

DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

A Quality Council



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the held on Wednesday 17th October 2012 at the Committee Room, the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury

Present: Cllrs A Keeler (Chairman), A Allen, S Berlyn, D. Bolwell, Mrs C Jacobs, M Wood

In attendance: Mrs M Saunders, Clerk
Mrs H Mayes, Assistant Clerk

61 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Mrs A Chapman and Cllr W Scaife. Cllr Thomson was unwell.

62 Declarations of Interest

All Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. They were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they had not previously notified her about it.

There were no declarations of interest

63 Public Questions

There were no members of the public present.

64 Minutes of the Environment Committee

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2012 be approved and signed as a correct record.

65 Advertising Signage at Eves Corner

A meeting had been held on 2nd October 2012 with representatives of ECC Highways, CCC Planning Enforcement, local charities, DCA and Parish Council. The report of this meeting was circulated. It was confirmed that only local charities would be able to put up signs in a specific area at Eves Corner and that the size of the signs must be within CCC guidelines. ECC Highways had drafted a letter and were awaiting approval. The letter would then be sent to the Clerk. Once this information was received this item would be added to the next agenda of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

66 Footpaths

66.1 Cycling on Footpaths

Cllr Allen had submitted a further document regarding signage on footpaths. He had grave concerns for the safety of walkers using the footpaths and felt that several near misses had been occurring. If the 'No Cycling' signage was placed on the waymarks throughout the village then there would be some recourse for walkers to take up the issue with cyclists when they request them to dismount.

He felt that the proposal made at the Environment Committee meeting held on 5th September 2012 minute 36.1 *“that where the Environment Committee receives a complaint from a member of the public regarding cycling on a footpath, the committee will liaise with the landowner to seek permission, and consider if it is appropriate to erect a prohibition sign”* was impractical, unworkable and unsustainable because it was impossible and unrealistic to implement. Cllr Allen had submitted a further proposal in the document which had been tabled with the Agenda.

The Chairman of the Council thought that in order to put up the signs permission should be sought from both the owner of the waymark post (ECC) and the landowner. He also thought this item should be taken to full Parish Council for a policy decision if the Committee were unable to make a decision. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council could not overturn a resolution made by the Environment Committee as it has delegated powers.

A protracted and vigorous debated ensued. Some Members had not experienced any problems with cyclists on the footpaths. It was commented that it appeared that the 6 month rule had not been applied to the resolution of the Environment Committee on 2nd November 2011 minute 62.2 *“that Essex County Highways is requested to place cycling prohibition notices at each end of footpaths adjacent to waymarks or finger posts.”* Cllr Allen had been satisfied with this resolution and felt that it had subsequently been overturned after the Public Rights of Way Officer attended the Environment Committee on 5th September 2012.

The Chairman of the Council called the meeting to order.

Some Members did not wish to discuss the matter further and wanted to move onto the next agenda item. The Clerk reminded the meeting that there was a proposal on the table.

Cllr Allen proposed

“that the Parish Council will acquire and fix ‘No Cycling’ notices to all of the waymark posts identified in the recent survey as being without such notices. This so that legitimate foot-goers may have a demonstrable means of drawing the attention of cyclists and explaining that cycling is not permitted on the footpaths. Also to maintain the integrity of the footpaths and in the interests of safety for all pedestrian users of the footpaths, with particular regard for the very young; the elderly and the infirm.”

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Mrs Jacobs. There were no amendments. 2 were for the proposal, 3 were against and there was 1 abstention. Therefore the proposal was not carried. No further proposals were made and the previous resolution made on the 5th September 2012 still stood.

RESOLVED: that the resolution made at the Environment Committee on 5th September 2012 still stood.

66.2 Danbury Youth Camp and Park - footpath opposite Riffhams Lane/ Works to Footpaths P3

The Public Rights of Way Officer had confirmed that following an inspection, a railing is not necessary at this point as there is already a gate in situ.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

66.3 Paths for Communities Grant Scheme

Cllr Keeler attended the recent briefing by Natural England and updated the Committee. There were 2 million pounds of grants available until December 2013 to create new definitive public rights of way. Grants of £1500 upwards could be given for specific projects. The track or path must not already be a recognised right of way i.e. paths on new housing estates. There would be matched funding of 75%. Further details were available on the Natural England website (www.naturalengland.org.uk) and Cllr Keeler had also received a copy of the briefing. The Assistant Clerk was asked to circulate the briefing to the Committee.

Cllr Berlyn left the meeting

Cllr Bolwell stated that there were no schemes in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Danbury. He would like to see a path running between Bicknacre and Danbury. It was agreed that Members could consider if there were any suitable paths for future meetings.

RESOLVED: that Members consider if there were any suitable paths in Danbury for this scheme and that the Assistant Clerk forwarded a copy of the briefing to the Committee.

66.4 Moores Bridge Lane

It had been reported that several large trees had been removed by contractors along Moores Bridge Lane. The work was being carried out for Essex & Suffolk Water who were laying a pipeline from the reservoir at Lingwood Close and required safe clearance for the heavy plant needed to bury the pipework. The Parish Council had been notified in advance about this work as it partly affected some of the Councils land. The Assistant Clerk had contacted the Public Rights of Way Officer who confirmed that pipework was due to start in March/April 2013.

Cllr Berlyn returned to the meeting.

The Public Rights of Way Officer would be arranging for a footpath diversion nearer the time and expected only footpath 15 to be affected.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

66.5 Report by Footpaths Officer Cllr Bolwell

Cllr Bolwell confirmed that the hedge had been cut along Main Road between the Parish Office and Moores Bridge Lane. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that a new footpath sign had now been erected at the entrance to Moores Bridge Lane.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

67 Well Lane Recycling Banks

The recycling banks were currently being phased out in Chelmsford and should have been removed. However, the removal of the bins had been delayed. CCC had been contacted again and would be advising Parish Office when a new date was received.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

68 Parish Transport Meeting

The Parish Transport Meeting was held on Monday 15th October. The next meeting will be held on 26th November. Cllr Scaife had given apologies for the Environment Meeting and so could not update the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

69 Highway Matters

69.1 Vehicles parking on grass verges at Hoynors & Gay Bowers

ECC Trading Standards had emailed originally regarding this issue. Members had agreed that posts were required at this location as parking was causing obstruction to traffic sight lines. ECC Highways had been requested to fund and fit the posts as the land belongs to them. No further update had been received. Members also expressed concern at vehicles parking on the footway which blocked access for pedestrians. The Clerk advised that this was an on-going issue and that the PCSO's had spoken to the residents concerned in the past to try to resolve the issue.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

69.2 Zebra Crossing outside Danbury Park School A414

The Chairman commented that the crossing appeared to be improved. The lines on the zebra crossing had now been painted. A resident had reported that notices had been fixed to telegraph poles close to the crossing stating that there has been an increase in incidents at the crossing and giving an email address to contact if any other incidents were observed. A request had been sent to ECC Highways to request provision of intermediate belisha beacons at the crossing. ECC Lighting had confirmed that they would not fit intermediate belisha beacons to the crossing as the zebra lanterns currently in place were the standard lighting required. One of belisha beacons had been reported as not working and had been repaired straightaway.

Members who had visited the local schools during Democracy Week also commented that the children had discussed the need for a further zebra crossing in Well Lane and come up with a list of pros and cons. Parked cars in Well Lane were also an issue, especially due to the bends in the road.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

69.3 Uneven footway at Hopping Jacks Lane from junction with West Belvedere to Simmonds Way

An inspection had been carried out by ECC Highways but the defects found did not meet the investigatory levels set out in ECC's Maintenance Strategy. This issue could be referred to the Local Highways Panel if Members wished to progress the matter further. Cllr Scaife had been speaking to the resident who had made the original complaint, however, he had given apologies to the Environment Committee and could not give an update.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

69.4 Paving at Bus Stop on Bicknacre Road (end of Plumptre Lane, SWF bound).

A resident had reported that the paving to the bus stop was removed at the beginning of the year and had not been replaced. The area had been left as mud. The opposite side of the road had been completed. ECC confirmed that the work was due to be carried out in 2010/11 through a transport improvement scheme (reference 89995). English Heritage had objected to the work and the work had been put on hold. The money in the budget had subsequently been spent on other work. ECC confirmed that this item

would need to be submitted to the Local Highways Panel for funding. Any items that were submitted to the LHP need to answer the following four questions.

1. What is the problem which has resulted in this request?
(Describe the issues being faced and the causes of the problems)
2. What is the suggested solution to the problem?
(Write full details of your project. You could include a detailed sketch or map of the project together with a full explanation of what is needed.)
3. What is to be achieved by the suggested solution?
(Describe how this project will alleviate the issues described above and what the result that you wish to achieve is.)
4. What evidence is there of the need for this solution?
(This can be provided through either a Parish Plan, survey, questionnaire, copy of letters received, petition, etc.)

Members felt that this work should still be carried out by ECC as they had originally accounted for this in a previous budget. ECC Highways were responsible for bus stops and may also own the land if it was within ½ metre from the highway. The LHP has a limited budget and Members wished to be mindful of which schemes were put forward for consideration. It is the National Trust that owned the land in question rather than English Heritage. Members requested the Assistant Clerk to contact the National Trust to ask if they had objected to the paving and if so what the reasons were. This item could then be considered at the next Environment Committee.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk contacts the National Trust to request further information on the objection to the paving.

69.5 Highways matters (reported items) Appendix A

The items in Appendix A had been reported and updates had been requested.

Members confirmed several items had still not been done. Cllr Mrs Jacobs reported that a number of potholes in Mill Lane had been marked to have work carried out but that this had not yet been done.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted and the Assistant Clerk report the potholes in Mill Lane to ECC.

69.6 Highways matters – (completed/no further action)

The following items had been notified to the Parish Office as either completed or no further action to be taken

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Hopping Jacks Lane	Outside 2A/4A the centre kerbstone at the dropped kerb has lifted and is dangerous	ECC	24/05/2012	E-1848019-1R-SB	1/9/12 ECC update: kerb was made safe on 28/6/12, nfa. Email received 25 May from ECC – will arrange inspection.
Riffhams Lane	Warning posts around ditch have been vandalised or destroyed. Replacement posts required.	ECC	29/06/2012	3061915	1/9/12 update by ECC: inspector reports posts are adequate. Further posts are not required as no history of accidents. Reported by resident and forwarded to Parish Office
Main Road	Zebra crossing markings need repainting	ECC	17/07/2012	78424	20/09/12 job completed. 01/09/12 - update from ECC - job is on list, no date as yet. 17/07/2012 reported to ECC
8 Southview Road	Road/gutter has subsided due to large vehicle	ECC	24/07/2012	79536	02/10/12 update from ECC work undertaken as part of jet patching work. 26/09/12 email to ECC for update. 28/08/12 Update from ECC job has been raised but no date yet. 25/07/12 email from ECC. This area will be repaired in the current programme of works. 24/07/12 reported to ECC
Hyde Lane	Debris left on road following hedge cutting. Also reported on Gay Bowers Lane and Mill Lane	ECC	29/08/2012	84126	09/10/12 Spoke to Andy Eves - he is arranging clearance. 02/10/12 update from ECC - issue passed to Andy Eves at CCC for investigation. 26/09/12 email to ECC for update. report by resident
Moore's Bridge Lane	Footpath 59 - footpath sign is broken	ECC	20/09/2012	87295	08/10/12 post has been inspected and contractors have been instructed to replace in due course. 05/10/12 email to ECC for update. reported by Cllr Bolwell

70 Chelmsford Local Highways Panel (LHP)

A letter had been received from the Director of Safer Communities at Chelmsford City Council. The Clerk noted that the Reserve Scheme List for Danbury in the letter had omitted several items that were on the list held by the Parish Council. The Assistant Clerk was requested to contact the Highways Liaison Officer to find out why these items had been removed. Clarification was also required for the footpath between Woodhill Road, Penny Royal Road and Mayes Lane. Concerns were raised that the LHP's were not a standard format across all areas of the county and that this may contravene CCC's Parish Council Charter. A briefing for Parish Councils had been organised by CCC on 28th November 2012 at 7pm. Cllr Berlyn would attend this briefing on behalf of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk contacted the Highways Liaison Officer to clarify the items on the Reserve Scheme List for Danbury and that Cllr Berlyn would attend the briefing session on 28th November 2012.

71 Traffic Volumes on A414

The Assistant Clerk had collated information received from the Department of Transport and ECC into a more user friendly document for publication in the Danbury Times. Members did not feel that the figures were an accurate representation of the traffic flows and did not wish for the graphs to be published in the Danbury Times. The Assistant Clerk was asked to contact ECC and request them to provide a graph or summary that could be published. Members discussed the general trend of less car usage which was felt to be down to high fuel and running costs. It was suggested the number of lorries seemed to have increased on the roads although they could just be more evident due to less cars.

RESOLVED: that the traffic volumes information would not be published in the Danbury Times and that the Assistant Clerk contacts ECC to request them to supply a graph or summary.

72 Signage Items on Highways as follows: (Items to note no change)

72.1 Well Lane

The signage was on Essex County Councils list.

72.2 Sightlines at Cherry Garden Lane

No further update.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

73 Localism small scheme list when opened is as follows: (Items to note no change)

73.1 Runsell Green Reduction in Speed Limit

The consultation had now been completed.

73.2 Well Lane – Zebra Crossing

73.3 Gating Signs

73.4 Footpath Mayes Lane, Penny Royal Road, Woodhill Road

73.5 Installation of Bollards – Parking on Verge in the Main Road

73.6 Speed Reduction in Woodhill Road (to be added when scheme opens)

Concerns had already been raised regarding the differences in the lists held by ECC and DPC in minute 70 and this would be addressed by the Assistant Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

74 Bus Shelters

Power to Bus Shelter outside nr Service Station (Chelmsford Side)

ECC had been contacted for an update.

75 Quarries

75.1 St Clere's Hall

Application ESS/58/12/CHL had been received – Continuation of mineral extraction and retention and use of processing plant until 1 August 2015 and continuation of importation of unprocessed aggregates from Royal Oak Quarry only for a limited period until 31st December 2013 (part retrospective). This application would be considered for comments at the next Parish Council Planning Committee on 22nd October 2012.

75.2 Royal Oak Quarry

At the Parish Council Planning Committee of 1st October it was reported that lorries had been seen in the village with dirty tyres and sides. The Assistant Clerk would notify this again to ECC.

75.3 Sandon Quarry

There was nothing further to report.

75.4 Proposed site at Tyndales Farm

There was nothing further to report

75.5 Whitehouse Farm Woodham Walter

There was nothing further to report

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

76 Danbury Country Park

Cllrs Keeler, Thomson and Allen were invited to the Danbury Lakes Country Park Forum on 2nd October 2012. Cllr Keeler confirmed that coppicing was being carried out which was looking successful. There were several on-going projects and resources were being utilised from around the park. Cords of logged wood were available for £80. There were no updates on the development of Danbury Palace.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

77 Neighbourhood Environmental Action Team (NEAT) Bulb Planting

The NEAT Officer had visited the site at the junction of Gay Bowers Lane and Copt Hill and identified this as a site for planting daffodil bulbs. The land belonged to the Parish Council. There were three possible planting dates which were Saturday 3rd, 10th or 17th November. Planting would be carried out between 10am and 12 noon. Posters would be placed on the noticeboard and the website to encourage residents to get involved. There was some discussion around the location of the site and concerns were raised about rotavating the area as it was looking well kept. It was agreed to request crocus bulbs rather than daffodil bulbs as rotavation would then not be needed. Members agreed a date of 10th November and Cllr Mrs Jacobs volunteered to assist with the planting.

RESOLVED: that the bulb planting would take place on 10th November between 10am - 12 noon and the Assistant Clerk would request that crocus bulbs were used.

78 Correspondence

An email had been received from a resident about various Environmental Issues. The Assistant Clerk had replied to the issues raised. Cllr Bolwell was also concerned regarding the new signs at the Danbury Outdoors Centre. The Assistant Clerk was asked to contact the Public Rights of Way Officer for an update on the signs.

RESOLVED: that the email was noted and that the Assistant Clerk contacted the Public Rights of Way Officer for an update.

79 Danbury Times

Cllr Mrs Chapman had given apologies and therefore could not update the meeting. It was suggested that an article be put into the Danbury Times requesting that residents who own land which have public footpaths running through them identify themselves to the Parish Office. There was some discussion whether this was a suitable request and if it would generate any response. This suggestion could be discussed further at the next Danbury Times meeting on the 25th October 2012.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted

80 Danbury Common/Cyclists

A bike assessment report had been received from Stuart Banks, Head Ranger.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

81 Hedging

Hedges for report

The following hedges were currently reported to ECC. A list had been sent to ECC requesting updates on these items. Cllr Bolwell had already confirmed that the hedge along Main Road had now been cut back. No further hedge issues were reported.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Actions
Jnc Nursery Lane & Hopping Jacks Lane	Triangle of land with overgrown trees & bushes	ECC	16/07/2012	79801	05/10/12 email to ECC for update. 24/09/12 Land belongs to ECC who instruct CCC to maintain. CCC are awaiting instruction from ECC. 01/09/12 update from ECC: Enquiry passed to CCC to deal with. 26/07/12 reported again as overhanging vegetation to footway & road - new ref received. 20/07/12 email from ECC with map showing land which is their responsibility - need to clarify exact area. Emailed to BS.
Main Road (Close to 150)	Hedge overhanging footway	ECC	24/07/2012	79537	05/10/12 email to ECC for update. 01/09/12 ECC update: on list for inspection. 31/07/12 response from ECC - will arrange inspection. 24/07/12 reported to ECC. Reported by resident via Danbury Society.
Main Road	Hedge overhanging footway between Parish Office and Moores Bridge Lane	ECC	23/08/2012	83403	05/10/12 email to ECC for update. 23/08/12 ECC rang to say CCC are to cut this hedge back in the next few days.
Elm Green Lane	Overhanging branches/hedge outside Danefleet House	ECC	27/09/2012	88379	reported by DB

82 Living Landscapes

There were no further updates.
RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

83 Climate Change/Green Group

83.1 Green Group

No further meetings had been held.

83.2 Climate Change

There was nothing further to report.
RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

84 Proposed deforestation at Lingwood Common Lt Baddow

Cllr Bolwell confirmed that the deforestation was now slowly happening with the assistance of volunteers.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

85 Christmas Tree & Carol Event

This item was discussed at the recent Communications Working Group. Danbury Mission and United Reformed Church had been approached to see if they were prepared to undertake the organisation of this event. The Communications Working Group had recommended that the Christmas Tree be purchased even if the Carol event does not go ahead. It was agreed at the last Parish Council meeting to purchase the Christmas Tree. The Facilities Committee would handle the purchase and installation of the tree.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

86 Matters for Report

86.1 Parking & Litter at Hoynors

A telephone complaint was received from a resident of Hoynors regarding litter from the fish and chip shop at the top of Hoynors and also parking issues from customers using the shop. This had been referred to CCC Environmental Health Department and Community Police. CCC informed the Clerk that clamping was now illegal on private land.

86.2 Parking on verge opposite the Village Hall

It was reported that vehicles were often parked on the grass verge opposite the village hall when events were being held. The Assistant Clerk was requested to write to the Village Hall and ECC (as owners of the land) to ask that this does not happen in the future.

87 Dates of Meetings for 2012/2013

Wednesday 5th December 2012 and Monday 21st January 2013

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.15pm.

Cllr Alan Keeler
Chairman

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Signed

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Date

DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL
Environment Committee Agenda: 17th October 2012

Appendix A
Current Highways Issues

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Cherry Garden Lane	Crossroads with Hyde Lane - sign obscured and junction dangerous	ECC	09/08/2012	81463	26/09/12 email to ECC for update. 01/09/12 update from ECC on list to be done, no date given. Reported following surgery 09/08/12.
Hopping Jacks Lane	Butts Lane Junction – White ‘Give Way’ road signs need replacing	ECC	24/05/2012	E-1848021-1R-LP	26/09/12 email to ECC for update. 25/05/2012 - email from ECC. Location is already on list for inspection.
Little Baddow Road	3 holes close to footpath outside 14 Lt Baddow Rd	ECC	02/08/2012	80646	26/09/12 email to ECC for update. ECC response 16/08/12 - arranging for inspection. Resident called to report as concerned it is a trip hazard. Reported to ECC 02/08/12
Mayes Lane	Tarmac footpath from Mayes Lane car park towards Penny Royal Lane has subsided and is now raised & uneven.	ECC	08/03/2012	new ref 87973	24/09/12 reported again as never received reference no. Awaiting reference/update – chased ECC 1/6/12 & 11/6/12
Mayes Lane	Flooding to road	ECC	08/05/2012	1945753	26/09/12 email to ECC for update. 31/07/12 reported again. Call from ECC to determine exact location. To be inspected. Awaiting reference/update – chased ECC 1/6/12 & 11/6/15. Resident reported again at farmers market. Sent new report to ECC 12/07/12
Pillar Box		Groundsman monitoring			Have requested ECC Highways if they can help again.
Southview Road	Footway at Southview Road (Woodhill Road & FP19) is cracking and uneven with weeds growing through	ECC	24/07/2012	79535	26/09/12 email to ECC for update. 01/9/12 ECC update: on list for assessment. Email from ECC 31/07/12 to be inspected. If no significant hazard found no immediate repair will take place. 24/07/12 reported to ECC
The Avenue	overgrown trees blocking pavement (reported by 2a)	ECC	06/06/2012	87979	24/09/12 Reported again and asked for update. New ref given. Awaiting reference/update – chased ECC 1/6/12 & 11/6/17

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Moore's Bridge Lane	Woodside Cottage: Cesspit overflow which is leaking raw sewage into the ditch	CCC	24/07/2012	AF34221	04/10/12 update from CCC - have met with resident and remedial work has been carried out on the system. They are still concerned about a cloudy discharge from the system which has been reported to Environment Agency to determine if there is a breach of the Environmental Permit. 25/9/12 emailed for update. 29/8/12 Jennifer from EH rang to update - has been to inspect site and is concerned re pollution. Is trying to contact owner of property to discuss drainage provisions and will update once more info known. 24/07/12 reported to CCC
Hyde Lane	Cross roads sign is facing wrong way (approaching junction with Mill Lane from Bicknacre)	ECC	29/08/2012	84161	04/10/12 ECC update - passed to cyclical maintenance team for Highway Rangers to deal with. 26/09/12 email to ECC for update. report by resident