

HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting held at Harpsden Village Hall
on
Monday 19th March 2012

Present: Mr Kester George (KG) Chairman
Mr Richard Bossons (RB)
Mrs Odette Moss (OM)
Mr Malcolm Plews (MP)
Mrs Karen Tross Youle (KTY)
Mr Rob Simister (RS) District Councillor
Mrs Helen Anderson (HA) PCSO

Residents: Mrs Vivienne Rubinstein
An additional unannounced person

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Tipple (ST) Clerk

2257 Welcomes and apologies: There were apologies from Dr Peter Skolar.

2258 Police Report:

2258.1 KG reported to HA that he had registered with the police the fact that he and several other Harpsden residents had received a large number of abusive emails from a woman in Harpsden who appeared to be in need of medical attention. HA said that she was aware of the resident in question and that the police were considering what could be done about her.

2258.2 HA reported that during a recent speed awareness campaign 12 out of 45 cars had been caught speeding through the village in the space of one hour. Warning letters had been sent to all 12. RS added that cars also exceeded the speed limit past his house and he offered his driveway as a possible site for a police car with a speed gun to be parked.

2258.3 There had been 20 recent shed break-ins in the Harpsden Road and Waterman's Road areas although nothing had been stolen.

2258.4 HA referred Councillors to the following website: www.dogwatchalert.com as it provided an email alert system for the Thames Valley Area and a central point to report stolen dogs and suspicious vehicles in the locality.

HA left the meeting at 8pm and KG thanked her for attending.

2259 Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 16th January 2012 were approved and signed as a correct record after the following items had been discussed:
2242 Highway Matters: Gillotts Lane. OM reported that the day after the last HPC meeting there were 2 further instances of damage to car tyres from the potholes on Gillotts Lane. Three officers from the Highways Department had visited the site and had acknowledged that some immediate repairs would be necessary and some within 28 days. OM wanted it noted that Harpsden Parish Council (HPC) considered the problem of potholes along Gillotts Lane to be as severe as it had ever been and that a complete resurfacing of the road was long overdue.
2255 AOB. KG pointed out the new storage and display cabinets which had been installed by the John Hodges Trust, and explained that HPC had exclusive use of the left-hand cabinet. He hoped to have some pictures of Harpsden framed and in particular a map of the Harpsden fields traceable from 1586 to the present day. The rent to the

Trust for use of the committee room had been agreed at £320 per year over ten years with the right to renew. OM proposed a vote of thanks to the Trust which was seconded by RS. KG would write a letter to Matt Hayward, Chairman of the Trustees. 2255 AOB. Plans for a village barbecue to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee had been put on hold for the time being. KG had heard that Pat Hiscock might be planning to erect a beacon on his land but that he was waiting for further information.

2260 South Oxfordshire District Councillor's Report

Season Tickets. SODC had launched a half price car park season ticket offer, which included Henley Station. It was agreed that uptake of this offer might alleviate the problems caused to residents of Station Road in Shiplake by users of Shiplake station parking all day for free but that the offer required further examination first. RS would email ST a soft copy of the offer.

Flytippers. RS had not yet received a reply from Biffa. He reported that someone had been fined £2,000 for flytipping in Wargrave.

CCTV. There had been 51 arrests arising from 432 incidents reported by CCTV monitoring staff in the Henley, Didcot, Thame and Wallingford area. This included the arrest of drivers of a convoy of vehicles involved in criminal activity in Henley.

2261 SODC Core Strategy and proposed development sites. KG asked RS for clarification regarding SODC's Core Strategy where it was stated that small villages would be exempt from significant development and yet more than half of the proposed 450 new homes would be in Harpsden; for instance those at Highlands Farm, Treetops and in the grounds of Gillotts School. The inclusion of these areas clashed with SODC's decision to exempt "small villages" like Harpsden from significant development. RS agreed to seek clarification of this anomaly.

KG also reported on Barry Wood's (BW) meeting held on Tuesday 13th March at Harpsden Village Hall. Although its aim had been to discuss the impact of the proposed development on Henley as a whole, it had been almost entirely focussed on the proposed development on the upper area of Lucy's Farm, which was within Henley's boundary. BW was trying to urge Henley Town Council to establish a Neighbourhood Plan and had invited HPC to be part of it. Malcolm Leonard had expressed concerns, which KG shared, about allying HPC too closely with Henley Town Council and the Neighbourhood Plan as Harpsden had its own issues and it was agreed that Harpsden should opt out of BW's committee. Nonetheless it was very helpful that KTY was prepared to stay on it as an individual observer who could report to HPC.

OM suggested that a Village Plan might be useful and would circulate a proposal for this in due course. She was concerned that any development on land at Lucy's Farm would increase the traffic flow along Gillotts Lane despite the proposal to build an access road onto Blandy Road. Mrs Rubinstein also expressed concern about the number of houses proposed in Harpsden itself. It was further agreed that with only 183 households in Harpsden, the building of even half of the proposed number of new homes in Harpsden would be completely unreasonable.

KG urged every member of the Council to put their comments and protests in writing to SODC by the deadline of Friday 23rd March. They could use the online form which BW had circulated the previous week and KG was happy to offer advice on wording.

2262 Highways and Footpaths

OM reiterated the problem of potholes along Gillotts Lane and RB added that Sheephouse Lane, Woodlands Road and the entire valley road were all in a poor state of repair. ST would draft a letter to the Highways Department emphasising that the state of the roads in Harpsden and in particular Gillotts Lane was very bad, that there were frequent instances of damage to cars and that recent remedial work had proved to be

ineffective. She would also repeat the suggestion that Gillotts Lane could be improved by becoming one-way.

KTY was concerned that the 30mph sign followed by the national speed limit sign along Woodlands Road encouraged drivers to accelerate unnecessarily. RS explained that signage was decided by local government and HPC could not remove them. KG wondered if a sign saying 'Beware Horses' might slow vehicles down although he sympathised with CPRE's dislike of road signs in general.

2263 Planning Matters

2263.1 SODC Decisions

Ref: P11/E1988 Thames Side Court, Bolney Road. Single storey extension at north end of dwelling with extension over former conservatory at first floor and attic levels.

GRANTED.

Ref: P11/E2130 Perseverance Farm, RG9 4AP. Proposed swimming pool and glass enclosure ancillary to the house. GRANTED.

Ref: P11/E2157 Basswood, Northfield Avenue. Proposed integral garage conversion GRANTED. It was noted that the application to build a new detached garage had been withdrawn.

Ref: P11/E2662/EX Thames Farm, Reading Road. Change of use from agricultural building to B1 employment use. GRANTED.

Ref: P11/E1755 Thames Farm, Reading Road. Change of use of building from agricultural barn to dwelling. GRANTED.

KG commented that although he had been disappointed in this outcome, the inspector's report had been extremely well-written and had been subtle in its conclusion. The building was to be converted rather than knocked down and rebuilt. RS commented that this did in fact limit the building footprint. KTY was pleased that there would be no precedent set for more building on the land adjacent. It was further noted that the driveway would exit onto the Reading Road as the entrance to the side road had been built without planning permission and would have to be closed off.

There followed some discussion about the former Engbers Garden Centre site which, in its current state of extreme disrepair, was acknowledged to be a blight on the Harpsden and Shiplake landscape. It would be useful to ascertain what Mrs Hersham's plans were to develop Fawley Court as this could have an impact on whether Toad Hall Garden Centre would need to relocate. The former Engbers Garden Centre could provide the owners of Toad Hall with an obvious alternative site.

2253.2 Outstanding Applications

Ref: P11/E2116 Lower Bolney Farm, Shiplake. Replacement polo stables, tack, hay and feed storage and associated permanent workers' accommodation and landscaping.

NO OBJECTION.

Ref: P11/E2375 Wakeford Lodge, Harpsden Woods, RG9 4AD.

Although most of the immediate neighbours agreed that the new house was a great improvement on the old, all of them objected to the proposed extension. Unfortunately KG's efforts to negotiate an amendment to the proposed extension that would save the long-standing use of the horse-training ring adjacent to the east end of the property had met with adamant rejection and it was agreed that the application should be opposed on the grounds of unneighbourliness.

OBJECTION on the grounds of unneighbourliness

2253.4 Other Planning Matters

The former New England Cottage, now known as Hunts Green House. RB expressed extreme disappointment with the installation of the close board fence which now looked likely to stay. He had asked Mr Wyatt for clarification about what height fence

was permissible and at what distance from the road. Moreover the word 'adjacent' had not been defined. Councillors agreed that the fencing and the choice of roof tiles, which were clearly not sourced from the local area, were very disappointing and the development as a whole was greatly to the detriment of Harpsden. RS would feed this disappointment back to SODC and would ask why blatant breaches in planning conditions had been overlooked.

2254 **Financial Matters**

2254.1 Balances as at 16th January 2012

Community Account: £0.00 Business Saver Account: £4,673.69

2254.2 Approval of Payments

Harpsden Hall Trust – annual rent	£320.00
OALC Subscription 2012 – 13	£133.07
Clerk salary and expenses (£500 + £59.63)	£559.63
CPRE membership	<u>£29.00</u>
Total	£1,041.70

Cash in hand: £3,631.99

2255 **AOB**

RB offered to provide HPC with a copy of the very interesting thesis on Harpsden from 1586 – 1979, written by Ruth Gibson. KG was extremely grateful to RB and added that the copy would be displayed in the new display unit.

2256 The Annual Parish Meeting would take place on Wednesday 18th April at 6.30pm in the main hall. ST would ask Adrienne Pratt to put it in the Parish Newsletter and would speak to Jane De Souza about how to distribute flyers. It was suggested that Colin White, the planning officer of the Chilterns Conservation Board, might be approached to be the keynote speaker. KG would liaise with RB.

2256 **The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 21st May 2012 at 7.45pm in the Committee Room of Harpsden Village Hall and will be preceded by the AGM.**