

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL PARISH
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, MAIN
STREET, HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL ON TUESDAY 4th OCTOBER 2006 AT
8:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath
Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan
Cllr Mr R. Davis
Dr. D. Campbell (Clerk)
Cllr. Mr S. Galton (Harborough District Council)

1. APOLOGIES

The Parish Council had received apologies from Cllr. Mrs A. Sharman and Cllr Mr S. Blackwell.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were to be made when agenda items were being discussed and recorded accordingly.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
THE 6th SEPTEMBER 2006

The Minutes of the Meeting of the 6th September were confirmed, and signed.

4. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM CLLR Mr M. STEVENSON ON
PROGRESS ON MINOR ITEMS ALREADY DISCUSSED

The Chairman read out a short report detailing the progress of minor matters for the benefit of the Council. The report was for information only. There was some short discussion on each topic with minor clarification of some points. (See Appendix 1)

1. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CLLR MRS A. SLEATH ON
THE POSITION OF SEATS AROUND THE VILLAGE AND TO
DECIDE ON AN INSTALLATION PROGRAMME FOR THE AGREED
POSITIONS.

Cllr Mrs A. Sleath gave a short report on the village 'walk—around' recently undertaken, during which possible positions for seats were identified. A written report had already been sent to each Councillor containing the information. Following Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath's report, the Chairman asked for each seat position to be discussed in turn, and that a separate vote for authorisation to be taken.

The Chairman then referred to each position (See Appendix 2 for details of the position).

Position 1 – Following a discussion, a proposal was made (proposed By Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan) and it was then:

*RESOLVED that a seat be positioned on the corner of Scotland Lane and
Linwal Avenue.*

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of PCA 1957,s.1 –provision of seats and shelters.

Position 2 – Following a discussion, a proposal was made (proposed By Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan) and it was then:

RESOLVED that a seat be positioned on the small green area on the Linwal Avenue side of the Newsagents in ST Catherine's Way.

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of PCA 1957,s.1 –provision of seats and shelters.

Position 3 – before any discussion Cllr Mr M. Stevenson declared an interest in the position of this seat. This was recorded and the discussion continued without him on this one aspect. Following a discussion, a proposal was made (proposed By Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan) and it was then:

RESOLVED that a seat be positioned on the small green in St Catharine's Way approximately opposite Nos. 28 and 30 St Catharine's Way.

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of PCA 1957,s.1 –provision of seats and shelters.

Position 4 – Following a discussion, a proposal was made (proposed By Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan) and it was then:

RESOLVED that a pair of benches be positioned on St Catharine's green close to the back edge overlooking the green and the fields.

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of PCA 1957,s.1 –provision of seats and shelters.

Position 5 – Following a discussion, a proposal was made (proposed By Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan) and it was then:

RESOLVED that a seat be positioned next to the bus stop outside the Village Hall.

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of PCA 1957,s.1 –provision of seats and shelters.

Position 6 – Following a discussion, a proposal was made (proposed By Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan) and it was then:

RESOLVED that a seat be positioned outside the rectory and close to the Pharmacy in Main Street.

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of PCA 1957,s.1 –provision of seats and shelters.

Position 7 – Following a discussion, a proposal was made (proposed By Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan) and it was then:

RESOLVED that a seat be positioned on the small green in Field Close to replace the broken one already there.

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of PCA 1957,s.1 –provision of seats and shelters.

Position 8 – Following a discussion, it was decided not to make a proposal in respect of this position as it was felt by the Council that the position was noisy, and would not receive much used. This position was to be left until a fuller discussion on the position and inclusion of the Ingarsby Lane section of the village could be made.

Following these decisions the Parish Clerk was asked to write to all the residents affected by the placing of these seats informing them of what was going on and to write to Harborough District Council asking the work to be done.

5. VERBAL REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

- School Governors – nothing to report
- Village Charities - nothing to report
- Village Hall - nothing to report.
- LRAPLC - nothing to report
- Field Association – Cllr Mrs A. Sleath attended the Field Association AGM and reported on the proceedings. Copies of her report are attached in Appendix 3.

The Field Association has now accepted the plastic recycling bin and apologised over their haste of the rejection of the dog bin offer. The Council therefore decided to re-offer the dog-bin trial to the Association to help clean and make safe the field for all users. A proposal was made (proposed by Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath and seconded by Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson) and it was then:

RESOLVED that a dog bin be positioned on the Playing Field for a trial period of six months.

(Votes – unanimous by all present)

Expenditure made under authorisation of Environmental Protection Act 1990,s.87 – provision of waste and litterbins.

- Billesdon Community Forum – nothing to report

There being no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 21:10 pm.

SIGNED.....

CHAIRMAN

DATE.....

Appendix 1

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE PARISH COUNCIL

Since the last meeting of Houghton Parish Council, the following aspects associated with Parish business have arisen. This short report is to apprise Councillors of these issues and to inform them of what action is being undertaken in order to progress these aspects. None of these issues requires Parish Council intervention and those that do are to be brought up as specific agenda items in the meeting.

Scotland Lane Rubbish

A letter has been received from a Scotland Lane resident complaining about the state of the embankments and providing photographs of the nuisance. Cllr Mrs A. Sharman has given the documents to the Clerk who has written to Harborough District Council complaining about the state of the verges in this area. There has been no response yet.

Refuse Collection

Cllr Mrs A. Sharman has asked the Clerk to write to Harborough District Council enquiring about refuse collection times. They seem to be varying at the moment and dustbins left out for longer than necessary in the narrow part of Main Street is providing a hazard that could be minimised.

NEMA

Cllr Mrs A. Sharman has received complaints from residents about low flying aircraft at night. She has asked the Clerk to write to NEMA and to Alan Duncan expressing residents annoyance and concern.

Houghton News

A misleading editorial had appeared in the Houghton News and the Chairman has written to Mr Tyler complaining about the inaccuracies. He also prepared an article to be included in next month's Houghton News to clarify the position. A letter from Houghton News has expressed the opinion that there is no inaccuracy. It also said that the article has missed the deadline for inclusion in next month's edition and needs editing.

Field Association

Following a visit from Harborough's environmental officer to answer their concerns over plastic re-cycling, they have decided to approve the location of a re-cycling bin on the car park.

The Parish Council response to the Charity Commission has been sent.

Dog Fouling

The Field Association has been informed that the offer by the Parish Council to install dog bin(s) as an experiment has been withdrawn. They have since re-examined the proposal and see the benefits to the community. They would like the Parish Council to reconsider its decision to withdraw the offer.

The Bus Stop Move

No further news from Simon Galton on the bus stop issue.

The New Councillor

Following interviews a new Parish Councillor has been selected for co-option. She is Mrs Wall-Bray the village's current tree and heritage warden. One small difficulty is that her naturalisation papers are not yet through and so as a non-UK resident cannot take up her position. This situation is expected to be temporary. In the meantime, she has been given an induction talk and is helping with the current tree-planting scheme.

ALPC

Information for the clarification of the status of parochial charity has been sent to ALPC. It is hoped that we will have clarification by the next Parish Council Meeting.

Allotment Gardens

A visit to the Allotments has resulted in a clear understanding of the fencing requirement. Cllr Mrs A. Nunan has written to fencing companies to get their opinions on the best fence and hence to get three quotations for the agreed type of fence.

Appendix 2

Report on the Location of Seating Around the Village

A second walk around the village has resulted in the identification of a range of locations for seats. This report identifies those positions.

All the positions are marked on the village map and numbered. A short description follows:

Position 1 - on the corner of Scotland Lane and Linwal Avenue

The pavement is wide at this point and the location is next to the sheltered housing project. The view is good with the old cottages being seen up Scotland Lane and the village pump across the road. The aspect is green and very peaceful. It is a good spot.

Position 2 – on the small green just beyond the Newsagents in St Catharine’s Way

This small green belongs to Harborough DC and is usually covered in daffodils in the spring. It is very close to the bus stop, newsagents, and hairdressers. The position is such that it does not allow views into people’s houses and should help those who have to wait for a bus or need a rest before travelling home. Another good site that with an ornamental tree could be a very pretty place to sit.

Position 3 – on the small green in St Catharine’s Way

This small green has some recently planted trees and a seat in this location is a convenient halfway stop along this road. If positioned near the centre of the green it would add to the street scene and provide another good place to sit on the long walk from the shops to the Stretton Lane end of the Village.

Position 4 – on St Catharine’s Green

This open space is under-utilised considering the amenity it presents. It has very good views across the countryside to Leicester, along St Catharine’s Way to the church, and there is the prettiness of the Green itself. It was thought that this open space should be made available to more residents and some ideas for its future should be considered. Some seating at the back of the green might start this process but would be an amenity in its own right. As the views towards St Catharine’s as well as across the field were

equally good, it was thought that benches could be placed here allowing sitters to decide which way to look.

Position 5 – Bus stop outside the Village Hall

It has been commented that a seat for people waiting at the bus stop outside the Village Hall would be a very welcome addition to the village. There is a good space for such a seat and it may encourage people to use the bus more if some comfort is provided. It is a good halfway point for people walking from the pharmacy to the School end of the village. It is also a nice place to sit to look at the church and the fields, and the pleasing aspect of the old village.

Position 6 – Outside the rectory next to the Pharmacy

This position has already received approval from the Rector and was one of the most important seating positions given in the Parish Plan. A review of its location has identified that there is no substantial reason not to install a seat here.

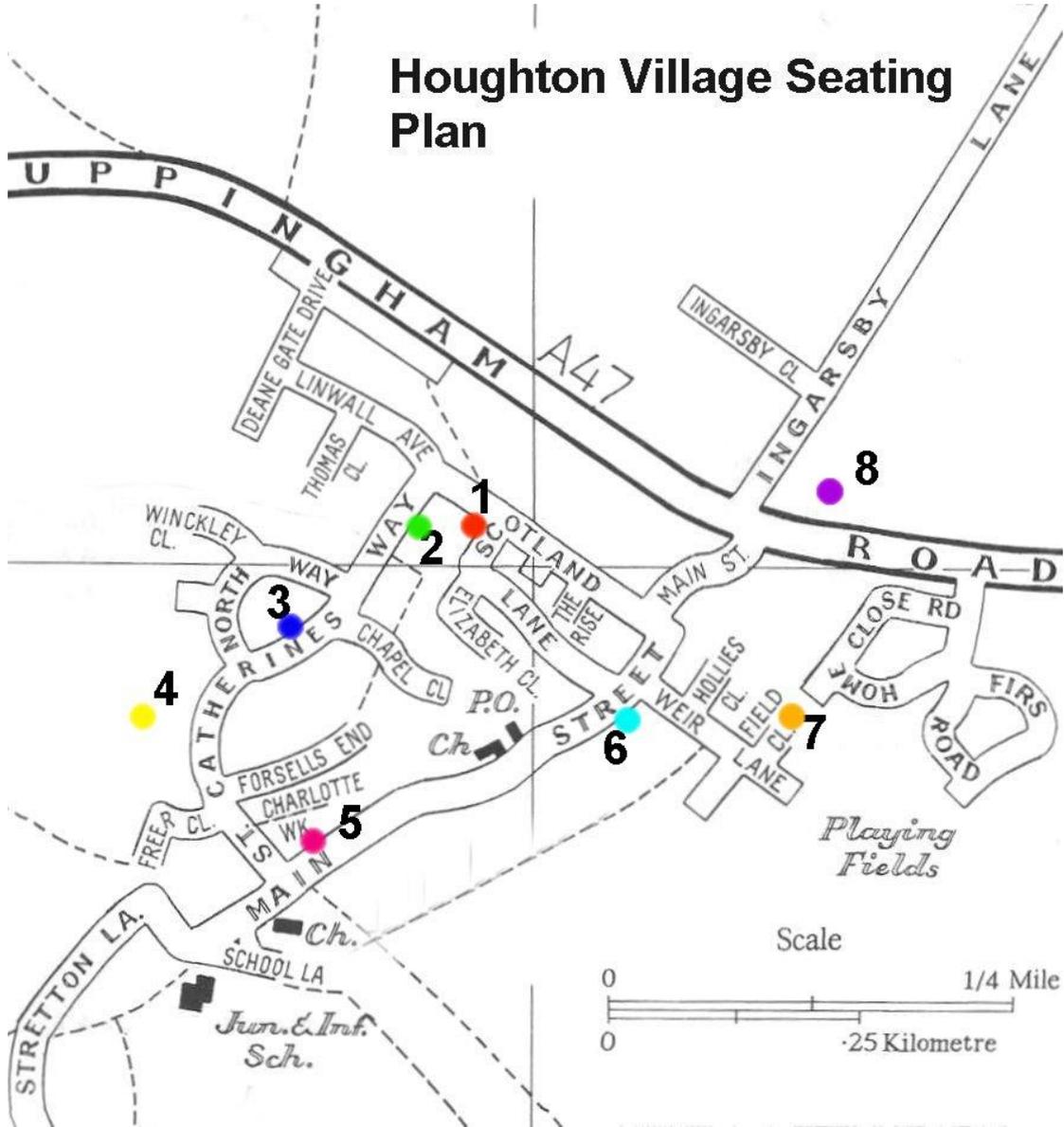
Position 7 – on the small green in Field Close

There already exists a badly broken seat in this location. Residents have indicated that if the seat was to be replaced it would be used. The position is a good one with no privacy invasion and its location under a tree is pleasant. It would seem from the comments that it would contribute to a good community spirit in the area.

Position 8 – on the small green on Uppingham Road Ingarsby Lane junction

There is significant space in this location and it is set well back from the main road. It backs onto conifers and is a good use of this wide space. Traffic noise is thought to be a nuisance but others see no problem. It contributes to an inclusion of the Ingarsby Lane end of the Village that somehow always seems to miss out.

Houghton Village Seating Plan



Appendix 3

Report Houghton Field Committee Meeting Monday 25 September 2006 7.00 pm at
the Pavilion Weir Lane

Attendees

Dave Wood, Gary Rogers, Craig Bollard, Geoff Thomas, Amanda Bennet, Sue Elliott, Hans Kuhns, Mick Whelband, Anne Jordan, Ann Sleath, David McClean, John Hancock, Neil Wallet Steve Brown, Graham?

(Note Mick Whelband replaced Anne Jordan as Scout representative).

Note Only 14 out of 21 Committee Members

Minutes of last meeting

These were approved once Geoff Thomas had been added to the attendee list.

Matters arising

Ann Sleath asked if the fire extinguishers had been checked, Answer was no, but Craig Bollards has a friend who will do it. There was some confusion as to whether a full fire safety report would be produced at the same time.

Finance

There is approximately £5,000.00 in the accounts at present.

Sports and Social

Dave Wood is the Chairman and there is £2359.00 in the accounts.

Football

There are about 80 children on the Field on Saturday morning. Steve Bright is Secretary of Junior Football club. They will play on the hard pitch at the school in December and January, which will help to preserve the field.

Tennis

They have had a successful season and now have 220 members. Planning permission has been granted for the clubhouse, which they hope to start on in about 2 months.

Scouts

Numbers are now approximately 55. The Scouts attended Charnwood 2006 - Leicestershire's international camp held at Long Whatton. It was confirmed that the pavilion bar would be staffed on bonfire night.

Play Area

Play equipment has been damaged. Repairs to fencing etc. will be carried out on the clean up day. Some equipment will become unusable. New Pavilion progress is as stated in the AGM.

Health and Safety

Fire extinguishers - see 'matters arising' above.

PC request for plastics recycling bin

After much debate, a vote was taken and the result was 8 for 6 against. Dave Wood spoke about dog bins and said they would like them on the Field. (There was no vote about this it was just assumed that they were wanted.) The position is to be near the path at the Pavilion end. Ann Sleath said that the plan had been to install one bin but following the negative

attitude the offer had been withdrawn but that she would raise the matter again at the next PC meeting. Questions were asked why bins could not be placed all round the village.

Field Security

The gate will be replaced. There was no date given when this would be done.

AOB

Ann Sleath asked if the footballers could change out of muddy football boots before leaving the field as there had been a trail of mud, obviously from football boots as the stud marks were clearly visible, all down Weir Lane and into Firs Road. The Footballers thought this would be difficult but would try to get the boys to change.

(Note there has already been mud in Firs Road this season).

Date of next meeting Monday December 11th at 7.30 pm

Report Houghton Field AGM and Committee Meeting Monday 25 September 2006, 7. 00 pm at the Pavilion Weir Lane

AGM

Approx. 20 attendees:

Dave Wood, Gary Rogers, Craig Bollard, Geoff Thomas, Amanda Bennet, Sue Elliott, Hans Kuhns, Mick Whelband, Anne Jordan, Ann Sleath, David McClean, John Hancock, Neil Wallet Steve Brown, Graham? Heather Hill, Mrs Green, John Siddons, Margaret Hunt, Chris Hunt.

Apologies

These were recorded.

Minutes of last meeting

These were approved

Finance Report

Treasurer Gary Rogers thanked the 100 club. He reported that the 2004/05 grant had not been received from the PC and was still being sorted out. The balance at year-end was £5185.00. The accounts were approved.

Chairman's Report

Pleasing to see so many youngsters using the field on Saturday mornings.

Vandalism a problem on the field affecting the playground, dugout, Scout store pavilion, and seat.

A new playground would cost about £57k.

Traveller risk low. Insurance in place at a cost of £ 100 to cover the cost of removing travellers if the situation arose.

Dave Wragg is too ill to continue on the steering group for the new pavilion. Vick Sherrett a professional fundraiser for a Cambridge Hospice will take over. He requires no payment but Dave feels that a payment could be made from Lottery money. There is £55 million lottery money available for East Midlands and the plan is to seek £10-£15 k to conduct a feasibility

study. Vick Sherrett thinks that it should not be too difficult to get that money. Assuming the study proves that a new building is feasible, the Chairman believes it makes it more difficult for the Lottery Board not to approve a grant for a new building. The building would need to be of value to the whole community not just football and tennis. Equipped computer rooms are popular. It would take about 5 years before a new building could be in place. A day would be arranged for a clean up on the Field and A. Liquorish would help with the play area

Election of officers

All existing people to remain in post - Dave Wood Chairman, Gary Rogers Treasurer. Sue Elliott Secretary.

Meeting Closed

NOTES FROM INFORMAL PUBLIC MEETING HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, MAIN STREET, HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL ON TUESDAY 4th OCTOBER 2006 AT 9:15 P.M.

PRESENT:

Parish Council
Cllr. Mr M. Stevenson (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs A. Sleath
Cllr. Mrs A. Nunan
Cllr Mr R. Davis
Dr. D. Campbell (Clerk)

Cllr Mr S Galton (District Councillor)

Three members of the public

NOTE:

Current Parish Council meetings are becoming more formal and this is necessary to ensure that all of our statutory aspects are met. However, although these are allowing formal business to be transacted speedily, they do not allow for the vital informal discussions on various topics that are needed in a small village. It has become obvious that there are issues that cannot be brought up within the current agenda and meeting structure, yet they do require an airing. It has been suggested that as soon as the formal business of the Parish Council has been dispensed with, an informal un-minuted discussion should take place. The benefits of this are:

- Anything can be raised (an informal AOB)
- Items that are generated from this informal discussion can be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Members of the public can join in the discussion and raise issues
- Speakers on any issue can be invited to talk without the need to close and open a PC meeting.

The difference between this and a formal PC meeting must be strictly observed and these differences are:

- No decisions must be made at this meeting - they must await a formal and recorded Parish Council meeting.
- No more than one subject to be raised by a councillor (except by prior arrangement with the chairman)
- There will be no votes, proposals, resolutions, or actions.
- These notes are for information only – they will not be approved, corrected, or kept as a formal record of proceedings.

These notes represent the main points to arise from this first public discussion.

1. The school has a surfeit of spring bulbs and would like to know if the children could plant them around the village. Mr Wall-Bray agreed to let Andrew Lee know where they could plant them.

2. Kath Grundy has been very ill – a heart attack and radiotherapy treatment for her thyroid. The council asked the Clerk to send her a card on their behalf.
3. The hedge behind the bus stop on the A47 will be planted with Blackthorn. It was suggested that a local handy man be used.
4. Cllr. Mrs Anne Nunan had started the arrangements for Remembrance Day and asked the Clerk to contact Mr Dunkley of Elizabeth Close to make sure the wreath was on order.
5. Cllr. Mrs Ann Sleath was going to get the flowers for the memorial.
6. Cllr Mr Ray Davis agreed to conduct the PC service on Remembrance Day.
7. Cllr Mr Ray Davis commented that there was space on the memorial for some suitable carving and asked councillors to give some thought to this in case we wished to add something.
8. Mrs Wall- Bray gave a report on the status of trees within the parish. She particularly mentioned the lack of tree maintenance that was affecting tree health and appearance. As tree warden, she was going to generate a maintenance programme and submit it to the PC later in the year as well as a report on the state of health of the village trees. She said she would not comment on the tree-planting scheme until the PC had seen the formal report from the PC working party.
9. Cllr Mr Ray Davis talked about instances of fly tipping at the back of the sewage disposal plant. It would appear that the rubbish is being dumped along the boundary fence of the sewerage works, in the sewerage works and along the brook. It seems to be a mixture of domestic and builders waste and is polluting the brook and looking unsightly. The water board are not interested nor is the land owner (Mr Mattocks) and as it is on private land the District Council has little or no interest either. The Clerk mentioned that HDC now have some powers in respect of fly tipping and would ask them if they could help.
10. Cllr Mr Simon Galton spoke on some issues that were relevant to the Council's business. They were:
 - Bus stop move. He explained the reasoning of the highways engineer and their decision not to allow the bus stop to be moved. He said the decision had been made and there was little he could do. Members of the Parish Council and the public made their views know to him. Cllr Galton had only been told the engineer's view, yet there were elements of the situation that the highway engineer had not taken into consideration. The Chairman of the PC asked if we wrote a letter explaining the situation from our perspective could we get the issue re-opened. Cllr Galton said he would try and the Clerk was asked to prepare such a letter.

- Safety issues on the A47. The PC explained the long and frustrating efforts, they had had with the Highways department. Cllr Galton was informed that some residents despairing of any action at all had written to the local MP and the Minister of Transport. He asked that copies of the letters be sent to him so that he might add his weight to the issue.
- Stretton Lane verge. The frustrating lack of information and progress on this issue was again a very irritating despite promises by the highways department. Cllr. Galton suggested that a letter directly to Mr Howe might get a better response. He asked to be copied on all correspondence so that he was in a position to follow up anything the PC wanted him to.