



The meeting of Egerton Parish Council was held on Tuesday 5 December 2023
7pm Committee Room, Millennium Hall, Egerton

Present

Cllrs John Lawton, Peter Rawlinson, Jeff Hopkins, Pat Parr, Claire Foinette, Richard Wall, Simon Palmer, and Sonia Young (Clerk).

Cllr Graham Howland resigned in writing to chair John Lawton. Chair John Lawton accepted the resignation with regret. Graham Howland will however continue to assist Egerton Parish Council in his longstanding role as Egerton Parish Council tree warden. The resignation leaves a vacancy for a Cllr. The process for co-option to fill the vacancy Cllr commence in the New Year.

Four members of the public were present.

1) Apologies

County Councillor Charlie Simkins and Borough Cllr Kayleigh Brunger-Randall

2) Declarations of Interest

Cllr Pat Parr: Neighbour to the Orchard Nurseries site proposed for development.

Chair John Lawton: Neighbour to North Field

Cllr Simon Palmer: Neighbour to the Orchard Nurseries site proposed for development.

3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 7th November 2023

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record of proceedings.

Proposed: Cllr Richard Wall. **Seconded:** Cllr Jeff Hopkins. **All in agreement.** Cllr Simon Palmer abstained as not present at the November meeting.

4) Matters Arising from 7th November (not covered by the agenda below)

a) The George Pub. Roofing works have stopped. A decision by Ashford Borough Council Planning Conservation Officer on the part retrospective planning application is expected by December 26.

b) Renewal of fencing around the cricket field

No quotes received from EPFA.

Action: Cllr Jeff Hopkins to follow this up. The EPFSA have asked for extra bins as there is litter following football matches. Cllrs agreed it would be more appropriate to relocate the bins from the area of the cricket nets to the steps rather than pay for more bins and additional emptying.

c) Grant towards the installation of rural charging points

No update available.

d) Treeworks

A second quote is required.

Action: The Clerk.

e) Repairs to the car park

Work is scheduled to commence 22nd January and last for four days. The School and Pre-school have been alerted to the closure. Residents will be given advance notice in January.

f) Computer Centre

A meeting will be held in January with all interested parties to discuss separation of the computer centre and film society from the EPC end of year accounts and AGAR.

5) Chairman to close the meeting for Public Discussion

Meeting closed at: 19.21pm

Meeting re-opened at: 19.38pm

6) Footpaths Report 163 (See Appendix i)

It was confirmed that the addition of steps to the footpath crossing the Canham Homes housing development is against KCC footpaths policy re accessibility. The path was gently sloping or level



before the development and easily accessible. It would also appear that the footpath has been moved without permission to enable longer front gardens to the houses bordering the footpath. The original plans also showed eight steps installed on the footpath, but there are only four which implies that the houses abutting the footpath have been built at a level 0.9m higher than the plans approved.

Action: Cllr Richard Wall will raise the issue with the Borough Councillor and the ABC Planning enforcement team.

7) Highways Report (See Appendix ii)

The clerk also to send details of the broken and worn street signage discovered during the recent clean to Borough Cllr Kayleigh Brunger-Randall so that ABC have the details and can replace them.

Action: The Clerk

It was noted that the contractors for Canham Homes have not repaired the kerbs and verges following recent utility works. EPC to write again to Canham Homes to get this put right.

Action: Chair John Lawton.

8) Planning

Planning applications submitted to Ashford Borough Council this month for Egerton Parish Council to consider, details of which may be accessed online at: http://www.ashford.gov.uk/online_planning/. Individuals may also register via the website with ABC to receive alerts of new applications.

8. No applications received

8.1 Planning appeal

The EPC Housing and Development Working Group and the Egerton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were both represented at the hearing on 29 November in the Royal Courts of Justice in London to seek permission on appeal for a Judicial Review of the Planning Inspector's decision to allow the development of North Field. The Planning Inspector's decision was contrary to the wishes Egerton residents as expressed by 92% of those who voted in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan did not include the development of North Field for speculative development of 13 executive homes that Egerton does not need. As such, Egerton Parish Council felt it had to try its very best to support and protect the wishes of Egerton residents by trying to overturn the Government Planning Inspector's decision by applying via the courts for a Judicial Review.

The barrister acting for the village had carefully argued in court that the Planning Inspector had erred in law by not acknowledging the factors resulting in the unsustainability of the village and thereby not justifying speculative development. Despite the clear argument, the application for leave for a Judicial Review was not granted at this appeal hearing in person.

The majority of all costs of the campaign against the Inspector's decision have been met by very generous private donations. Egerton Parish Council took the view that it was reasonable to bear a small proportion of the legal costs from its budget because a campaign to uphold the views of the 92% of villagers who voted in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan was an important and justified objective. It was more than unfortunate that the efforts were in vain but EPC believed it was reasonable and justified to try and uphold the overall interests of the village.

It was proposed to discuss donations to the Neighbourhood Fighting Fund in a Closed Session.

Proposed: Chair John Lawton. **Seconded:** Vice-Chair Peter Rawlinson. **All in agreement.**

Egerton Parish Council will consider how it will communicate the full and proper details of the campaign to protect the village from unwanted development and agreed that comments pedalled on social networks were inaccurate and misleading.

It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan remains a robust and valuable document that covers a range of policies and topics of value to the village and aims to facilitate the type of housing the village said it needed: local needs affordable rented housing and private housing designed to meet the needs of older residents.



9) Older People's Accommodation

No update.

10) Affordable Housing

Planning permission is awaited for eight plots for affordable homes for local people at G(s)ale Field. These include a pair of semi-detached bungalows for affordable rent by older local people, 4 other semi-detached houses or maisonettes for local people to rent, two homes for shared ownership by local people and one self-build plot which will be sold to offset some of the build costs of the affordable rentable homes. Applicants for the homes will need to be on the ABC Housing Register. Enquiries would be made to English Rural Housing about the procedure, since some local people had already expressed interest.

11) Approval of the EPC Standing Orders – document circulated prior to the meeting.

Approval of the EPC Standing Orders proposed.

Proposed: Chair John Lawton. **Seconded:** Vice-chair Peter Rawlinson. **All in agreement.**

12) Correspondence

Note: All circulated by email in advance unless marked with a *

CPRE event news – All. 13/11

KALC bulletin – All. 07.11

KALC AGM - All. 08/11

East Kent highways information pack. All. 07/11

KALC area meeting minutes. All. 10/11

KALC training. All. 15/11

KALC newsletters. All. 15/11

Highways seminars – JL/GH. 21/11

KCC Local Flood Risk management consultation. JL/PR/GH. 23/11

ABC Coronation Living Heritage Fund – orchard planting. All. 23/11

ABC – Eurostar campaign gathers momentum. 28/11

KALC AGM presentation out-takes. All. 31/11

Website

October minutes

December agenda

Accounts

Expenditure		Cheque No	£
Remove and install new bench plus remove and then fit replacement toddler swing seats	T Kent	BACS	179.90
Microsoft annual licence	Reimburse S Young	BACS	79.99
Clerk Salary – Dec	S Young		1034.42
HMRC			193.60
Legal fees			6000.00
The Glebe Christmas tree inc delivery	Reimburse S Young		131.99
Total			£7,619.90



Egerton Parish Council

Income			
Donations		Deposit	
			340.00
Total			£340.00

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 30th November 2023 = £34,341.73 less un-presented cheques as follows

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Actual balance = £34,341.73 at 30th November 2023

Accounts for Egerton update magazine

Expenditure			£
Egerton update delivery			130.00
Total			£130.00

Income			
Advertising			33.75
Total			£33.75

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 30th November 2023 £2,757.55 Less un-presented cheques as follows:

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Actual balance = £2,757.55 at 30th November 2023

Accounts for Village Projects

Expenditure		Cheque No	£
Total			

Income			
Interest		BACS	25.50
Donations		Deposit	676.85
Total			£21.24

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 30th November £23, 794.82 Less un-presented cheques as follows:

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Actual balance = £23, 794.82 at 30th November 2023

Village Projects fund

Pre-school project		3103.88
Esme Slater woodland		10,000.00
Village Hall		10,690.94

13 The accounts to be approved and budget spend to date noted.

Approval proposed.

Proposed: Cllr Jeff Hopkins. **Seconded:** Cllr Richard Wall. All in agreement.

13.1 Proposed budget 2024-25 for review and approval – proposed budget circulated in advance of the meeting.

The village precept request for the 2024-25 financial year will mean that a Council Tax Band D residence in Egerton will pay an additional £0.18p per week. **See Appendix (iii)**



Proposed: Chair John Lawton. **Seconded:** Cllr Pat Parr. **All in agreement.**

Action: Clerk to submit the precept request to Ashford Borough Council

14) Additional items

- replanting of trees at Elm Close

It was agreed to purchase a flowering cherry and to ask tree warden Graham Howland about the suitability of a field maple for the secondary position – the field maple was given to EPC by ABC and has been nurtured ready for replanting.

15) Closed Session

The clerk read the minutes of the closed session 7th November 2023.

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the closed session in which the EPC working Group for Housing and Development updated the full council on commercially confident information.

The minutes were proposed as a true record of the closed session.

Proposed: Cllr Jeff Hopkins. **Seconded:** Vice-chair Peter Rawlinson. **All in agreement.** Cllr Pat Parr abstained due to a conflict of interest. Cllr Simon Palmer abstained as not present at the 7th November meeting.

The minutes will be held in a closed confidential file.

A Closed Session was held to discuss the private donations made the Neighbourhood Fighting Fund.

Meeting closed at 21.03pm

Next meeting Tuesday 9th January 2024 at 7pm

Appendix (i)

Report no. 163 of the Egerton footpaths representative for November 2023

8 *Outstanding Items remain from the November 2023 report.*

0 Closed Items

New Items 0

The outstanding issues below are listed with the KCC Reference, the date reported, the footpath number, the location, the difficulty experienced and the status of action.

1. **PROW 210959063.** 10/09/21. AW75 at Heronsdale, Wanden Lane. Egerton resident complaint of overgrowth (brambles) and fence panel leaning towards the footpath. Status: Still Awaiting Allocation.
2. PROW211126930. 09/11/21. Part of AW87 to the west of the church behind the Glebeland houses where the path is quite narrow has collapsed due to badger activity. Status: Still Work Scheduled but it is accessible with matting in place until a more permanent solution is found. Status: Still In Progress.
3. PROW211117086. 21/11/21. AW64 Footpath opposite Egerton House on Greensand Way in a small wooded area towards the byway up to Coach Road. Two planks missing/broken on the bridge over a small stream. Status: Still Work Added to Forward Maintenance Plan.
4. PROW230285561. 07/02/23. AW67. Egerton House Road, next to Willowdene, the 'finger' of the fingerpost at the entrance to this footpath has fallen off the post. Status: Still Work Added to Forward Maintenance Plan.
5. PROW230288567. 07/02/23. AW97. Near Frasers on Barhams Mill Road fingerpost is leaning into the hedge. Status: Still Work Added to Forward Maintenance Plan.

6. PROW230732955. **28/07/23. AW96. Barhams Mill Road, before Frasers, on the right-hand side from Egerton village end. Broken stile at the entrance to the footpath from the road. Status: Still Awaiting Allocation.**
7. 19/10/23. **AW81 (Greensand Way) at Stone Hill adjoining the 5-bar gate into the Heathcote's field out to Greenhill Lane. Stile too high (reported to KCC in June 2022 under PROW220641396 and marked as "Resolved – Officer Action" in September 2023)**

However, in mid-October a resident raised this issue again. A request was sent on 17th October to the landowner's manager to repair. 21/11/23. Update. The manager emailed to say they had fixed the broken plank and sent a photo but it didn't solve the original complaint which was the top plank was too high for shorter ladies to get over. The manager has been asked if he might get the original problem sorted.

8. 27/10/23. AW92. New Road – Canham Homes Development. Builders have started to install wooden steps to connect the public right of way footpath at the New Road end of the site and the new path for residents. This leads ramblers/dog walkers out to the orchards and is there because the levels of the field have changed quite markedly from being completely flat from that end of the field to the other at the orchards end. Residents raised this because if the wooden ones are to be permanent, they look slippery in wet weather and have no handrail and it would be appropriate for the builders to install a graded path or put in proper stone steps in.

31/10/2023. Canham Homes emailed for a reply. On 14/11/2023 they responded that "for safety reasons the steps will be finished with a handrail on both sides".

NEW: PROW231147996. 13/11/2023. AW92, as above. Matter reported to KCC so that in the event of problems later on KCC will be aware.

16/11/2023. The following reply from KCC:

"I inspected the steps in question and made some enquiries with the developer. Firstly, I noticed the steps were made from high pressure treated timber, which should last at least 20 years. There is a drop in the ground, and we would prefer steps to a slope as it would be safer – we felt concrete steps would look unsightly and although the whole development is not ideal for the locals, the wooden steps are far more pleasing on the eye. The developer has agreed to fit handrails, anti-slip bars on the steps and in relation to future maintenance, the steps will be covered by the land management company for which the residents will have to pay a service charge. It's still a work in progress and I will keep a watchful eye on things."

23/11/23. A follow up letter was sent to KCC, and they replied to say it had been saved on the file for AW92 file and would be discussed with the manager.

NEW ISSUES:

Appendix (ii)

Report no. 7 of the Egerton Highways Representative – December 2023

Summary

Report no. 7 of the Egerton Highways Representative – December 2023

Summary

Closed Items 4 – 2 are ABC issues

Open Items 2



Egerton Parish Council

New Items

1

Closed Issues

Reference	Description & Status
748541	Multiple Potholes – Link Hill Lane
Logged	Set 2023
Status	Works completed
714234	Multiple potholes – Coldbridge Lane
Logged	September 2023
Status	Risk assessed – no action required
755722	Blocked Drain/Gully – The Street
Logged	October 2023
Status	Works completed
756342	Multiple Potholes – Mundy Bois Road
Logged	October 2023
Status	Works completed
756369	Multiple Potholes - New Road
Logged	October 2023
Status	Works completed
756370	Signs & Name Plates, Road/Traffic Damaged/Missing – Green Hill Lane/New Road
Logged	October 2023
Status	Enquiry Investigated and customer updated – ABC issue
756373	Signs & Name Plates, Sign Dirty or Obscured by Veg – Stevens Close
Logged	October 2023
Status	Enquiry Investigated and customer updated – ABC issue

Outstanding Issues

Reference	Description & Status
646549	Egerton House Road near The Coppice – Dip/Depression
Logged	20/07/2022
Status	Works being programmed
706534	Egerton House Road – Blocked Drain/Gully
Logged	March 2023
Status update	Gully scheduled to be cleaned



Egerton Parish Council

716257	Multiple potholes – Coldbridge Lane
Logged	September 2023
Status	Works being programmed

New Issues

Reference	Description & Status
762311	Soft verge damaged by Contractors
Logged	November 2023
Status	Under investigation

Appendix (iii)

EGERTON PARISH COUNCIL: BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2024-25		
Cost heading	Item	Proposed budget 2024-25
Administration	Clerk's salary (incl NIC)	17,000
	Clerk cover	250
	Training	500
	Telephone	250
	Travel	100
	Stationery/photocopying/stamps/office equipment	400
Office	website/publicity	750
	Insurance	1250
	Equipment	200
	Rent of Parish office	600
	Repairs/ replacement	250
	Utilities	150
S.137		200
Donations	Wealden Wheels	1000
	KALC	500
	CPRE	40
Activities	Assembly/ election/referendum	150
Mowing/ hedging	Mowing (Aspire)strimming/ Glebe/hedges	7000
	Tree surgery	3000
	Plants	160
General maintenance	Street cleaning/repairs/replacement	6350
	Maintenance	2000
	playground skatepark repair	350
Professional fees	Auditor	1000
	Professional fees	1500
Contingency	Unforeseen items	4000
TOTAL		48,950

As a very basic reserve EPC is legally required to have: £3,000 by-election; £5,000 legal costs for a code of conduct investigation; £2,000 local referendum. Total £10,000.