

Raddon Hills Area Group of Parish Councils

Notes from the meeting held on Tuesday 25 October 2022

Via Zoom at 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Roger Cashmore (NSC PC) (Chair)	Cllr Neville Lane (Thorverton PC)
Cllr Steve Parker (NSC PC))	D/Cllr Bob Deed (MDDC)
Cllr Sarah Cross (Silverton PC)	Cllr David Horton (Upton Pyne PC)
Cllr Amanda Somerwill (Bickleigh PC)	Cllr Derek Boustred (Stoke Canon PC)

In Attendance: Jane Hole

Apologies: Ros Davies (DCC); Cllr Jim Maunder (Huxham), Cllr Graeme Barnell (MDDC), Cllr Jim Enright (NSC PC), Cllr Clive Williams (Bickleigh)

236. Notes for the meeting of the 27 July 2022

Agreed

237. Matters Arising (not on the agenda)

Increasing attendance at meetings

238. Footpaths update from Ros Davies (DCC)

Clerk to ask Ros Davies for update on issues raised at the July meeting and circulate with minutes from this meeting

The footpath across the railway line at Stoke Canon was closed due to safety concerns – the lights required adjustment to allow for a longer crossing time. Cllr Bob Deed would raise this issue at his next meeting with Network Rail

Update from Ros Davies (minutes from last meeting with updates from Ros in blue)

i) Right of way: St Martins Chapel to Lee Cross in Thorverton

We are aware of the signing on this route and currently working with one the landowners concerned to address the matter of material/alluvial deposits in times of heavy rain.

[I shall speak to the warden to see if he has an update on this crossing and when it might be accessible once more](#)

ii) Stoke Canon to Brampford Speke – access for all route

We are holding a meeting with a representative of the Devon Countryside Access Forum to discuss the needs for access improvements on this route – meeting planned for 2nd August.

[I walked the route under discussion and contacted the landowner over whose land the path crosses. This project has been explored in the past with the landowner and was not met with a favourable response. Unfortunately, the landowner has not changed his views regarding this footpath that would result in the creation of a link between the two communities. He has grave concerns regarding the risk of cattle getting out of the fields and onto the railway if in the event a gate were to be left open/tampered with by a member of the public. I had a very long conversation with the person concerned but unfortunately I was unable to change his stance on the situation.](#)

iii) Burnhalt Bridge

We are hoping to get an engineer to look at this project as soon as they are able to find some time. The project is not forgotten, just time is not our side at the moment.

[We understand the frustration felt by the Raddon Hills community that the suspension bridge at Burn has not been replaced. To help give some reasoning as to why we have been unable to undertake this work I have an email extract from a senior colleague that states, 'For bridge replacement work we typically have an annual budget of around £250,000 and approximately 2,000 bridges to maintain, including over 300 large bridges that require professional engineering oversight.](#)

A DCC bridge engineer has estimated that to replace Burn Suspension Bridge with a modern truss steel beam bridge would cost around £175,000. This bridge has, to date, proven prohibitively expensive to replace but would be a key structure should sufficient resources become available’.

Unfortunately, as DCC enters a period of significant financial challenges we remain unable to offer a quick solution regarding the replacement of this bridge. Naturally, we would like to see a suitable structure in place but with rising costs and depleting budgets it does not look likely that a new bridge will be insitu soon. We shall continue to keep the structure on our ‘bridge replacement’ list and should funds become available we will do all we can to undertake the necessary work.

iv) Network Rail had closed a well-used footpath between Rewe and Stoke Canon without consultation and this had caused issues for local residents

I shall speak to the warden to see if he has an update on this crossing and when it might be accessible once more

239. To agree constitution for Raddon Hills Group - circulated

This had been circulated and was proposed and seconded and agreed unanimously.

(Note from Clerk - the constitution provides that “each representative will be content for their contact details to be available to other members of the Group to enable networking outside of meetings” Therefore emails will be sent to all and no longer blind copied)

240. Update on Climate Issues

Cllr Bob Deed noted that MDDC had been granted £2.8 million by the Government to update the energy supply at its leisure centres. MDDC wished to retrofit its 3000 plus homes as a priority but as rents cannot increase by more than 5% it was not clear how this could be funded.

Cllr David Horton noted that it was important for Parish Councils to concentrate on what they can influence in their immediate area but to be ambitious within the local area

241. DCC Highways update

Cllr Neville Lane reported that Thorverton had access to a Highways map which showed a road condition score for their parish. Thorverton’s map is circulated with these minutes for information. Other parishes should be able to obtain their own maps from Highways. It was reported that Highways were working with a new provider and were using a new asset management tool.

Newton St Cyres Road Wardens were working well with the NHO

242. Plans to help communities keep warm this winter

Cllr Sarah Cross reported that Silvertown were looking at providing a warm hub in the community hall but it was not clear how this could be funded. It was suggested that a possible source of funding may be from Devon Communities Growing Fund, as detailed in the July minutes.

Cllr Bob Deed suggested that Parish Councils consider setting funds aside to help their community and this would be reflected in the precept calculation.

With regard to food banks, this may be an area where Raddon Hills parishes could come together as they may be merit in a joint scheme, where for example, one approach was made to supermarkets rather than each individual parish contacting supermarkets.

Consideration must be given as to how to ensure that all those that needed help receive help as many will not ask for help.

Thorverton’s community larder, run by the Church was trying to be more responsive by allowing people to request specific items.

Silvertown community larder, run by volunteers was collecting short dated food from supermarkets.

It was agreed to discuss this at a future meeting with a separate note included with the minutes.

243. Update on developments within each Parish

Newton St Cyres – the consultants report on the Boniface Trail was unlikely to be published before the end of the year. A community group were running allotment plots to grow food for the community

Stoke Canon – Increased heavy vehicles in the lanes - there had been a recent accident between a tractor and tanker

Could Ros Davies give an update on the footpath across to Brampford Speke where disability gates were being considered?

An application for a small development of 5 homes and 2 affordable homes had been turned down due to flooding risk, even though the areas had not been known to flood in the last 40 years.

There were a number of road repairs outstanding.

Thorverton – MDDC had agreed to fund a housing needs survey which would be sent out in the new year.

Allies Mid-Devon may still have some free daffodil bulbs – contact details available from Cllr Neville Lane if required

Silverton – a public meeting had been held to discuss changes to the bus timetable which was being reduced largely due to a shortage of bus drivers and viability of some routes which were not used as much as they needed to be. Silverton were considering how to encourage greater bus use

Upton Pyne – Footpaths – inappropriate use of footpath, for example dogs running in crops was causing some issues and there was a balance to be struck between land owners rights and public enjoyment of paths

Bickleigh – would like an update on the footpath across the Exe. A footpath Warden had been appointed. A community consultation had taken place recently and it was hoped that unused patches of land could be used to grow food for the community. Looking at using the “Incredible Edible” model.

Consideration was being given to a thermal imaging camera to help residents identify source of energy loss from their properties. The parish was keen to encourage parishioners with particular skills sets to come forward and use these for the benefit of the whole parish.

Link to thermal imaging camera which can be used with an I phone

<https://www.flir.co.uk/products/flir-one-gen-3/?vertical=condition+monitoring&segment=solutions>

244. Focus for next meeting? Ideas for speakers?

Food larder/foodbanks

245. To agree a Chair for the next meeting and to agree dates

Cllr Roger Cashmore agreed to be chair for the following year. It was requested that meetings did not take place on Tuesdays. Clerk to circulate dates after consultation with Chair.

246. Any other business

None

247. Date of next meeting: Wednesday January 25, 7.30pm at Newton St Cyres Parish Hall