

## Hamsey Parish Council

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Mrs J.Toomey, Clerk to Hamsey Parish Council  
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### Minutes of the meeting of HAMSEY PARISH COUNCIL held at BEECHWOOD HALL on Thursday 12th March 2020 - 7.15pm

**Present:** Cllr.D'Arienzo, chair  
Cllr.R.Baughan, vice chair  
Cllr.Ian Ginn Cllr. M.Dodd  
Cllr.J.Harmer Cllr.K.McBrown

**Apologies:**

**In attendance:** Mrs J.Toomey - Clerk/RFO to the Council. Mrs. N.Kinch, Assistant clerk  
LDC Cllr.Isabelle Linnington 1 member of the public

		Action
3.20.1	<b>Apologies for absence – none</b>	
3.20.1.1	<b>A resident had approached the council regarding the vacancy.</b> Chair asked Rachel Kelly to introduce herself. Chair proposed that Rachel be co-opted to fill the vacancy, seconded by Cllr.Dodd and agreed by all. The acceptance of Office was signed and Cllr.Kelly joined the table.	
3.20.2	<b>Questions from the public</b> None	
3.20.3	<b>Declaration of interest by</b> Councillors on any agenda items and update of interests. None	
3.20.4	<b>Minutes</b> of the council meeting held 9.01.20 were agreed & signed as a true record	
3.20.5	<b>Update on any matters arising from last meeting</b> (not elsewhere on the agenda)  <i><b>Min.no: 7195.1</b> – Any update on resident parking spaces at Chatfield Close – Worrying responses to the Chatfield Close Residents Survey which highlighted road safety concerns were emailed to Gold Property Developers, Highways Safety Team, LDC Development Control, LDC planning, MP Maria Caulfield and Cllr. Isabelle Linnington. Gold Property Developers have never replied and Cllr.Baughan is still waiting for a response from Development Control since being advised at the recent Highways SLR meeting to contact them instead of the Highways Road Safety Team. There is some uncertainty for new residents about who will own and be responsible for the parking spaces committed to Wellington Cottages and Fourwinds now that the last house is sold, which is meant to thought to trigger a change of ownership.</i> <i><b>Min.no: 1.20.9</b> – Update regarding clarification of footpath from Hamsey Brickworks. Clerk had circulated plans that were slightly easier to understand. The footpath goes North to Chailey but Council remains concerned pedestrians will need to cross and re-cross the A275.</i>	



3.20.9	<p><b>Council noted all correspondence received since the last meeting</b></p> <p>An Offham resident had copied HPC into a complaint made to ESCC re: muddy path in Offham. Cllr.Harmer reported that there is a natural spring in the field close to the road. The spring has always been there and it has always run across the pavement during high rain fall. We have been experiencing unusual levels of rain fall which is making all waterways run. There has never been a hedge along this stretch of road, but a line of small trees which Cllr. Harmer planted. In response to a complaint from a resident about overhanging trees, Cllr Harmer states that he complied with the Highways request to remove these trees.</p> <p>The footpath is in poor order along the whole stretch from Offham to Cooksbridge due to normal ageing. The large debris on the path is from the main road crumbling along that section.</p> <p>Cllr.McBrown had been contacted by a Cooksbridge resident concerned at reports of development plans for an area currently used as allotments. Council understand there is no possible vehicular access to the land in question but Cllr.McBrown will investigate with LDC.</p>	Cllr.McBrown
3.20.10	<p><b>To receive any reports from, or meetings attended by Councillors</b></p> <p>Chair reported on the LDALC, Cllr.Baughan reported on the SLR meeting and chair reported on the Cycle Lewes meeting.</p>	
3.20.11	<p><b>Trees/rights of way – Cllr.Harmer</b></p> <p>Cllr.Harmer and Monday Group had a meeting with the ESCC re:footpath 9.It was resolved that if the landowner will remove the old fence or pull it upright, the Monday group will move the stile to the new position. The official path route remains the same. Path 15 Hamsey- ESCC will write to the landowner to get the hedge/fence in order. Path at rear of Fishpond House - where this path crosses a ditch/stream, ESCC said it was a job for them and will contact the landowner, this is a large job Path that runs under the railway line on Tulleywells farm- there is a large area where the cows funnel through the bridge that is a challenge, so ideas are being sought to improve the area and make this workable for everyone.</p>	
3.20.12	<p><b>To consider any parish celebrations for VE day May 8<sup>th</sup></b></p> <p>Chair is consulting with ECPC re: lighting the Beacon</p>	chair
3.20.13	<p><b>Highway, Parking and Traffic issues (Report attached).</b></p> <p>Repairs to the footway between Offham and the garage have started.</p> <p>HPC is still asking for better repairs to the A275 outside Downsview carpark. This has been temporarily resurfaced.</p> <p>Parking charges were introduced at Cooksbridge station with no consultation. This is very bad timing as it follows the increased services. Cllr.Baughan explained GTR has a unique franchise which is a management contract where fare income does not go to GTR. Therefore GTR can only increase income through additional ancillary services like car parking charges. They can only charge commuters so evenings and weekends are free. Cooksbridge is very expensive when compared to other GTR stations in the area but weekly discounts will be introduced. Council will ask Maria Caulfield for support to request effective consultation with HPC, LDC and ESCC.</p> <p>Cllr. Linington will liaise with LDC Cllr. Rob Banks to ensure a unified approach with Plumpton and parity with the charges at that station. A resident had contacted Cllr.Baughan about parking in Chandlers Mead, this should also be part of a wider plan to consider parking in Cooksbridge following the introduction of parking charges at the station.</p>	
3.20.14	<p><b>Rail and bus issues.</b> A report from Cllr.Baughan had been circulated (attached).</p> <p>The May timetable includes new services for Cooksbridge on Sundays and earlier Down trains on Saturdays. The off-peak journey time to London will be reduced by approximately 5mins and train formations should be at least 8 cars in future. Network Rail have advised that a project is currently under consideration for extending the Up platform to accommodate longer trains.</p>	
3.20.15	<p><b>Council considered Police/Neighbourhood watch issues</b> The PCSO for this area is Rose Stainer</p>	

3.20.16	<b>To consider any environmental issues.</b> (Report from Cllr.Baughan attached.) Anti Idling notices around the level crossing were designed with help from Hamsey school. This was a good joint project.	
3.20.17	<b>To consider any emergency planning in view of the Corona Virus outbreak.</b> Chair will add information on the community website, which will be circulated to hall users. The hall will undergo extra deep cleaning. Some hirers have cancelled. Cllr.Linnington said help is available from LDC, she would seek guidance on how to get that.	
3.20.18	<b>To consider the condition of the Cooksbridge bus shelter following damage</b> Damage has been caused to the notice board and bus timetables and the bench by attempts to burn them. Repairs to petty damage costs residents through their council tax. Cllr. Kelly will look into a possible replacement noticeboard.	Cllr.Kelly
3.20.19	<b>Council considered GDPR requirements and website accessibility.</b> The council is still waiting on the web provider for a quote to bring the website into line with the new accessibility requirements. The new regulations come into force in September so HPC may need to look at a new website provider.	
3.20.20	<b>Items for noting or inclusion on a future agenda</b> Note: May 14 <sup>th</sup> 7pm AGM for the council as sole trustees of the Beechwood Hall and Rural Park. May 14 <sup>th</sup> also the date for HPC Annual residents meeting. Cllr.Dodd said that due to other commitments has is resigning from the council. The chair thanked him for his many years as part of the team. Council noted that this was the last meeting with Jenni Toomey as clerk, who will retire on March 28 <sup>th</sup> . Council thanked the clerk for her 15 years of excellent service.	
3.20.21	<b>Meeting dates for 2020 – AGM</b> May 14 <sup>th</sup> to follow the APM, July 9 <sup>th</sup> , September 10 <sup>th</sup> , November 12 <sup>th</sup> All at Beechwood Hall 7.15pm	

Meeting closed at 9.55pm.

JT 13/3/2020

Signed.....(Chairman ) Dated..... **Highways Report – March 2020**

Since the last report in January 2020, there have been a number of significant highways issues affecting Hamsey parish including the diversions associated with a further planned daytime closure of Cooksbridge level crossing, planned daytime closures of the A275 for ash dieback works and the annual Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meeting of Hamsey Parish Council (HPC) with representatives of East Sussex Highways (ESH) and East Sussex County Council (ESCC).

A significant item of good news was the confirmation by ESH that the permanent repairs to the footpath between Offham Garage and Cooksbridge are now programmed to be undertaken between 09-03-20 and 27-03-20. First reported for resolution on 20-02-18, the condition of this footpath has been raised on many occasions with ESH and these longawaited repairs will finally address one of the most significant safety related highways issues within our parish.

During this period HPC has continued to seek clear commitments from ESH for the resolution of all outstanding items and to identify opportunities to further enhance our effective working relationship.

A brief summary of the status of current highways issues involving ESH is provided below:

#### **Issues Resolved Since Last Report**

- **Case 00402407 - A275 Cooksbridge Road, Pedestrian Island 'block' needs repairing.** Repairs have now been completed although at the recent SLR meeting it was noted that as a consequence of the road carriageway defect outside Downsview Cottages car park (Case 351312) the traffic island is being repeatedly struck by vehicles taking evasive action. ESH agreed to evaluate any potential mitigation measures to prevent the displacement of the blocks.

- **Case 00438656 - Potholes on Hamsey Lane and The Drove.** First reported on 06-02-20 (see below under New Issues) these potholes were repaired by 28-02-20.
- **Case 00439036 – Pothole at Cooksbridge end of Beechwood Lane.** First reported 0702-20 (see below under New Issues) this pothole was repaired by 06-03-20.

#### **Pending Issues**

- **Case 207892 – Repairs to A275 footpath from Offham Garage to Cooksbridge.** First reported on 20-02-18, the damage caused to the footpath by a contractor's vehicle has been raised on many occasions with East Sussex Highways. Following a sustained campaign by local residents and HPC that has involved lobbying ESCC Cllr Jim Sheppard, Rupert Clubb, Director of Communities, Economy and Transport at ESCC and the intervention of our MP Maria Caulfield, ESH advised at the recent SLR meeting that these works will be carried out from 09-03-20 to 27-03-20.
- **Case 351312 – Defective A275 road surface / carriageway at entrance to Downsview Cottages carpark.** First reported 27-06-18, ESH advised at the recent SLR meeting that planning for a full structural repair of the road carriageway is progressing with works due to be undertaken during the current financial year. Scheduling depends on the outcome of investigations as this will determine the scale of works required. At HPC's request, due to current safety concerns relating to motorists taking evasive action and steering around the defective road surface, ESH agreed to look at the possibility of a temporary resurfacing of the affected area pending the permanent repair.
- **Case 00437758 – Two blocked drains on A275.** At the recent SLR meeting it was noted that the blocked drain at the junction of Beechwood Lane and the A275 is still to be addressed. ESH will investigate and report back.
- **Subsidence to the edge of Hamsey Lane – First reported 08-01-20.** HPC has previously reported this issue but at the recent SLR meeting ESH requested that the associated photos were re-sent as they were not received. It is thought the subsidence is at the location of the bridge damaged during the closure of Cooksbridge level crossing on 28-11-19. ESH will investigate and report back.
- During the SLR meeting of HPC with ESH and ESCC on 21-02-20, the following pending issues were also raised:
  - **Assessment of safety measures for vehicles pulling out of Chatfield Close onto A275** – HPC advised that they require immediate action from ESCC to address an ongoing major safety concern relating to vehicles parked on the A275 obscuring visibility for motorists existing Chatfield Close. HPC require ESCC support in putting appropriate pressure on the developer Gold Property Developments Ltd to fulfil their obligations to allow access to the designated parking spaces within Chatfield Close for residents of Four Winds and Wellington Cottages. Ian Johnson, Traffic and Safety Manager at ESCC, agreed to take up this matter with Dan Witcher, Principal Officer (Implementation Team) at ESCC, to determine what action can be taken.
  - **Daytime closures of Cooksbridge level crossing** - The need for a long-term solution to the issue of diversionary routes for daytime closures of Cooksbridge level crossing was discussed. As part of their role, the ESH Networks Team will attempt to ensure that daytime closures of the level crossing are avoided, but when this is not possible a more effective multi-agency approach is required to avoid the safety hazards and environmental damage caused by motorists not adhering to the published and signed diversionary routes.  
It was agreed that HPC will contact Trevor Merchant, Networks Manager at ESH, to request a meeting together with the local Network Rail Level Crossing manager to review all aspects of this issue and determine a viable long-term solution.

#### **New Issues**

- **Case 00438656 - Potholes on Hamsey Lane and The Drove.** First reported on 06-02-20, ESH advised at the recent SLR meeting that they would investigate and report back. On 24-02-20, ESH advised that the local Highway Steward had now inspected Hamsey Lane and The Drove and identified three potholes in need of repair. ESH advised that they intended to repair these within 5 days.
- **Case 00439036 – Pothole at Cooksbridge end of Beechwood Lane.** First reported 0702-20. ESH advised that repairs have already been scheduled to be completed within the next 28 days.

- **Case 00445416 – Drains at North End.** First reported 20-02-20. ESH have advised that they will investigate the drainage issue and report back.
- **Case 00449521 – Flooding on B2116 near junction with A275.** First reported on 28-02-20. flooding is occurring on the B2116 at approximately 50 metres from the junction with the A275. This flooding is a regular occurrence, causing a traffic hazard, and is believed to be caused by the culvert that runs under the road at this point being blocked or collapsed. ESH have been requested to make the rectification of this defect a priority given the safety implications.

### **General**

Hamsey Parish Council maintains a positive relationship with East Sussex Highways and we look forward to continuing to work in partnership to ensure that highways issues affecting Hamsey parish are appropriately addressed.

For any issues requiring the attention of East Sussex Highways, please don't hesitate to let me know. I will add the details to our log and ensure that they are raised with the appropriate department.

**Councillor Robert Baughan**

### **Rail Report – March 2020**

**May 2020 Timetable** – The May 2020 timetable will come into effect from 17<sup>th</sup> May and will include the restoration by Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) of an hourly Sunday service after an interval of 36 years. This will complete the restoration of a full 7 days per week train service at Cooksbridge which has long been an aspiration of our parish and a key objective of our Neighbourhood Plan. Sunday UP services will depart at 26 minutes past the hour and Down services will depart at 45 minutes past the hour.

Further good news within the same timetable includes the provision of earlier Down services on Saturdays with departures from Cooksbridge at 06.48 and 08.21 respectively. The new timetable will also see a rescheduling of Monday to Saturday off-peak departures with Up services departing at 3 minutes past the hour and Down services departing at 21 minutes past the hour.

In order to facilitate Network Rail's rebuilding of Gatwick Airport station which also commences in May 2020, the new timetable will see off-peak train services from Cooksbridge no longer attaching and detaching at Haywards Heath, thereby resulting in shorter overall journey times to and from London Victoria (i.e. Up trains 63 minutes compared to current 68 minutes and Down trains 57 minutes compared to current 64 minutes). A further benefit of this timetable change is that most off-peak trains calling at Cooksbridge will in future comprise of 8 cars, thereby addressing the overcrowding issues which currently affect many of these services.

**Passenger Benefit Fund** – To compensate their customers for the disruption suffered during the introduction of the May 2018 timetable, GTR established a compensation fund of £15 million for enhancements to be used to 'provide tangible improvements for passengers', with £30,000 allocated for Cooksbridge as a Tier 3 station. After careful consideration of all suggestions received, the Station Partnership submitted a proposal based on costed potential options provided by GTR for the provision of enhanced cycle facilities, additional seating and an electric car charging point.

The GTR passenger benefit fund project managers are currently surveying each station, to check the proposed schemes for feasibility, safety and whether the schemes are within the station allocated budget, and the survey for Cooksbridge was carried out in February. They plan to have surveyed all GTR managed stations by the end of March 2020 prior to submission to the Department for Transport for final approval prior to implementation.

**Station Accessibility** – The only 'step free' access to platform 1 at Cooksbridge station is via the platform end ramp, which has an inclination that exceeds the current maximum permitted, and accordingly GTR have been requested to provide a handrail(s) at this location.

Following the removal by Network Rail of a redundant equipment cabinet and post in January 2020, and the associated landscaping of the area at the entrance to platform 1, GTR are now progressing with the installation of the handrail.

The campaign for the installation of suitable raised humps on each platform continues and we are seeking the support of Railfuture to assist us in progressing this initiative. Furthermore, Network Rail have advised that a project is currently under consideration for extending the Up platform to accommodate longer trains and full details, including the proposed implementation programme, are still awaited.

**Introduction of Parking Charges** – GTR introduced weekday parking charges of £6.60 per day for users of Cooksbridge station with effect from Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February. Unfortunately, the timing of the introduction of these charges by GTR has been ‘insensitive’ and there appears to have been no effective prior consultation with relevant local authorities.

The true medium / long term impact of the parking charges on our community is yet to be fully understood as GTR are still in the process of introducing weekly and monthly season tickets for regular users. Also, parking is free at weekends / public holidays so most new train services (Saturdays / Sundays) are unaffected whilst greater bus service integration and encouraging ‘greener’ transport alternatives (walking, cycling, etc) are also potential mitigating measures.

Hamsey Parish Council is seeking the assistance of our local MP, Maria Caulfield, to work with Lewes District Council and East Sussex County Council on potential measures that may be necessary to address any long-term consequences for overall parking in Cooksbridge.

**Promotion of Enhanced Train Service** – Cooksbridge Station Partnership is continuing to work on a range of initiatives to promote the new enhanced train services, for local residents and for those travelling to Cooksbridge as a leisure destination. With the objective of encouraging visitors to use the train service to Cooksbridge to access the South Downs National Park, we are working with the Park Authority to map and document a circular walk starting at Cooksbridge station together with the production and distribution of associated leaflets.

**Lewes to Uckfield Rail Link** – Our local MP Maria Caulfield has made a bid for a share of the Department for Transport’s £500 million Restoring Your Railway Fund towards reinstatement of the Uckfield to Lewes railway line, through submitting an initial application for the inclusion of the Sussex and Kent phases of BML2 [Brighton Main Line 2] in the government’s fund.

The government has asked MPs, local councils and community groups across England and Wales to propose how they could use funding to reinstate axed local services and restore stations. As well as looking for new ideas, the £500 million fund will be used to help accelerate the development of closed lines and stations which are already in the process of being considered for restoration and a decision on allocation of the fund is expected later this year.

If any of the above requires further clarification please don’t hesitate to let us know and we will do all we can to assist.

**Councillors Robert Baughan and Ian Ginn**

## **Environment Report – March 2020**

**Anti-Pollution Signs** – As a result of a great collaborative project, bespoke anti- pollution signs designed by children from Hamsey Community Primary School have now been manufactured and installed on the approaches to Cooksbridge level crossing by the Network Rail project team responsible for the recently completed upgrade works. It is hoped that these new signs, appealing to motorists to ‘please turn off your engine’, will result in modifying behaviours and less time that vehicle engines are left idling whilst waiting at the level crossing.

**Parish Litter Picks** – Our next litter pick is scheduled for Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020 when we hope very much to see as many of you as possible taking part in this regular opportunity to keep our parish clean!

**Ash Dieback Disease** – LDC commenced emergency works on 24<sup>th</sup> February along sections of the A275 (and the Offham Road outside our parish boundary) to remove dead, dying and ‘imminently’ dangerous Ash trees that will or have already succumbed to Ash Dieback disease. The affected trees have and will continue to fail without warning and fall into the highway and hence the risks to public health and safety were considered to be too high to delay this action. LDC advise that restocking of felled areas will be predominately by natural regeneration for the first 3-5 years, with targeted but limited enrichment planting in selected areas.

**Fly-Tipping** – A further serious instance of fly-tipping occurred on Beechwood Lane with debris being deposited along the verges and mattresses tipped into the stream from the bridge. The roadside clearance was undertaken on the morning of Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March by LDC Waste and Recycling staff but at the time of writing the recovery of the mattresses from the stream is still awaited.

**Community Projects** - A number of residents on the Hamsey Community Facebook group proposed meeting to discuss how environmental projects can be taken forward locally. Recent projects at Beechwood Hall include 14 trees planted, wildflower beds, installation of a 'bug hotel' and several bicycle locking hoops around the overflow car park where young children have been learning to ride their bikes. Plans to install a drinking fountain at Beechwood Hall are also being developed with the aim of encouraging reduced waste, as well as increasing well-being. Residents proposing the initiatives hope that a number of local groups may wish to collaborate in a joined-up approach to projects which will positively impact our local environment and community. If you are interested in getting involved in environmental initiatives locally and you are not a member of Facebook but you have access to email, please ensure you visit hamsey.net to sign yourself up for news alerts so we can share meeting plans with you.

**LDC Sustainability News** – Lewes District Council (LDC) advise that they have appointed a new Strategy and Partnership Lead for Sustainability to 'drive forward a programme of far-reaching action'. The appointment of Kate Richardson in this role will lead to a Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy being fully developed by July 2020. LDC declared a climate emergency last July and are now in the process of underpinning this declaration with measures to achieve the overarching goal of zero emissions and climate resilience by 2030.

**Level Crossing Diversions** – Despite having agreed a trial solution with East Sussex Highways and Network Rail to address the issue of local traffic using our local lanes as diversions, significant environmental damage was again caused during the planned daytime closure of Cooksbridge level crossing from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January due to a failure on the part of the Network Rail road signage contractor. Following the recent Strengthening Local Relationships meeting with East Sussex Highways, a meeting to find a long-term solution to this issue is being arranged with the appropriate representatives from Hamsey Parish Council, East Sussex Highways and Network Rail.

**Future Initiatives** – We have many exciting ideas for future initiatives and always welcome contributions and suggestions for consideration.

**Councillors Robert Baughan and Tamsyn d'Arienzo**