

Ogbourne St Andrew, Ogbourne Maizey and Rockley Parish Council

Minutes

Monday 6th November 2023 at 7pm at Southview, Ogbourne St Andrew

Present: John Hetherington (JH) (Chair)
Jan Whitehead (JW) (Clerk)
Nick Parsons (NP)
John Edmunds (JE)
Alan Brown (AB)
Brian Dean (BD)
Nicky Place (NPL)
Carys Gregory (CG)
Roger Swan (Parishioner)
Ian Davies (Parishioner)

Apologies:

- 1) Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
Parish Steward has done all the work he is able to do.
Action: BD to speak to householder about further trimming.
Local Policing team have been advised of meeting dates
Amendment to minutes of 3rd July 2023. Item 4 should state that the Parish Council made a case for the access to Green Lane from the gallops on the Downs to become a bridleway.
Some part of the river bed have not been fully cleared which could lead to potential flooding.
Action: BD to advise as necessary about clearance of drains/river bed
Nobody has advised of available land for a football pitch.
Action: NP to put article in parish newsletter.
Action: JH to contact WCC about human waste around Bay Bridges
Action: JW to prepare a notice for newsletter about parking on pavements.

- 2) Village Maintenance
 - a) Winter Flooding Preparation. Wet Pits Lane flooding – WCC advised of issue. Parishioners have cleared the drain to try to alleviate the problem, however this is a recurring problem. Some flooding issues previously reported to WCC are still showing as In Progress.
Action: Annual request to WCC to be done each October to clear drains in flooding locations.
River Og has been re-routed across the field which has resulted in the old river bed being almost dry. Springs are already running – key areas for flooding are Wet Pits, outside Sheepridge, Ogbourne Maizey and Rockley
Action: NP to prepare an article for the Parish Newsletter on flood prevention
A website exists to report flooding instances and can go back 5 years: www.gov.uk/report-flood-cause
Environmental Agency emergency hotline is 0800 807060. Floodline is 0345 988 1188
Automated flood warnings can be signed up to at www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

b) Drains. Parish Steward to be alerted to blocked drains. Parishioners are asked to clear drains outside their properties where possible and report blocked drains to WCC.
Drains in Maizey have been cleared. Eagle Cottages, Rockley drains also flood across the road.

3) Roads and Footpaths

a) Footpath between St Andrew and Maizey. There have been some instances of walkers being worried about using the footpath across the field due to loose horses. This will be monitored.

b) Public Inquiry Update. This was held on 31st October. Opinions were taken from people who were in favour and against the bridleway. WCC Planning Committee supported the creation of the bridleway. The evidence will now be considered and there are 3 potential outcomes: refusal of the application, approval of the application or a compromise situation where the bridleway will be made into a footpath. It could be 6 weeks before a decision is made.

4) Health and Social

a) Community activities. Bingo night has been held and was very successful. An events list is currently being prepared.

b) Silks on the Downs. The manager position has been made redundant and the pub is now being run by some paid staff and a large number of volunteers. Strongly encouraging everyone to use the pub as much as possible and spread the word. More volunteers are needed. Locals have also been asked to promote the Christmas menu and to help with leafleting in the local area.

c) Defibrillator update. The installation in Rockley is being followed up currently. We still require an installation site for Ogbourne Maizey. As the church is a listed building and a faculty would be required, which is a lengthy process, it was decided to ask the church to keep the other defibrillator inside for use when the church is open.

Action: JW to follow up with the PCC Secretary.

5) Planning

No planning applications have been received other than permissions to carry out works on trees.

6) Finance

Since the last meeting, the following payments have been made from the current account:

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| Parish Newsletter invoices for 2023 | £352.60 |
| Remembrance Wreath | £23.98 |

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| Current account balance: £4687.93 | Savings: £5959.69 | Total: £10647.62 |
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JW will now purchase the defibrillator box for Rockley.

7) Correspondence

None

8) AOB

a) Church refurbishment. Roger Swan attended the meeting to provide an update. Permission has been granted to make some changes to the west end of the church. There will be a meeting in the church on 30th November at 6pm. A notice will be sent out to advertise this.

It has taken 16 years to get permission and reach this point. The Village Design Statement in 2002 resulted in the setting up of a group of 11 villagers to present findings from an exhibition in 2003. Over 55% of households in the parish attended. 33 recommendations were made and the document was printed in 2005.

Key request from this exercise was that more should be done to integrate the community – a village hall or a place where everyone could meet. No land is available for a village hall so the church was proposed for community get togethers. However, it is not the most suitable building in its current form – no running water, no toilet, no kitchen and only pews available for seating. In 2005 the PCC started work to look at possible changes. Approvals for work is time consuming. Proposals were to remove the pews and replace with chairs, install running water, drainage, kitchen, toilet, new lighting and new heating and to move the font.

Objections were made to these proposals by the Victorian Society, so the proposals were reviewed and approval for the revised plans then sought. These new plans propose to install running water, drainage, a disabled toilet, servery, move partition to create a new vestry and resite the font. Middle section of the church would therefore be open. Redecoration is also proposed, but this will also require a faculty. An application would be made later to remove the remaining pews.

The meeting on 30th November will provide details and give everyone a chance to make comments. Fundraising will be coordinated by an experienced fundraiser. Hope to start building around May 2024.

The Parish Council expressed thanks to the PCC for their perseverance on this issue and to Roger for explaining the proposals.

The meeting closed at 19:55

Date of next meetings: 08/01/24, 04/03/24, 13/05/24 (AGM), 01/07/24, 02/09/24, 04/11/24