Bridgman suggested a grant payment of £200 to help with the running costs of the CAB.
Proposed by Cllr Rudd and seconded by Cllr Booton.

It was agreed that points 10 and 11 on the agenda would be dealt with later in the meeting.

160/08 Dates for Meetings in 2009

The schedule of dates for meetings to be held in 2009 was agreed. The Clerk would book the village hall.

161/08 Wolfmere Lane Access Track

Cllr Bridgman reported on the situation regarding the access track into the field. The access track was not needed to gain access to the field but it was owned by Mr Shea. Wheel clamping has been threatened on the access track. The fees were £150 for the release of a wheel clamp and £250 if the vehicle was towed away.

A member of the public stated that a letter had previously been sent to the residents offering an opportunity to discuss the issue of the track but nobody had taken up this offer.

Cllr Booton said that adverse possession should be taken by the residents of Wolfmere Lane as they have used the land as their own and looked after the land as their own land. This had carried on for 40 years (since 1968) and so adverse possession was applicable.

Another member of the public, who said that he did not own the land but a member of his family did, stated that the strip of land in Wolfmere Lane had been bought as a separate package of land and had not been bought with the field. There had been a letter sent out to the residents of Wolfmere Lane asking if anyone wanted to buy the land. He thought adverse possession was not relevant on this bit of land as it was not enclosed. He stated that the land in question was a strip down the side of about 10 foot. He had no dispute that there was access across the land. However the land was owned by the family member who did not want any parking on his land.

Cllr Bridgman said that he had seen the Land Registry records and it showed that both parcels of land are owned by a Mr D Shea.

Cllr Larner said he was not familiar with the site and could it be described. Mr Shea, who claimed he is not the owner of the land, described the strip of land. Cllr Larner asked what price would be acceptable for the residents of Wolfmere to purchase the land. Another member of the public stated that several residents had put in "without prejudice" offers and no reply had been received from Mr Shea's solicitors.

Signs have been put up saying "do not park". A member of the public stated that he had lived in Wolfmere Lane for 45 years and since 1969 no-one has ever said that you cannot park cars there.

Cllr Bridgman said that the Parish Council must look at the facts. The new owner was not intending to use the track as a gate has been put in on the opposite side of the field. He can offer it for sale. If residents feel that they could claim for adverse possession then this would be decided in a court of law. Cllr Booton said that this was a moral issue and not just a legal issue.

Cllr Bridgman said Greatham Parish Council has no legal power over this matter; the District Council and County Council have the power to intervene.

The residents said they would like to be supported by the Greatham Parish Council over the matter of Wolfmere Lane.

Mr Shea stated that when the land was purchased, 3 letters had been sent out and there has been no response. He also stated that the land is no longer for sale under any circumstances. Mr Shea also stated that Cllr Rudd was arrested for verbal abuse against him. Although this was not relevant to the discussion, Cllr Rudd confirmed she had not been arrested and had no criminal record.

Cllr Larner reported on NALC document regarding wheel clamping. This states that the amount of the de-clamping fee must be reasonable. The release charge of £150 was not a reasonable amount for a track in a village.

It was confirmed that Wolfmere Lane is owned by Highways and that cars are now having to park in the road and on the pavements instead of parking in the track.

The Parish Council will write to the District Council and ask if there is anything they can do. At one point the County Council had said they would adopt the track and it was asked if the County Council would consider doing this again.

Cllr Bridgman said the Parish Council would check with the Highways Department of the County Council. It was agreed that the matter would be taken up with the District Council and the County Council to identify the rights of the residents of Wolfmere Lane. The owner does still own the land, although it has not been used for access since 1968 and therefore access rights may have been surrendered.

A resident of the village was offended by the leaflet, saying it was racist against travellers. The chairman pointed out this did not appear to be in any way a racist term.

It was felt by some that the owner of the land should try and be more a part of the village and not threaten other residents.

Cllr Bridgman then spoke about the field on Longmoor Road which is also owned by Mr D Shea. No planning applications have been made, but it was of concern to the Parish Council that an attempt might be made to develop the field. The land is designated as agricultural land, although it was sold for approximately £100,000 which is not in keeping with the price of agricultural land.

Mr Shea stated that Dave Swallow of EHDC had been consulted regarding the field and there had been 7 site visits with Mr Swallow. Mr Shea said that should the field be developed it would be dealt with by the correct application through the District Council.

162/08 Budget 2009/2010

Cllr Lerner reported on the draft budget he has prepared. It was based on the last three years and the present year. He ran through all the different headings. The Council has about £10,000 running costs each year, but reserves have built up, mostly due to sorting out the playground drainage.

Cllr Lerner said that £15,000 had been earmarked for the drainage of the playground, with £2,000 for the Old Church and £6,000 for a bus shelter.

It is to be proposed that the precept for the village be kept at £12,000, so the Parish Council would still have £17,000 to spend on extras. The Parish Council would need to submit their request for the precept in January 2009 so a decision needs to be made at the next meeting in January.

Cllr Bridgman agreed that the precept should be kept down this year and agrees this is the right figure but said that the precept for 2010/2011 might need to be increased.

Cllr Lerner asked for input from residents, and if there was anything specific they would like to see achieved in the village.

A member of the public asked if the children's playground could be painted to make it a bit more attractive to the children and could the locks be fixed again. The painting of the playground was not in the budget, but this could be considered.

Another member of the public suggested that the grass verges near the school should be put to a lay-by as they are in such a bad state, or possibly have a black rubber matting put down to protect the grass verge but still allows cars to park on it. The Parish Council will write to the Highways Department of Hampshire County Council to arrange a site visit and ask for their suggestion.

It was decided to defer this matter to January to make a decision.

163/08 Reports of Representatives

(a) Coryton Almshouses

Cllr Booton reported that he had attended the meeting. The issue of number 3's daughter is being addressed legally so there are no complications.

(b) Village Hall

Cllr Ascherl was not available to report and had not been able to attend the Village Hall meeting.

(c) HALC Nothing to report.

(d) Old Church

A Carol service was to be held at the Old Church on Saturday 6th December at 5.30 p.m. It was being arranged by the Manor House and Councillor Booton was providing the mulled wine.

Cllr Bridgman confirmed that a meeting with the Old Church Committee had been arranged for 7.00 p.m. on Friday 5th December. It was confirmed that the clerk would attend to take the minutes.

(e) Transport and Highways

This subject had been covered earlier by Councillor Cartwright.

(f) Footpaths and Tree Warden

Cllr Fellows not available to report. The clerk confirmed that she was awaiting an e-mailed copy of the report to be able to send it on to Hampshire County Council as this was how they have requested the report to be sent. The clerk also reported that Barry Lockyer had left Hampshire County Council and it was now a Mr David Marshall who is based at Queen Elizabeth Country Park.

(g) Planning Committee

No planning meeting was arranged as to date there had been no planning applications received.

(h) Playground Committee

Cllr Bridgman confirmed he had prepared letters to send to the contractors. The quotes should be received before the January meeting and the work has been asked to be carried out before March 2009.

Cllr Bridgman gave the clerk two invoices received from N J H Landscaping for the grass cutting at the playground. It was agreed that these should be paid.

Cllr Bridgman read the report prepared by the clerk regarding the annual inspection of the playground. It was proposed that the inspection should be carried out now at the cost of £195 plus VAT. It was also agreed that the next inspection would take place in May 2009 as this was the usual month that Play Safety would undertake the inspections and the cost would then only be £63 plus VAT each year. Proposed by Cllr Larner and seconded by Cllr Rudd.

164/08 Selborne Road Footpath

Cllr Bridgman confirmed that he had been in touch with the estate agents for Forge House and they were trying to contact the owners. Cllr Redman confirmed that the field in question was owned by Forge House.

165/08 Application for a bus shelter

The Councillors looked at the quotes received for bus shelters the clerk had obtained. A member of the public requested a bus shelter on behalf of her two children. It was proposed to go outside the school, where the wooden bench was already sited, possibly being built around the bench. Cllr Larner said he would consult with the school as to the siting of a bus shelter so near to the school. Concern was given to the safety of the children if the bus shelter was on the opposite side of the road to where they actually caught the bus from.

Cllr Booton asked if there were enough people using that particular bus stop to justify a bus shelter. 3 children use the bus stop every day to go to school in Alton. There may well be more children using the bus stop to go to Bohunt.

Another point that was asked to be considered was whether either the Bakersfield residents might be needier of a bus stop, or the bus stop on the Selborne Road as more people use it. The matter was deferred to the next meeting. Cllr Larner confirmed he would speak to Greatham Primary School.

166/08 Grant Application Form

The grant application form was proposed by Cllr Larner. It was discussed and felt that the present way of dealing with grant applications was sufficient and therefore no form was required.

167/08 Action Log

Cllr Larner reported on the use of an action log, to ensure that actions are carried out and not forgotten. Cllr Booton confirmed it did make things clear. The clerk was to produce the action log. Proposed by Cllr Larner and seconded by Cllr Rudd. All in favour.

168/08 Any Other Business for next meeting

It was agreed that the following items would be on the agenda for the meeting in January.

- (i) Budget 2009/2010
- (ii) Bank accounts – to enable the clerk to access information.

169/08 Date and place of next meeting

Monday 5th January 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in Greatham Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.