

English Bicknor Parish Council

Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting held on 10th June 2019 at English Bicknor Village Hall.

Those present were as follows:

Councillor Mrs P. Drinkall – Chairman

Councillor Mr C. Drew

Councillor Mrs. D. Owen

Councillor Mr K. Braithwaite

Councillor Mr J. Carrick

Councillor Mr D. Gunter

Councillor Mrs A. Bowen

Also present was County Councillor Mr T. Hale.

910. Apologies and welcome

Apologies were received from District Councillor Mr T Gwilliam. The chairman welcomed Mr K. Braithwaite to his first meeting as a Parish Councillor.

911. Public Forum

No members of the public were present.

912. Reading and confirmation of the minutes of the last bi-monthly meeting

The minutes of the April meeting were proposed by Cllr Drew, seconded by Cllr Gunter and agreed by all present, following which they were signed by the chairman.

913. Matters arising from the minutes of the last bi-monthly meeting

904. District Councillor Following the local elections held in May, the new District Councillors for the Berry Hill Ward, which includes English Bicknor, are Cllr Mr T. Gwilliam and Cllr Michelle Mumford.

889. Parking bay along Bicknor Street On 2nd April the Area Highway Representative confirmed that on visiting the site he found that a small amount of the bank had been removed, which had not undermined the hedge/verge. He felt that any run off would be minimal. The clerk will inform Mr P. Gwilliam of this response. County Cllr T. Hale confirmed that the Safety Officer will have a look at the garden gate which is left open onto the highway along Bicknor Street.

571 School safety zone Headland Archaeology have now reviewed all the paperwork and forwarded a report, which quotes two costings (£3,526 and £5,166) for further work based on whether archaeological remains are found or no. This report and its attachments were forwarded to Mr David Haigh, Conservation Officer to the District Council, who replied outlining avenues which the Parish Council may be able to pursue rather than having to pay for an archaeological survey. Cllr Drinkall outlined the history of the site for Cllr Braithwaite. After some discussion, Cllr Carrick proposed canvassing residents who live near the school about parking at the start and end of each school day and whether they would wish the Parish Council to take any action. Cllr Drinkall agreed to draft and distribute a letter.

673.3 Traffic island at the top of Church Hill County Highways still insist that the small direction arrows currently on the traffic island are the original arrows. The Parish Council know this is not the case and that the smaller arrows were installed after a vehicle had demolished some of the bollards. County Cllr Hale will liaise with Highways to try and get bigger arrows.

690 BT telephone box, English Bicknor Forest Holidays are not able to refurbish the BT box at present. Two small panes of glass in the box need replacing, for which Cllr Mrs Drinkall has obtained a quote of £70. Cllr Mrs Owen proposed that we accept this quote; Cllr Carrick seconded and everyone agreed that the contractor should be asked to replace the two panes.

754.1 Speed surveys in the Parish Cllr Drew has drawn up a plan of where a flashing speed sign could be placed along Hillersland Road and forwarded it to County Cllr Hale, who advised that permission is required from Gloucestershire Highways for a flashing sign to be placed on the side of the road. County Cllr Hale still hopes to be able to fund a flashing sign from his County Councillor budget. The clerk will purchase 40mph wheelie bin stickers for use along Hillersland Road.

755.1 Lime Kilns Foresters' Forest have paid the £450 grant towards the cost of repairs to the Lime Kilns directly into the Parish Council bank account. The sign saying 'Enter the Lime Kilns at your own risk' has been left in place.

782.2 Street lighting in Hillersland A map showing the position of the current street lamps, with the distances between them marked, has been prepared by Cllr Drew and forwarded to Mr K. White at Mark Harper's office and to County Cllr Hale, who confirmed that the County Council feel that the number of lights is sufficient for the area. However, County Cllr Hale will continue to liaise with Saska re the possibility of more street lights for Hillersland.

870.3 Sign hanging from footbridge at Symonds Yat Rock The sign has been inspected by County Cllr T. Hale and his report forwarded to the Forestry Commission (now called Forestry England). The next report will be due

in July.

844. Overhanging vegetation between Lucy Court and the Rectory This work will be added to the list of jobs for the Community Gang (Lengthsmen).

870.4 Silt across Redhouse Lane This is still due to be swept by a Bobcat sweeper.

884. Wild Boar Letters were forwarded to the owners of Holly Barn, to DEFRA and the Forestry Commission, asking them to point out to guests and organisers of events the dangers of dropping food waste.

896. Highway matters – Sterts Farm drain Works have now been completed on the drain near Sterts Farm.

897.4 Parish elections A parish election was not required, as 6 councillors stood for the 7 positions available. Mr K. Braithwaite indicated an interest in joining the Parish Council and was duly co-opted as a Parish Councillor at the Annual Meeting. A letter of thanks will be sent to Mr J. Britton thanking him for all his work as a Parish Councillor.

898.1 Dog waste bags Dog waste bags are still appearing on woodland footpaths and on tree branches. The clerk will ask whether the Forestry Commission (now called Forestry England) have delivered leaflets to the campsites.

898.3/4 Litter pick in English Bicknor and Hillersland Litter picks have been carried out in both locations.

908 Overhanging roadside vegetation on Junction Hill This has been reported to Highways and a reference number provided.

914. Report of the County Councillor

County Cllr T. Hale reported that the County Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions by 2030 and have started to implement measures to this effect. The full list of measures will be passed on to the clerk for circulation. The Parish Council expressed interest in having someone from the County Council speaking at a future meeting of the Parish Council re reducing carbon footprint. County Cllr Hale is also involved in the Youth Support Strategy Group, which is looking at current provision and the state of buildings used for youth work, and in adult care and community groups.

915 Report of the District Councillor

District Cllr T. Gwilliam forwarded a report, which was read by Cllr Mrs Drinkall.

Cllr Gwilliam reported on the latest development concerning the leisure centre site at Five Acres. Homes England has now withdrawn its application to the Secretary of State to sell the site to the District Council for £1. In October 2018, the District Council were made aware that in 2010/11 a letter was written by the District Council supporting Homes England in their bid to develop 70% of the site with housing. It remains the District Council's intent to develop the site as a sport, leisure and cultural centre for the District.

916. Register of Members' Interest Forms

These had been previously circulated to councillors (except Cllr Braithwaite) for completion. Five councillors returned their completed forms, while Cllr Braithwaite was given a form to complete.

917. Bus service through English Bicknor

A few days after the last Parish Council meeting, a parishioner approached Cllr Drinkall, concerned at the new proposals for the local bus service. These proposals show that in future most buses will go to Cinderford, where passengers will have to change buses to go to Ross-on-Wye. Passengers will also have to change buses in Coleford to get to Monmouth. Stagecoach had asked for feedback. Cllr Drinkall met with several bus users from the Parish, and from their concerns and views, a letter was drafted and forwarded to Mr J. O'Neill, the Commercial Manager at Stagecoach. An individual letter was also sent to Stagecoach by a parishioner on behalf of his mother. A reply has been received, confirming that Stagecoach are planning an implementation date of 1st September, and should be in a position to share their finalised plans during July.

918 Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)

The Parish Council have recently learnt that there is now no PCSO attached to English Bicknor. The clerk will contact the Police to ask if they can advise who is to be the new PCSO, and when parishioners can expect to see them.

919. Planning matters

(659) P0747/19/FUL Arnells, Church Hill, English Bicknor

Extension to existing dormer on rear elevation of dwelling providing bathroom to first floor.

The Parish Council support this application.

At a planning meeting held on 23rd April 2019, the following application was discussed
(658) P0401/19/FUL Bicknor Court, English Bicknor
Proposed barn conversion with granny annex and associated works (revised scheme).
The Parish Council supported this scheme. Cllr Mrs Bowen did not take part in the discussion.
Full permission was granted on 20th May 2019

At a planning meeting held on 13th May 2019 the following application was discussed:
(655) P0270/19/FUL (amended) Bicknor Cottage, Ross Road
Conversion of existing outbuilding to holiday let, incorporating timber decking, conversion of existing outhouse to washing facilities and utilities room with associated parking. Creation of new vehicular access.
The Parish Council support this application now that the glamping tents have been removed from the application and are happy with the revised access. Cllr Gunter did not take part in this discussion.

(653) P0120/19/LD1 Hopyard Cottage, Ross Road
Application to determine whether the occupation of the dwelling without compliance with the occupancy condition is lawful.

This application is still pending.

(654) P0108/19/LD1 Blackthorns Farm, Hillersland
Application to establish whether the erection of a wooden cabin for residential use is lawful.
A Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use was issued on 22nd May 2019.

(656) P0374/19/FUL Uplands, Hillersland
Erection of a replacement garage.

Full permission was granted on 15th May 2019.

(657) P0387/19/FUL Land south of Shadowlands Barn, English Bicknor
Change of use of land to provide glamping site comprising shepherd's hut, including landscaping.
Full permission (with 8 conditions) was granted on 21st May 2019.

920. Accounts for payment

- 1) Clerk's wages, office allowance and expenses - £489.92
- 2) PAYE on clerk's wages - £93.92
- 3) Mrs J. Hailes – internal audit - £70.00
- 4) Community First – insurance renewal - £290.58
- 5) English Bicknor Village Hall – rent for use of hall - £60.00
- 6) English Bicknor W.I – refreshments for Parish Assembly - £30.00

A copy of the overview of finances had previously been circulated, while copies of the latest bank statement were available at the meeting. Acceptance of the accounts and proposed payments was proposed by Cllr Mrs Owen seconded by Cllr Drew and agreed by all present.

921. Highway matters

The Highways list was updated and a list compiled of jobs which can be completed by the Community Gang (formerly the Lengthsmen).

1. The public footpath at Swanpool Lane is completely overgrown and needs to be cleared throughout its entire length.
2. Road signs throughout the Parish need cleaning.
3. Weeds need clearing from the Traffic Island at the top of Church Hill.
4. Brambles need clearing from around some street signs.
5. Brambles need clearing from around the electricity pole near Larksfield, Ross Road.
6. Overhanging vegetation between Lucy Court and The Rectory, Ross Road, needs clearing.
7. Brambles need clearing from between the boundary wall of the Rectory and the road.

Weed spraying is due to be carried out at the end of June. The clerk will re-send to Mr A. Middlecote of Highways the map showing the areas in English Bicknor to be sprayed.

922. Footpaths in the Parish

The clerk will contact the PROW officer to report a sign which has been knocked off by the hedge cutter on footpath REB29/1, along Ross Road – going towards Christchurch - before Sterts Farm.

923. Correspondence received since last meeting

1. Mrs S. Middleton of Foresters' Forest had sent details of free minibus tours taking people to visit some of their project sites.
2. Notification has been received from UK Cycling Events of a Wye Tour taking place on 31st August, which passes through English Bicknor. The clerk will contact the organisers to warn them of the pot holes in Grove Road, Berry Hill.
3. The Forest of Dean Dementia Action Alliance group sent notice of their annual event, to be held on 18th July at Berry Hill Rugby Club.
4. Information has been received from the Coleford Area Partnership about a meeting relating to flooding. Cllr Carrick will attend the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council.

924. Any other matters affecting the Parish

1. The Parish Council has been informed that the cardboard recycling bin located at the village hall, blows open when it is not full and cardboard blows out. The clerk will contact the relevant authority.
2. Supplies of the free weekly newspaper which are left in the former BT box in English Bicknor are disappearing very quickly. Parishioners have been asked to keep an eye on whether no or very few newspapers are being left, or whether someone is taking a lot of copies.
3. The drain in a gateway at the very bottom of Church Hill is completely blocked, so silt has piled up in the field gateway. The clerk will inform Highways.
4. Pavements are cracked and starting to break up in Redhouse Lane. The clerk will inform Highways.

925. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 5th August at 7pm at English Bicknor Village Hall.

