

Meeting: Environment Committee, Clapham Parish Council
16th September 2024 at 7:00pm

**Meeting postponed to Monday 16th September due to unavailability of several members on the scheduled date.*

Council Members in attendance: Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG), Chair
Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW), Vice Chair
Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF)
Cllr. John Keech (JK)
Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL)
Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS)
Cllr. Eric Cooper (EC)
Cllr. Charlie Tomkins (CT) – late arrival 19:06

Apologies received: Non received

Non-attendance: Cllr. John Reid (JR)

Clerk to the Council: Rosemary Plum (RP)

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence

None received

2. Declarations of Interest

Nothing to report

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

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 9th July 2024

5. Matters Arising (*for information only*)

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

- I. Letter sent to Cody Road residents to remind them of tree maintenance to prevent overhanging FP14.
- II. VH car park – update on new ANPR parking system
- III. Highways/Environment issues covered under items below

7. Riverside Gardens

a) Update

- Volunteers are preparing area for autumn. Bulb planting in coming weeks.

PROPOSAL: Purchase of agricultural shuttering to return border around Jubilee tree. Cost £120

PROPOSED: Cllr. John Keech

SECONDED: Cllr. Nigel Sparrow

IG

- Breakfast meeting for volunteers very well received. Thanks to JK and NS for organising.

PROPOSAL: To have an annual breakfast meeting for Riverside Gardens volunteers in recognition of their efforts.

IG

PROPOSED: Cllr. Ian Gaskin

VOTE: Unanimous in favour

b) New turf area – preparation and laying

- Started preparations for laying new area of turf.
- IG will check with volunteers to confirm area to be grassed. Work will be done in stages. CT will organise half pallet of turf for 28 Sept.

IG

c) Other business

It was noted there has been a reduction in vandalism so far this year.

8. Millennium/Community Gardens

a) Update

- I. Lead Councillor currently on annual leave. RP gave brief update.
- II. Interest in joining proposed steering group received from Police, 4YP, Pre-School, BRCC, Allotment Association members, Scouts.
- III. Senior schools will be approached as they run Duke of Edinburgh community projects that may be suitable for this area.

9. Tree Planting

a) Update

- I. Borough still waiting for response from Forestry Commission which is expected shortly.
- II. Consultation process with residents will follow to decide exact locations and tree species.
- III. One response received from article in Village News. A resident in Fetlock Close asked for a tree on the green outside their property. However, land is shared green space and not owned by Bedford Borough Council.

10. Flood Group

a) Update from outgoing Chair

- JR not in attendance.

b) Appointment of new Chair

- I. RP advised that Cllr Allan Prudham may be prepared to take over as Chair of the Flood Group and is in conversation with JR about this.
- II. It was agreed that JR has shown “magnificent dedication to the job”.

- III. JK called for drains and gulleys to be cleared again by the Borough.

c) Other matters

- I. CT has spoken to Borough Flood Group about annual flooding on land at Paddock Close following contact from local residents asking 'when is the farmer going to fix it'.
- II. Borough have confirmed there is no action to be taken by CT and they are trying to locate ground plans for further investigation. RP
- III. Black bags dumped in the river – RP to ask JR for update from Environment Agency.

11. Highways & Footpaths

a) Update

See items below

b) Green Lane

- I. Need to monitor the area to see how things progress as a shared space for cars and people.
- II. Water leak bottom of Green Lane – reported 16/9/24

c) Hedgerows & speed issues

- I. Rats in Milton Road - households must report it to Bedford Borough Council and request a pest control treatment by calling 01234 718099. The lines are open Monday to Tuesday and Thursday to Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM, and Wednesday from 10 AM to 5 PM.
- II. The Borough will only deal with private residents enquiries and do not operate this service through the Parish Council. Read more at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/pest-control/>
- III. Residents have reported rats seen in the garden. The Council Pest Control were ineffective, and the resident paid for private pest control service. Possibility rats may be living in the pipe under Oakley Road and rubbish in nearby trees where they could be nesting/living.
- IV. NS and Environment Committee have reported for years about rats in Miller Road and Borough have taken no action.
- V. Borough now looking to clear the ditch in future to avoid it substantially restricting water flow and the area around the crossing will be cut back. There will be some delay as Borough have other works to complete first and they also have to wait on the completion of bird nesting.

d) The Close & Shopping Parade - vehicle & pedestrian access

- I. Borough advised on 16/9/24 that works order for new lining and remarking of the existing has been placed and they are waiting for their contractor to complete these works. The contractor has a

- backlog of work at present and they are pushing the contractor to complete this work as soon as possible within the next two weeks
- II. IG advised that work in The Close was in fact started on 13/9/24 and is now 90% complete.
 - III. The issue of dustbins on footpath behind the shops is being raised by Highways with their Borough refuse team colleagues.
- e) Footpath 14 – damage to fence
- I. Several reports of motorcycles being ridden along FP14 and damage has been caused to one of the new fence panels.
 - II. Situation reported to the Police.
 - III. Police want to see FP14 closed overnight.
- f) Other matters reported
- I. Milton Road Clapham sign knocked over. Reported to Borough.
 - II. Renewed call for gate erected onto Bedford Road to slow down traffic into Clapham.
 - III. The Ford bridleway needs resurfacing under the River.
 - IV. Bollard on the green on The Glebe is rotten and has been pulled out.
 - V. Hedge trimming on The Glebe – no-one been out to sort laurel.
 - VI. Offer accepted from MW with thanks, to refurb benches around the village that are not in good order.
 - VII. MW doing river water quality survey on 19/9/2024
 - VIII. RP updated all about ongoing situation with grass and hedgerow cutting along the entire length of Green Lane.

12. Churchyard & Burial Ground

- a) Update
- I. Parish need to become member of ICCM – Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management who provide regulatory guidance for the management of burial grounds. RP
 - II. RP and Asst Clerk currently transferring all records to new software for management of burial plots. RP
 - III. Reports of travellers walking around Milton Road burial ground. Burial plots have been driven over and flowers strewn about RP
 - IV. Agreed to put coded lock and chain on entrance gate as soon as possible.
 - V. Nearby property to Milton Road burial ground victims of theft of vehicles and plant equipment by presumed travellers. Access to property was gained through burial ground boundary. Neighbour has made good the fencing at the burial ground.
- b) Grave subsidence
- I. First delivery of soil received and 30 graves have been topped up.

- c) Burial Ground notice board
 - I. Will be installed a part of overall improvements in due course.

13. Litter picking

- a) Update
 - I. Borough Council supports litter picking groups with equipment.
 - II. Need to create a group of volunteers. Discuss further at Parish Council meeting.

14. Dog Park

- a) Use of area by dog walking services
 - I. Residents wishing to use the dog walking park have reported being advised by a dog walker with seven dogs using the park, not to go in because of concerns about the behaviour of some of the dogs. RP
 - II. RP will investigate dog walking rules. RP
 - III. Need to add notices in dog park stating for private resident use only and not commercial walkers of multiple dogs.

15. Any other business

- I. Annual programme of tree maintenance to be agreed with Parish Council areas only.
- II. Dog faeces increasing on the playing field. RP write to nearby residents asking them to ensure they can't get onto field unnoticed. RP
- III. RP to review all signs on entrances to Playing Field.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 8th October 2024

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 9.30pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	8 th October 2024*

Chair