

Meeting Environment Committee, Clapham Parish Council
13th February 2024 at 7:00pm

Parish Council Members in attendance: Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS) – Chair
Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG) – Vice Chair
Cllr. John Keech (JK)
Cllr. Michael Walmsley (ML)
Cllr. John Reid (JR)
Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL)
Cllr. Eric Cooper (EC)
Cllr. Charlie Tomkins (CT)

Apologies Received: Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF)
Cllr. John Reid (JR)

Not in attendance:

Clerk to the Council: Rosemary Plum (RP)

Members of the Public: None

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr. Jacky Fraser
- Cllr. John Reid

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Charlie Tomkins declared an interest in all matters relating to JDT Contracts.

3. Open Forum (*Open to the public for 10 minutes*)

- a) IG raised concern raised about the tremendous amount of dog fouling. Particularly noticeable in Highbury Grove and Mountpleasant Road and definitely increased in recent months. RP to investigate additional signs around the village. RP
- b) EC requested update on Borough Gulley clearance. Borough Cllr. Weir should be attending the March Parish Council meeting and will be able to provide further information.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting held 12th December 2023

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Michael Walmsley

SECONDED: Cllr. Ian Gaskin

5. **Matters Arising** (*for information only*)

Nothing to report that isn't already on the Agenda for this meeting.

6. **Clerk's Report** (*for information only*)

Nothing to report that isn't already on the Agenda for this meeting.

7. **Millennium/Community Gardens**

a) Consider tree/hedge report & quotation

- The Parish Council has received a quote of £810 from JDT Contracts for clearance and pruning of shrubs, trees and general overgrowth in Millennium Park.
- All agreed the Park looks shabby and tired and maintenance work should start as soon as possible.
- After the initial maintenance, Parish Council to try and build a volunteer support group for ongoing care of the Park.

PROPOSAL: The Environment Committee accepts the quote of £810+VAT from JDT Contracts for clearance work to be carried out in Millennium Park.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Ian Gaskin

SECONDED: Cllr. John Keech

VOTE: Unanimous

b) Receive update report from Be Active

- I. BeActive have supplied a comprehensive review of options that hasn't been circulated yet as 156 pages long. The matter will be discussed at Parish Council next week.
- II. Little response received from call for volunteers in Village News.
- III. Riverside Gardens volunteers are unable to extend their support to Millennium Park.

c) Formation of Volunteer Group.

- I. We need to progress consultation with local residents.
- II. We will create a project steering group as well as a volunteer group for grounds maintenance.
- III. The Parish Council needs to produce a schedule for routine maintenance and ensure funding is allocated in the budget.

8. **Kings Ditch**

- I. JDT Contracts due to complete clearance work of dead and self-set trees and shrubs in the ditch around 24th February 2024.
- II. Water running well through the ditch.
- III. Parish Councillors to discuss with Cllr Weir the recent changes to the footbridge and lack of functionality.

- IV. FP14 needs to be maintained by Borough Footpaths Dept in accordance with HSE regulations. RP to write to Borough officer to clarify.
- V. EC requested purchase of daffodil bulbs to plant along banks for ditch on the allotment side.

9. Riverside Gardens

a) Update on 2024 work schedule

- I. The volunteer group continues to work well.
- II. RG maintenance group have agreed to creation of a shingle circle approx. 2ft wide around based of large 'xmas' trees. RP
- III. Paths need spraying for weed clearance. RP to speak with contractor. RP
- IV. RG maintenance group have requested area to be grassed. Committee agree this will be done with turf. CT will provide turf. CT

10. Flood Group

a) Review recent flood issues

- I. Acknowledgment, appreciation and vote of thanks given to JR for his excellent work in keeping all residents informed of flood risk and river levels.
- II. Recently cleared gulleys and drains have held up well in recent heavy rain.
- III. Green Lane has been cleared and paths swept by the Borough.
- IV. Ditches on Green Lane still blocked. Residents need to be contacted again about upholding their Riparian Responsibilities. RP/MW
- V. Parish Council must follow proceedings around discharge conditions for planning consent and drainage arrangements for new Milton Road development.
- VI. EC requested information on any high level Environment Agency studies into existing flooding issues and why Clapham residents have to put up with the many issues and aftermath of river flooding. Possible work with other N. Beds villages to add weight to the arguments.
- VII. Flood group has been asking for river to be dredged – not done since 1975.
- VIII. Clapham PC to investigate engagement with Great Ouse Environmental Trust (GOVET) chaired by Stevington Councillor John Strutt. RP
- IX. Consideration needs to be given in future on how residents can clear up after a flood.
- X. Ask police to patrol when there's flood water to try and prevent cars driving at speed through the water. RP

11. Burial Ground & Churchyard

a) Update

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| I. | Milton Road burial ground trees and shrubs becoming established and all looking good. | |
| II. | Issue with plot 9 where a shrub has been planted and is overgrowing the plot boundary. Parish Council to ask family to keep under control or remove the shrub. | RP |
| III. | Need to erect sign with map and regulations at the Burial Ground entrance. | RP |
| IV. | Add water bauser to Milton Road burial ground. CT to source bauser and RP will arrange placement and filling. | CT/RP |
| V. | Borough tree planting now completed in the Country Park near the burial ground with orchard at the bottom of the planted area. | RP |
| VI. | Green Lane cemetery – a small amount of pointing required on the wall inside the cemetery. | RP |
| VII. | Continue to monitor land subsidence. Parish maintenance contractor continues to top up soil in plots where required. | |

12. Tree Planting

a) Update

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| I. | RP to make contact with Woodlands Trust and register interest for tree provision in Sept/October. | |
| II. | EC has produced a plan with suggested tree planting. | |

I. **Highways & Footpaths**

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| II. | <u>Update</u> | |
| III. | Green lane – CT has trimmed hedges path now needs to be re-exposed in front of Church Farm paddock. RP to speak to Borough Highways. | RP |
| IV. | FP14 in dangerous condition with wet leaves deposited. Borough sweeper should go down there. | RP |
| V. | Residents in Cody Road properties have cut back hedges and left large clumps of main trunk sticking out of the fence. Dangerous with for people and children walking along FP14. Borough needs to clear the footpath. RP to contact Borough. | RP |
| VI. | Residents hedges overgrowing onto FP14 making it narrow and dangerous along the length opposite the dog exercise park. FP14 is a safety route in the event of flooding. RP speak to Borough. | RP |
| VII. | White 4x4 vehicle parked on road outside RG with parking ticket since 31 Jan 2024. RP to advise Borough. | RP |
| VIII. | Bottom of Green Lane, blue BMW with smashed headlight. Needs to put it on residents drive/off road. Residents appear to be carrying out car maintenance from home and leaving vehicles on the road. | RP |

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| IX. | Kerb stones opposite 99 The Glebe, outside medical centre have come out of setting. AL to send photo to RP who will report to Borough. | AL/RP |
| X. | Flooding on corner of The Close – drain still not sorted. Vehicles parked on green preventing people walking. Removal of bollards has given rise to indiscriminate parking. Report to Borough. | RP |
| XI. | Trees and hedges overgrown across the alley between The Close and The Slade.. | RP |
- PROPOSAL: Parish Council to write to residents to remind of their duty to cut the trees in line with the boundary and set deadline for work to be carried out. If no response/action received within deadline, the Parish will carry out the work and either charge responsible residents for work and/or leave all pruned branches with the residents property.**
- PROPOSED: Cllr. John Keech**
- SECONDED: Cllr. Ian Gaskin**

13. Grass Cutting

a) Start date

- I. Borough contract due to start 3rd or 4th week of March depending on weather. If it continues to rain it will be later.

14. Litter Picking

- II. Alleyways beside shops and the Slade are in a terrible state.

15. Any Other Business

Cllr Sparrow announced he will be standing down as Chair of the Environment Committee after the March meeting. He has been Chair since the inception of the Committee and feels the time has come for him to hand over the baton. He proposes to stay on as a member of the Committee.

EC proposed thanks to NS for all his hard work, humour and wit. The Parish has benefitted hugely from the legacy being left including the creation of Riverside Gardens and the Milton Road Burial Ground. Sincere thanks and acknowledgement were given to Cllr Sparrow by all members of the Environment Committee.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 12th March 2024

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 8.53 pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	13 th February 2024

Chair