

English Bicknor Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1st August 2022 at English Bicknor Village Hall.

Those present were as follows:

Councillor Mrs P. Drinkall – Chairman	Councillor Mr K. Braithwaite - vice-chairman
Councillor Mr D. Gunter	Councillor Mrs A. Bowen
Councillor Mr J. Carrick	Councillor Mrs D. Owen

Also present were County Councillor Mr T. Hale and one member of the public.

164. Apologies and welcome

Apologies were received from Cllr Mr P. Warden

165. Public Forum

No matters were raised in the public forum.

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

The minutes of the bi-monthly Parish Council meeting held on 6th June 2022, were proposed, seconded and agreed by all present, following which they were signed by the chairman.

167. Reading and confirmation of the minutes of the Annual Meeting

The minutes of the annual meeting held on 16th May 2022, were proposed, seconded and agreed by all present, following which they were signed by the chairman.

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

87. Village Hall Committee and Football Club A letter was sent to the Village Hall Committee asking about any future plans for the playing fields and to ask that the rubbish on the playing fields be removed. A short reply has been received from Mr P. Gwilliam saying that the playing field can now be used for any recreational use such as tennis, cricket, rounders etc. No mention was made in his reply to the rubbish on the playing fields, although the VHC have asked the Football Club to remove it.

754.1 Speeding in Hillersland The location for the hardstanding for the speed camera van still has to be agreed by a member of the camera enforcement team of Gloucestershire Police.

951.2 Speed limit approaching Symonds Yat Rock Mr A. Middlecote of County Highways confirmed that the missing sign on the bend approaching Symonds Yat Rock has now been replaced, and he advised that there are signs in advance to the car park and at the entrance to it. The clerk will write to point out that these signs are from the direction of Symonds Yat Rock, while the danger of collision relates to vehicles coming around the bends from the direction of Hillersland.

Mr Matthew Parker from Community Speedwatch met with Cllr Drinkall and Braithwaite to deliver wheelie bin stickers. Mr Parker offered the Parish Council free use of a camera which will capture car number plates and is linked to the police data-base. The clerk will write to thank Mr Parker for this very productive meeting.

26.4 Lime Kilns Cllr Mrs Bowen was thanked for arranging for the weeds on the Lime Kilns to be sprayed. She offered to arrange for this work to be carried out again in the Spring.

50. The Definitive Map The County Council confirmed that REB15 is a restricted byway and is shown on the Definitive Map. They also confirmed that REB48/1 and 2 are lengths of public footpath which were added to the Definitive Map in 2004 by means of a dedication agreement between the Forestry Commission and GCC. The clerk will query whether there is any difference between a restricted by-way and a bridlepath.

82.1 Verge near Dove Cottage County Cllr Hale confirmed that the Safety Officer has attended the site, and agreed that further repairs are required.

84.3 Road name signs The District Council has confirmed that a new sign for Redhouse Lane has been ordered and should be put in place in the next few weeks. They will ensure that the contractor knows where the sign is to be placed.

84.5 Designation of Redhouse Lane County Cllr Hale and Mr A. Middlecote walked this path

recently. The mud across the road is now very dry, so Mr Middlecote feels there is no problem and is not prepared to spend money and possibly encourage off-road driving. The clerk will contact Highways to clarify that clearing a track a metre wide would be sufficient for pedestrians to use this road.

102 Weed spraying in the Parish Mr Middlecote had confirmed that a works order has finally been raised for the weeds to be sprayed. However, councillors agreed that it is now too late in the season. Cllr T. Hale will ask the lengthsman to scrape the weeds, and the clerk will ask if the weeds spraying can be put on hold until the Spring of 2023.

106.8 Ditch along Bicknor Street County Highways reported that their street works team are in talks with Gigaclear to resolve the issue.

106.9 Man-hole cover in playing fields A site meeting was held between representatives of County Highways and the Parish Council. County Highway will survey the storm drain.

107 Swanpool Lane (REB18/1) Although the PROW Officer replied that the new kissing gate fills the gap where the barrier was removed between the gate and the hedge, there is concern that this is not exactly the case to the right of the gate. It is hoped this will not cause problems in the future. The lane has now been cleared using funds from County Cllr T. Hale's budget.

116.2 Speeding in Bicknor Street The '20 is plenty' signs have been received. Cllr Braithwaite will liaise with a resident of Bicknor Street who has indicated that he would like to help put the signs in place.

121 Footpath REB10/1 The PROW Officer has apologised that he has been too busy to visit this footpath yet, but it is near the top of his list. As this path is part of the English Bicknor Heritage Trail, it was felt it does need attention. Cllr Mrs Bowen offered to try to find out who owns the land. The clerk will contact the PROW Officer to recommend that he walk up the path from the bottom, as it was felt that it is now too dangerous to walk down the path towards the river.

123.1 Playground for under 5s on playing fields The playground is now in place and is being used, although it has been placed on the area where both the Parish Council and the W.I. asked for it not to be placed. It was clarified that a fence around the playground is not a legal requirement.

131 Annual Audit The external auditor has confirmed receipt of the Certificate of Exemption and that there will be no fees to be paid unless they receive correspondence from local electors during the period for the exercise of public rights which requires the auditor to contact the Parish Council. As this period ended on the 22nd July, the Parish Council will not hear from the auditor again this year and there is no fee.

133 Footpath REB29/1 This leaning post has still not been dealt with.

135.2 Trees on Parish Council land at Redhouse Lane Cllr Mrs Drinkall will ask Mr Maxfield when he is able to deal with these trees..

157. Accounts The VAT claim of £484.81 has been paid into the Parish Council bank account. This claim is made up from VAT on the new speed sign (£430.81) and £27 VAT paid on the annual support for the defibrillator in both 2021 and 2022.

158 Eastbach Roads County Cllr Hale confirmed that resurfacing the further two sections of the Eastbach Roads had never been promised, but this work would be done at some time in the future. Meanwhile, pot-holes have been filled and the road is regularly checked.

159 Footpaths in the Parish Cllr Gunter will find out where the reported broken stiles are.

161.2 Polling Station Review The clerk confirmed to the District Council that there are no issues relating to the polling station in English Bicknor.

162.1 Crime figures for the Parish Crime figures are available on the Gloucestershire Constabulary website, but these cover the whole of Coleford and surrounding area. The PCSO has confirmed that there is very little reported crime at the moment.

162.2 Parish Website Cllr Mrs Drinkall will contact someone who may be prepared to take on the responsibility of updating the Parish website. Councillors agreed that they would like to see information on local charities included on the website.

162.3 Plaque for Oak trees Wording was agreed for a plaque to be placed in front of the Oak trees planted for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Cllr Braithwaite will purchase the plaque and liaise with Cllr Mrs Bowen to put it in place.

169. Report of the County Councillor

County Cllr Hale reported that the Black Bridge across the Wye is now closed as the boards need renewing. He is trying to get funding for a more permanent repair. It was agreed that the Parish Council should support 'Save Cannop Ponds' which is a campaign against the ponds being drained and write to Forestry

England.

170. Planning Matters

(683) Application Ref: P0978/22/FUL The Grange, Braceland, Christchurch
Erection of a first floor extension over existing annex with associated works.
Councillors support this application.

At a planning meeting held on 12th July 2022, councillors considered the following applications:

(681) Application Ref: P0797/22/OUT 4 Orchard Close, English Bicknor

Outline application for the erection of a detached dwelling with garage. Demolition of existing outbuilding.
Councillors supported this application, but asked that adequate parking be provided on-site.

(682) Application Ref: P0750/22/FUL Bench at Symonds Yat Rock

Erection of perch bench with associated works. Removal of 2 existing benches.

Councillors supported this application.

To date, the District Council has not made a decision on either application.

Full permission was granted on 29th July for application ref P0397/22/FUL, for removal of conditions e and f relating to planning permission DF11884/A at Turnfield Barn, Eastbach, English Bicknor.

County Cllr Hale confirmed that at present there is no planning enforcement officer in the District.

171. Accounts for payment

Miss W. Lawrence – clerk's wages and expenses £358.51

HMRC – income tax on clerk's wages - £85.04

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

172. Highway Matters

A tree in the hedge of The Glebe, English Bicknor, is obstructing the 20mph sign approaching the school. As the owners of this property live abroad, it was agreed to write a letter to the owners informing them that the Parish Council have asked for this tree to be cut back by the lengthsmen. The Parish Council will ask the tenants to forward this letter.

173. Correspondence received since last meeting

1. An invitation was received from Mrs S. Middleton inviting councillors to a 'Forest in Future' event at Whitemead Park on 2nd July, but no councillors were able to attend.

2. English Bicknor Primary School forwarded a copy of a letter they had sent out to all parents asking them not to park on the bends opposite Bicknor House.

174. Any other matters affecting the Parish Council

1. The closure of Stowfield Road at Lydbrook had resulted in a lot more heavy traffic being diverted through English Bicknor. County Cllr T. Hale will inform County Highways of the problems this diversion caused.

2. Cllr Gunter advised that the VAT claim system had changed in April. The clerk has not been informed of any changes, but will clarify with GAPt if these changes affect the Parish Council.

3. The clerk was asked to inform Two Rivers that one of the two trees on the corner of Smithy Close is dead and if they could replace it.

4. It was reported that on the edge of the wood opposite 1 Cherry Tree Cottages, Hillersland, an Ash tree is dying, with more dying Ash trees in the wood behind it. The clerk will contact Forestry England.

5. The parish magazine editor is moving from the area and at the moment no-one has come forward to take over this role.

175. Date of the next Parish Council meeting

The next bi-monthly meeting of the Parish Council will be held at English Bicknor Village Hall at 7pm on Monday 3rd October 2022.

