

OVER HADDON PARISH

Council Chairman: Roger Truscott

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The Annual Parish Meeting was held at 7:30pm on Monday 14th March 2022 in Over Haddon Village Hall

Minutes

Attendance: 10 electors and 4 non-electors

1. Appointment of the Clerk to the meeting

The meeting appointed the Parish Clerk to take the minutes

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from PCSO Morris and County Councillor Alasdair Sutton who is visiting the village tomorrow so supplied his mobile in case any parishioner present wished to discuss any issues.

3. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Monday 10th May 2021 were approved.

4. Chair's Report

Councillors this year have been myself as chair, Zena Hawley (vice chair), Penny Aitken, Sally Mosley and Steve Pope. Matthew Lovell has continued as Clerk to the Council and we thank him for all his hard work again.

After several more virtual meetings via Zoom we began meeting from July onwards in person at the village hall and found that more people, both local authority representatives and members of the public, were able to attend.

One issue that has continued to preoccupy the council has been the dispute with Derbyshire Dales District Council over the public toilets at the car park in Over Haddon. Following the district council's resolution to close the toilets several years ago the parish council has succeeded in keeping them open only by agreeing to pay for cleaning them. Despite installing an "honesty box" which brings in a small amount of revenue this now costs the parish council about 40% of its annual precept. This seems to us an entirely unjust situation as the toilets were provided, about 40 years ago, when Lathkill Dale was designated as a National Nature Reserve, along with the car park, to serve the needs of tourists coming to this part of the National Park. Both were paid for at the time jointly by the National Park and English Nature (as it then was) and later passed to the ownership of the district council for them to manage. The district council are happy to retain the car park (which yields substantial revenue) but they would like to offload the toilets which costs money.

Another ongoing problem for the parish council has been the management of roads within the village. An obvious issue is that of potholes, which has become noticeably worse over winter, and another has been that of the inconsiderate parking of cars, sometimes causing obstruction, and which seems to be mainly caused by visitors, including holiday makers staying in the village. This is partly linked to an unwillingness of some motorists to pay the car park charges, and partly to some residents at Manor Court using the road rather than their designated parking on the other side of Bakewell Road. Further issues include

persistent attempts by motorists and van drivers to use the lower ginnel between Main Street and Monyash Road as a through route (which it clearly is not!) and periodic problems of speeding, especially along Bakewell Road and Monyash Road. Finally, the issue of dog mess has re-emerged after a long time when it has been under control.

We are in regular contact with the County Council Highways department over the issues of potholes, parking, the lower ginnel and speeding, but so far to little avail. The police have been more helpful over speeding, and in collaboration with the Police Communities Support Officer we have established a local Speedwatch group and are actively promoting "20's Plenty" signs. We also have regular meetings with the PCSO to discuss general matters of nuisance and petty crime and he has promised to support us in resolving them. Further assistance has been provided by Councillor Mark Wakeman(DDDC) who has provided equipment for gathering unwanted litter in the village and parish, carried out by a local group of volunteers, coordinated by parish councillors.

The "Plantation" (the small triangle at the junction of Main Street and Wellgate Lane) has seen significant progress this year towards becoming a Community Garden. This a project in conjunction with Derby College to landscape the triangle, and the latter have now almost completed their work, providing re-walling, planting, decking, stone paths and Corton Steel panels depicting aspects of life in the parish. A group of volunteers, coordinated by Councillor Pope, have been carrying out regular garden maintenance on the site (along with clearing the area around the old village well, which is also owned by the parish council) and we have obtained the approval of the County Council and British Telecom to construct a path from Main Street across the grass verge to the Plantation entrance. Once this has been done and a seat and information panel provided then the site can be opened as a community garden – a new amenity both for local residents and visitors.

A review of allotment usage was carried out in the Summer, which revealed that some plots had fallen into, or were falling into, disuse. As a result of this some tenancies were relinquished and plots became available to all who were then on a waiting list. A meeting of councillors and tenants was also held to discuss allotment regulations, as a result of which a new set of agreed rules were drawn up and it was decided to form an allotment tenants association to coordinate activities and provide mutual benefits for tenants. It was also agreed to set aside a plot for common amenity use near the entrance, towards which Councillor Wakeman kindly made a donation. In addition the parish council found it necessary to remove some ash trees from the edge of the main access pathway from Monyash Road, partly because of the hazard they caused to a neighbouring property but mainly because they were affected by ash die-back.

Following representations from residents about the need for improved broadband speed in the village the parish council led a campaign, coordinated by councillor Pope, to get support for making high speed broadband available for the village community. Although a small section of the village already has access to fibre broadband, we have not yet persuaded BT to extend this more widely.

Turning to housing issues, a survey of rural housing need has not established a clear need for more social or affordable housing locally (although we would contest this) but there is concern over the growth in the number of dwellings in the village and parish which are not permanently occupied. Apart from the damaging effect this has on community cohesion it means that there are now more than twenty dwellings in the village, and rather more in the parish, for which Council

Tax is not payable, which means in turn that they do not contribute to the parish precept.

Another issue which has been grinding on throughout the year is a review by the Local Government Boundaries Commission into the wards which make up the Derbyshire Dales District Council. We recommended to the Commission that Over Haddon should be included with Youlgrave and Monyash into an electoral ward of neighbouring villages, rather than being subsumed with Bakewell, as at present. This appeared to have been accepted, but was later reversed, to our disappointment, although the matter is still under review.

Finally, the parish council continues to make its recommendations on planning applications which are referred to it by the Peak Park Planning Board. We do not always agree with the final decisions made by the Peak Park but endeavour to remain objective in our recommendation, in the interests of good planning and of the local community. We also act, informally, as “eyes and ears” for the Peak Park over developments, changes of use, and possible unauthorised activity, in view of the shortage of manpower at the National Park.

It has been a busy year and we look forward to positive change and progress in 2022/23.

Roger Truscott (Chairman.)

5. Report from representatives of County, District, Police, PDNPA attending

District Councillor Mark Wakeman noted that discussions are being held regarding re-opening or further provision of public toilets by the District Council and promised to press our unique case for taking back the cleaning. Parking leaflets for inconsiderately parked cars are being issued to the Speed watch groups. Further details were requested on the Monsal Head barcode donation system.

6. To consider items already requested for discussion:

none

7. To consider any other Parish matter that may be brought forward by the Council or local government electors

The felling of trees across the Lathkill water course with the intention of being left to decay was raised by a parishioner as a danger to children exploring and for the clogging up of the watercourse with debris and flooding of the paths as well as erosion issues. Council agreed that Natural England needed to explain their justification for this and will write to them.

The issue of second homes detracting from community life and the holiday homes not paying their way as Business Rates go to central government was discussed.

The bus shelter is not being used by the bus company and either needs notices putting up to warn users that they are turning around at the junction or the route to be altered. It was noted that inconsiderate parking had created this problem and volunteers agreed to carry out an assessment to establish if this was a local or visitor issue and an email sent round to residents.

No further matters were raised and the meeting closed at 7:58 pm