

SARRATT PARISH COUNCIL
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**Minutes of the Sarratt Parish Council meeting held in
Sarratt Village Hall on Tuesday 14th September 2021**

Present: Councillor Dobson
Councillor John Rugg
Councillor Peter Thorp
Councillor John Gell
Councillor Nick Mortimer
Councillor Lee Farman
Councillor Flo Garvey
Councillor Michael Lowry

In attendance: District Councillor Ciaran Reed
11 members of the public

Start time 7.32pm

212.APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Apologies from Councillor Diggins.

Due to the lack of space and poor ventilation and the number of members of the public in attendance the Clerk and Chair decided to move the agenda items that members of the public wanted to speak/hear about closer to the beginning of the meeting.

213.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest.

214. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18th August 2021.

Councillor Dobson noted there was only one RED flagged allotment in the Clerk report whereas there were 6 reported in the Allotment Inspection. The Clerk will check and amend.

Cllr Dobson questioned the Enforcement Notice on Fir Trees, Dawes Lane – a new Enforcement Notice appears to have been issued, but it was understood one was

already in existence and should have been complied with in November 2020. The Clerk to query with the Enforcement Team at TRDC.

- Proposed: Cllr Mortimer; Seconded: Cllr Gell.

215. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES WHO HAVE ATTENDED MEETINGS ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

- Cllr Gell attended the Chandler Cross Residents Association meeting and informed Council that a notion is being put forward to extend the resident's association to encompass the whole of Sarratt. The next meeting will be on 13th October and Cllr Gell will report back to Council on this.
- Cllr Garvey and Cllr Mortimer attended a meeting with Thames Water on the water extraction and pollution of the River Chess. Cllr Garvey will circulate the report to Council.
- Cllr Mortimer attended the KGV meeting and informed Council that their Grant application is on its way.
- Cllr Dobson attended a meeting with the KGV Chair and SCCF Trustees and will discuss under Agenda item 228/21.

216. CLERK/RFO REPORT

- The Sarratt Youth Group is set to start again with first meet scheduled for Sunday 12th September. We have a new lead for the group; Sarah Hickles who previously was a volunteer for the group. I will be doing the Administration for this and will provide updates on the successful uptake. I envisage a slow start until word of mouth and adverting takes hold. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Thorp for his incredible input and success for setting the Youth Group up and moving this new 'opening' forward. I understand that although Cllr Thorp is leaving the Council, he will still be volunteering sporadically for the Youth Group, and we are very grateful for this.
- Replacement glass has been ordered for the phone box in Bucks Hill.
- The sign entering Belsize from Chipperfield has unfortunately been broken. I am in communication with the field landowner who has accepted liability and is arranging his insurance company to make contact. In the meantime, I have ordered a replacement, and this should be with us within 4 weeks. Please see images below.
- Fingerposts are due to be delivered in the next month.
- The Grant application process is now open with a deadline of 12th October.
- We have experienced a few IT issues with fraudulent emails being received in quite a sophisticated manner. This has been dealt with accordingly and the office

PC is going to be reviewed and security is going to be increased. The SPC email address is also going to be changed (if not done already by the time of the meeting). All details will be circulated. Advice is to remain cautious and vigilant before replying/opening emails.



As I mentioned earlier, this will be Cllr Thorps last meeting in his Councillor capacity. I would like to thank him for all that he has done for SPC and the invaluable work throughout my sickness absence. I wish him all the best for the future.

Sarratt Youth Group had 18 young people attend the first meeting which is wonderful news.

ENVIRONMENT

217.REMEMBRANCE GARDEN (220/21)

Cllr Dobson gave an overview of the objective behind the garden.

A member of public requested the opportunity to speak for 3 minutes and strongly objected to the commemorative garden and informed Council that village greens are protected when registered with Secretary of State and therefore cannot just be dug up. They also made reference to the SPC policy highlighting it states village greens cannot be changed or altered without permission from the Secretary of State. They also highlighted that if this area of The Green was used then it would need to be replaced by another piece of land of the same size somewhere in Sarratt. The Parishioner stated that a letter she received from Cllr Diggins says that he does not consider the whole Green as a single entity. The Parishioner suggested that if it was to go ahead then a village meeting should take place to discuss and plan together as a village.

Cllr Rugg confirmed SPC was aware of a need to apply for permission to change the structure of Green as Council records contain a recent email from him suggesting " As we have reached this stage it might be sensible to ascertain if the

Planning Inspectorate in Bristol (acting for and on behalf of the Secretary of State) will provide an opinion on the proposal and the likelihood of Sarratt obtaining consent for a change of use for a section of the registered common – as we will be required to apply to them (not TRDC) for permission”
He also informed the meeting that DEFRA issued a revised policy document on this very topic in 2015 and a copy also available online was now held in the Parish Council records.

Cllr Thorp reiterated that there was no intention of SPC urbanising the area or ruining an area of land. It was meant as a positive place for reflection.

It was decided that Cllr Garvey would liaise with the Wildlife Volunteers to create something more natural using wildflowers and then take a view from residents and SPC enable us to all work together.

Cllr Rugg noted that depending upon the scope and design the planting the planting of wildflowers and a small number of trees and was unlikely to be deemed a change of use requiring approval from the Secretary of State.

Cllr Garvey will come back at next meeting with an update.

It was also noted a maintenance budget/ written maintenance agreement for this would be needed, to put peoples’ minds at rest that it will not be neglected in future years.

218.LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT (217/21)

It has been a month of lots of little things

- KGV meeting – planning application on extended operating hours has now gone in - awaiting update. Nothing else for SPC currently.
- Complaints re: ivy and nettles around the Parish – Parish Warden tasked to remove
- Belsize sign broken – scene visited, broken part retrieved and reason for breakage photographed – full admission from landowner, now in hands of insurers, new sign ordered
- Complaints from residents re Helicopters at Model Farm on Sarratt Road – looking into it to advise them accordingly. It has already been recommended they keep a log of the times and duration on the helicopter activity. It was noted they are only permitted to use the facility for 28 days per annum. It was decided that a formal letter also be sent to the Civil Aviation Authority regarding the helicopter training exercises taking place over the village.
- The litter picking group went to the Belsize area – 2 bags worth removed. Michael Groom and Sally Furr also picked up substantial amount in Langlebury Lane and Solesbridge Lane – TRDC have removed these.

- Parking on The Green opposite The Boot – signage put up on one side so on Sunday 12th a white 19 plate Discovery parked on the other side! It was decided that posts will be placed opposite the existing posts to stop vehicles parking on the other side of The Green.
- Green wheelie bin week 3 – It has become apparent that residents living adjacent to The Green are using the bins for their own personal household waste and garden cuttings – article in Spotlight please. Clerk will look in to grills to be placed over the litter bins to stop large bags of resident’s household rubbish being placed in them.

Cllr Gell reported that he has received comments that residents do not want the red telephone boxes in Chandlers Cross and Bucks Hill. The Clerk will put it as an agenda item for the next meeting and find out cost of removal.

219. WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (218/21)

Cllr Rugg reported that he has contacted Richard Young for an update on the Woodlands Management Plan. He confirms he is awaiting a response from the Forestry Commission (FC) on the proposals for the 10-year plan that we have jointly submitted but he is fairly confident it should be accepted.

He reminded Council that we could potentially qualify for a retrospective FC £1,000 grant for producing the plan – but this will likely trigger a bill from Herts CC for Richard’s work that may come to £3K.

We have £4k in the current Environment budget for Woodland Management Plan work. At the time of compiling the budget we were not sure if the £1K was likely to be available under the revised and emerging ELMS scheme therefore being prudent it was not included as income.

If and when the 10-year plan is accepted, we should (as in the past) then be eligible for Woodland Management grants at a rate and timescale for work determined by the Forestry Commission. They pay in arrears for work that has been undertaken – it is important that we manage this carefully as we were late with claims and copy invoices in 2015 and lost a series of payments by default.

220. SUSTAINABILITY REPORT (219/21)

- Queens Green Canopy - talking to one particular landowner about land for this with hopeful possibilities. Looking for more. There has been a request from a resident to have several small trees planted on the patch of grass on the corner of Dawes Lane and Downer Drive – both for beauty and to stop it being used as a car park.
- Community Garden (behind the Village Shop) – this has generated sales of £921 from the fresh produce since April. This year, all that revenue has gone to the shop, but next year, a sizeable proportion will come back into the garden, which should mean they won’t have to fundraise or ask for grants quite so much. Upcoming event is the Apple Festival being held on 19th September at Ramillies Orchard – open to all.

- Allotment - it was proposed the license enabling the Community Garden to rent one of the allotments be agreed by the end of September

Thanks and appreciation were given to Cllr Garvey for all her hard work and moving projects forward so well.

PLANNING

A member of the public requested 3 minutes to speak.

The member of the public explained that she is experiencing problems with an adjacent neighbour placing a large fence at 4'6 height alongside the boundary between their properties. It has impacted the sightline from her drive and created a safety issue which means she is unable to exit her drive by car without someone standing in the road to confirm the road is clear. The member of the public would like SPC to support her case. She has already contacted the planning case officer.

It was decided that SPC would write to both the Planning and Enforcement teams formally and officially. Cllr Farman will follow this up.

221.TO COMMENT ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS (225/21)

21/1770/LBC Green End Farm, The Green, Sarratt, WD3 6AS.

Proposal: Repair works including to internal walls and ceilings and the external front elevation.

NOTED

21/1983/LBC York House School, Sarratt Road, Croxley Green.

Proposal: Replacement of windows along southern elevation.

NOTED

222. TO NOTE PLANNING DECISIONS (226/21)

21/1657/FUL Great Sarratt Hall Cottage, The Green, Sarratt, WD3 4DP

Proposal: Demolition of existing extension and conservatory and construction of single-storey rear extension.

SPC decision: No objection

TRDC decision: Approved

21/1563/FUL Holly Hedges Farm, Olleberie Lane, Belsize WD3 4NU

Proposal: Single-storey front and side extensions. Still awaiting FULL application decision however it seems they have collated all previous applications and approved them collectively.

21/1607/FUL Land at rear of The Woodyard, The Green, Sarratt, Wd3 6BH

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings, change of use of land to residential, conversion of building to 1-bedroom detached dwelling including extensions and

alterations to external material, and associated parking, ancillary works and landscaping enhancement including the formation of a pond.

SPC decision: Objection

TRDC decision: Refused

21/1783/FUL Potten Farm Stables Chandlers Lane –

Proposal: Demolition of existing stables and change of use of remaining stable buildings on site to studio units (Use Class B1) with associated parking areas

SPC decision: No objection

TRDC decision: Approved

**21/1443/FUL - Land Adjacent to 2 Micklefield Green Cottages Sarratt Road
Croxley Green WD3 6AH**

Proposal: Construction of a 25m x 50m menage with associated change of use to equestrian

SPC decision: *No Objection, but we ask that a check is conducted to ensure no hedgerows have been removed in the preparation or execution of this application.*

TRDC decision: Approved

223/21 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT (224/21)

Council were informed that former Councillor Soothill will be attending the next meeting to update SPC on Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Dobson asked the Clerk if she could arrange for copies of the Neighbourhood Plan design codes to be printed for each Councillor for the next meeting.

POLICY AND RESOURCES

224/21 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT (221/21)

The RFO informed Council that the quarterly budget report will be presented at next meeting. Cllr Lowry and the RFO will be starting work on the Budget for 22/23 and information and requests will be sent out to Council regarding this.

Applications for Grants are now open and the deadline for submissions is 12th October.

225/21 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS (222/21)

To approve internet banking transactions to the sum of £8,694.32

Approved: Cllr Thorp; Seconded: Cllr Mortimer

226/21 POLICIES REVIEW (223/21)

The Councillors were asked to read the policy below in advance of this month's council meeting, as follows;

- Allotment Policy

Approved: Cllr Mortimer ; Seconded: Cllr Garvey

HIGHWAYS

227/21 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT (227/21)

Cllr Diggins provided this report in his absence and was circulated to Council prior to the meeting.

Significant repair work to roads in area ongoing, with concomitant road closures: Solesbridge Lane has been shut for considerable periods; other works have been postponed. The most up-to-date picture is to be found here: <https://one.network> . While this is subject to change, the only major disruption in our area, going forward, appears to be in the Belsize Area.

Activity

Three main areas:

- Following-up on previous actions:
 - Bucks Hill - pleased to see some improvement to road surfaces;
 - Sarratt Bottom/Dawes Lane/Moor Lane. Discussions on effectiveness or otherwise of, admittedly limited, traffic calming measures around Sarratt Bottom, Moor and Dawes Lanes. The residents' view is that this is insufficient and so wish to move to formal traffic regulatory orders; I have requested this on their behalf but have, to date, not received back a reply.
- Double Yellow Lines. It was rumoured that double-yellow lines were proposed for Alexandra Road and Downer Drive; this proved to be false. The investigation did however establish that, as a Parish Council, we are a statutory consultee, so would always be involved, unless it is a private road, in which case we have no, official, locus. For future reference, all such changes are listed here: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/traffic-regulation-orders/traffic-regulation-orders.aspx?searchInput=&page=1&resultsPerPage=10&view=card>
- Road Signage and Speeding at Belsize. Recently received correspondence from a resident, concerning road safety at the junctions of Bottom Lane, Toms Hill and Bucks Lane. We have requested that Three Rivers DC restore the fallen road sign and establish a Traffic Regulatory Order so that a 30 mph limit be imposed throughout the area; a response is expected within 10 working days.

Follow-up Actions

I have asked for an update on the following:

- Proposed Strategic Cycleway plan. We sent this in some months ago now but have had no proper response. I chased and the reply, from Three Rivers DC is that they are about to go out to 'stakeholder consultation'; I will continue to follow-up.
- Horrocks Wood/Redhall Lane Flooding. I've contacted the Woodland Trust and requested that they cut-down over-grown branches and bushes infringing on the road and restore the poorly-maintained drainage ditch that runs alongside the road. Currently, because the wood surface level is higher than the road, water just drains out onto the road.
- I will also follow-up with Herts CC on other outstanding issues: North Rd/ Church Lane; Red Lion Rd; safety outside Sarratt School.

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Peace Garden

I am extremely disappointed by the number and range of negative comments received, nonetheless I continue to believe it to be a worthwhile project that deserves our full support. Most of the negativity concerns the Green and it's apparent eternal character; nothing could be further from the truth. Within living memory it has been a cattle feeding point en route to market; it is still a mixed use area: green space, nature reserve, fairground, memorial area, play area. Our plan would take a small part of the Green, cut-off from the rest, and directly adjacent to the school and make something beautiful and worthwhile that will have meaning for generations.

We should listen to objections but also be robust: we decided on this after fairly robust discussion and with a clear vision as to what it was to achieve, and more importantly, why. I attach the design brief that I passed to Flo and the Head of Sarratt School.

Vision

A place of beauty, reflection, remembrance and rest for all, where the fruits of peace, often hard-won through struggle and war, can be appreciated.

(This might become a visualisation of Green Madrigal(1) by Lynette Roberts; see <https://www.blueridgejournal.com/poems/lr1-madrigal.htm>)

Concept:

- A Commemorative Garden that remembers not just the dead of the World Wars but more recent conflicts and tragedies, including Covid-19.

- It celebrates the 'fruits of peace' ie that which flows from conflict, once resolved, and, that which is only possible with peace. (This is really important to me, as a former soldier: if war has ANY point it is that it allows for the settlement of conflict and creates opportunities for peace and development.) Physically, the location stands in counter-point to the focus of Remembrance at the top of the Green (which is where the VE/VJ Day trees will go).
- It should be a 'sensory' garden: accessible to all and enjoyable to all; hence the rather pompous title of 'Physic' garden, traditionally a place where herbs and other medicinal plants are grown..
- It should be a 'natural' garden, reflecting one of the other great challenges of our time: the conservation and preservation of the natural environment. It overlooks the duck-pond (along with splendid new duckhouse) so there is a sort of perspectives' seque there already.
- It should be open and used by all but planned, inspired and (as far as possible) involve our Young People, especially the pupils of Sarratt School, in the layout, planting and looking after.
- It should be a lasting memorial: easily maintained, scalable (so it can grow - within reason), and so pupils can look back in five, ten, fifteen or longer, years and say, 'I helped make that'.

Practical

- 'Rome wasn't built in a day' and, depending on what we decide to do, this may take a couple of years to plan and develop, however, it would be good to 'cut the first sod'/plant the first bushes this autumn.
- The initial SPC budget is in the region of £800 but, depending on the vision and where we want to take it, more might be obtained, especially in subsequent years..
- The Council will deal with planning, consultation and communications' issues

Other Ideas

- Built-in compass rose
- Permanent labyrinth, recalling the meditative purpose of labyrinths and reflecting the vision of the garden.
- Orientation upright stones: one perhaps facing towards Jerusalem, important to three Abrahamic faiths (and presumably part of the core values of Sarratt School); one perhaps facing West, in black, recalling the horrors of the Slave Trade.
- Natural wood benches
- Use of Fruit trees and edible plants to match the 'fruits of peace' idea.

It's ambitious but even if we realise part of it, it will be worthwhile. What would be disappointing is if we give in to negative conservatism (not a political statement), that would preserve everything the way it is, imagining (wrongly) that is the way it was.

Cllr Gell commented on the road work activity next to the Wheatsheaf sign. Cllr Mortimer informed Council that this is just works being carried out and the skip will be removed shortly. Not a highways issue.

Cllr Gell received some correspondence regarding the speed of vehicles down Bucks Hill and to do with the 'keep left' sign that keeps falling down. All the drains are also blocked up in that area. To inform HCC again.

228/21 KGV ALIVE UPDATE (228/21)

Cllr Dobson provided the background to the project, and advised Council that the project team had been unable to come to a unanimous decision, so had referred the decision to the 'corporate sponsors' – SPC, the KGV Management Committee and the Sarratt & Chipperfield Foundation (SCCF) Trustees. She had met with the Chair of KGV and the SCCF Trustees and agreed there was sufficient support for the project to progress to the next stage. This would include further work on the design to ensure it met the needs of the target audience. It would also include work on the measures necessary to mitigate the concerns raised by some residents. Until this was completed funding could not be applied for from various bodies such as the National Lottery. As such the decision to progress to the next stage did not mean the project would definitely go ahead, rather there was sufficient evidence to justify further work on the idea. Key to moving to the next stage was the appointment of a Project Manager and supporting project team.

229/21 CORRESPONDENCE (229/21)

A letter was received from a local resident regarding a potential path going over SPC Common Land. It was decided that a letter be written to the owner requesting that the hardstanding slabs should be removed, as that formalises a path, and the area returned to grass. A letter should also be written to the complainant stating that no trespassing is taking place as it is Common Land. Letter and emails to be shared with Cllr Dobson, Cllr Mortimer and Cllr Rugg before sending.

A letter received from the landlady of The Boot relating to the recent Spotlight article, in particular the issuing of a Noise Abatement Order by TRDC. The letter stated no such order had been received. The Clerk will investigate and respond accordingly. It was decided that whilst SPC supports local businesses we should write to The Boot and reiterate that the noise levels do need to be managed.

230/21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (230/21)

A member of the public questioned the £800 allocated to the Community Garden. It was confirmed that these funds were granted by SPC only.

231/21 COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (231/21)

Cllr Gell raised question about KGV fencing and whose responsibility it is to mend. Cllr Mortimer stated that a site visit is going to take place to see if a formal entrance can be made to enable children to go through to get lost balls.

Cllr Farman informed Council that 2 public consultations on the Neighbourhood Plan had taken place and encouragement was given to residents to please engage with it and respond with any comments asap.

Cllr Rugg stated the Financial Regulations should have been brought to Council this meeting for approval. Clerk apologised and will work with Cllr Lowry to bring them to next meeting.

Cllr Thorp thanked Council for their support. He also gave explanation as to why he was leaving SPC, which included the reaction and behaviour of local residents about the Skatepark which had been disgraceful and had affected all those involved mentally. Cllr Thorp said he was very sad about what had happened and wished the Council all the best. Cllr Dobson thanked Cllr Thorp for all his incredible work establishing the Youth Group and the skatepark project especially.

232/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ITEMS REQUESTED TO BE PUT ON NEXT AGENDA (232/21)

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 12th October 2021.

Meeting closed at 21:38

Caroline Owen
Proper Officer/RFO, Sarratt Parish Council

