

Otterton Parish Council

Minutes							
Date & Time	4 th November 2019	Location	Otterton Village hall				
Councillors Present	Initials			Also Present	Initials		
Mr J Hiles	JH	Parish Councillor	Chair	Mr T Wright	TW	District Councillor	
Mrs V Pride	VP	Parish Councillor	V.Chair	Mr A Dent	AD	District Councillor	
Mr J Lister	JL	Parish Councillor		Mr P Jarvis	PJ	District Councillor	
Mr T Farrington	TF	Parish Councillor		Members of the public	7		
Mr S Walker	SW	Parish Councillor					
Mrs S Young	SY	Parish Councillor					

Apologies	Initials	Reason for Absence (Category of Governor)	Absent without Apology	Initials	Category of Governor
Cllr K Hill	SW	Caught in traffic			
Miss Claire Wright	CW	Work Commitments			

In Attendance	Initials	Capacity	Minutes to	
F Mills	FM	Clerk	Councillors, website, notice board	
Ref	Agenda item, comment & decision			Action Owner & deadline
1	Welcome & Apologies for Absence: It was agreed that apologies would be accepted from Councillors Kevin Hill and County Councillor Claire Wright			
2	Declarations of Interests: There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.			
3	Confidential Items of Business: It was agreed that no items needed to be dealt with in confidence.			
4	The minutes of the meeting held on 7 th October were signed as a true record of the meeting. Matters arising: Hedge cutting now completed. Tree for triangle on green. Sourced but not yet costed.			
5	Public questions: Maize Harvest. Detrimental to environment, causing silting up of river. See letter from Geoff Porter and additional page of letter attached. Advice given that Landlords do not tell their tenants what to grow. Subsidy from the Gov reliant on good practice the Chairman gave details of the best method of reporting. Chair has spoken to contractors regarding speed of vehicles through village. TW advised correspondence to be sent to Geoff Jung. Comment that horse boxes were parked in the village during Bicton event over the weekend. Junction at Brick Cross continues to cause problems, suggestion that additional arrow could be put road to direct traffic. Contractor's traffic causing problems with mud splattering on cars and houses about which residents are very unhappy.			Clerk to write to Landlord & Tennant re damage to PROW Clerk to write to Highways. Clerk to write to CDE
6	Chairman's business. The Village Boundary walk in this Saturday 9th Nov. Remembrance service will start at 1050hrs on Sunday 10th November. Press release has gone out for the Footpath posts. See attached. Maize If you think a farmer is breaking any rules you can report to; fraudinconfidence@rpa.gov.uk If you think a farmer is polluting the brook/river Environment Agency 03708506506			Clerk

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7	<p>Neighbourhood plan. Ian Birch made a comprehensive report on the progress of NP. Final version now ready and emailed to Councillors. Appendices to follow. 2 versions sent:- 1. Clean. 2.with changes. Paper copies to be printed. This version takes into account all comments made by stakeholders. Needs approval, request that review is made using email by 15th November. Outstanding issues in plan which need consideration and comment:- 1.Currently new development at North Star only housing plan for village. If this changes and more developments are planned the rules state that 66% must be affordable housing. 157 orders were used in the past to restrict the sale of council housing to people with a local connection, should a similar rule be used for the sale of housing in the village should a new development happen. 2. Holiday homes/second homes – should there be a mechanism in the plan to ensure the sale of properties are for the principal residences. Aim for plan to go to EDDC by the end of the month when it will be checked and once confirmed will be returned to the village for a referendum by March 2020. A discussion took place regarding these aspects of the plan. Thanks to Iain Birch and team for the detail in the plan and the time taken to achieve this detailed document. 106 Funding: It was agreed that the village meeting in October that a visit would be made to the school to talk to the children about their wishes for the Jubilee playground. Rosemary Birch who attended the meeting in October kindly drew a plan to illustrate the possibility of creating a scooter track with small jumps. This is attached.</p>	<p>Councillors to email JH With their views re restricti of property and planning.</p>
8	<p>Planning matters:- Consider planning applications & note objections. 19/2276/TCA Unanimously agreed.</p>	
9	<p>Pathways and PROW: See separate reports. Footpath 5 steps to Clamour bridge need to be replaced as a matter of urgency matter of H &S. The response from Richard Spurway was that this was not currently a matter for urgent action.</p>	<p>CW to speak to Richard Spurway.</p>
10	<p>Ladram Bay: nothing to report</p>	
11	<p>Dates for meeting for next year agreed. Meeting dates 2020 3. Feb, 2 Mch, 6 Apr, 4 May, 1 Jun, 6 Jul, 7 Sep, 2 Nov, 7 Dec Dates of Annual meeting and AGM to be agreed</p>	<p>Clerk to Publish dates.</p>
12	<p>Reports from Councillors The Village Green & Community Shop. Planters renewed and new tree to be planted. The War Memorial, will be weeded before Remembrance day & Raleigh Federation - fine Stantyway Recreation Ground – Hedge cutting to be completed by Cllr Sam Walker – many thanks. Football Club & Jubilee Playground. Damage to rope on climbing frame TF to see if it can be mended. The Cemetery – Cllr Lister. The Village hall – Cllr Young Trees – Mr Iain Ure Contracts & Finance – Cllr Hiles Village Defibrillator -</p>	<p>Clerk to seek monthly report from shop. NTR NTR TF to advise Football Club NTR NTR See reports NTR</p>
13	<p>County Council report: None received.</p>	
14	<p>District Council Report: TW LORP consultation delayed until after Christmas. AD. Review of cost of car parking to take place with review by end of Feb. PJ. Crime panel cancelled due to election. Police commander to attend meeting/ Waste & recycling 21.11.19 6.00 @ Honiton Council chamber</p>	
15	<p>Correspondence: See attached letter from which was discussed during the meeting. Advice re action was detailed in the Chairman’s report.</p>	

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16	Financial matters – it was agreed unanimously to pay all cheques as detailed in the agenda. A report showing bank reconciliation for the month of October was signed as an accurate reflection of the transactions shown in the OPC bank account.	Clerk
17	It was agreed to pay the following cheques. No 1441 Halcyon Landscapes £569.00 (2 months), No. 1442NSP 369.00 re Neighbourhood watch, No 1443 DALC re Clerks training.	Clerk
18	Items for next agenda: Ratfication of NP, Budget, School feedback re 106.	Clerk
19	It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on 2 nd December 2019	

Correspondence

Dear Parish Council, I would like to raise the concerns that I have and that other residents have voiced regarding the impact on the village and local environment from the recent maize harvesting.

Transport issues. For those of us living on Fore Street and Ottery Road there was a constant train of large tractors and trailers for some 4 days this month. Despite a road cleaner attempting to pick up the mud on the road, stones were left by the roadside and parked cars were splattered with dirt as were the walls of houses facing the road. In short, the village was left in a mess.

The danger of fast heavy machinery. Despite the atrocious weather conditions, tractors travelled at speed up and down the village for hours on end. Some residents who have blind or difficult exits from their driveways found it frightening and difficult to enter the road ,in their cars. Tractor drivers seemed to have little regard for local drivers or the risks created by wet slippery roads. As pedestrians also have to walk in the roadway at several narrow points in the village, the large speeding vehicles were frightening. This was particularly the case for older residents, parents with young children and dog walkers let alone visitors.

Damage to the environment. This has been two-fold. Firstly, the entrance to Checkenhole and Watering Lane. This entrance is normally difficult to enter by foot over winter months but the heavy machinery has made it almost impassable due to the deep ruts that quickly filled with water. Those who are responsible for this damage should be expected to repair it so that walkers can use the lanes. Secondly, the damage to the land is of great concern. Using heavy machinery in such wet weather compacts the land. The lower fields are also badly rutted. Once cut, the maize leaves bare topsoil that then gets washed away as a result of following wet weather leaving silt in the brooks and river. All this is very bad for the local environment. It appears that the current users of the land have no regard for the long term damage that they are causing for short term gain. Should the landlords not have concern for the damage being done to their land?

All in the name of being environmental. Ironically, all this maize growth is being done in the name of being good for the environment despite all the resulting damage that is being done. Numerous fields of maize are being grown and harvested not as a food crop but to supposedly produce 'green' power. But at what cost to our local environment? Fields are sprayed to the detriment of plant, insect and bird life, the crop is then transported a considerable distance to the power plant by large agricultural machinery along totally unsuitable narrow country roads causing pollution and disruption. As already stated the cropped fields are then left vulnerable to erosion.

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I would ask the Parish Council to raise these issues with the farmers concerned and their landlord. How can they justify all the negative impacts their activity is creating? More widely, this is after all an AONB and there should be a wider concern for the damage this is causing that environment.

As the village rep. for the OVA I have already voiced these concerns with the Executive Committee resulting in others voicing very similar concerns for their neighbouring communities. Whilst the direct impact is focused on Otterton other local parishes are experiencing the same negative impacts.

Yours sincerely, Geoff Porter, 34, Fore Street, Otterton.

Proposals to Otterton Parish Council re. the impact of maize production on the village.

1. Raise the following issues with Greendale as tenant farmers growing maize for bio-fuel.

- a. The damage to the entrance to Checkenhole Lane: needs urgent repair.
- b. Awareness of damage to the farmland: deep ruts resulting in water run-off into Otterton Brook and the River Otter, the subsequent loss of valuable top-soil and the silting up of the river bed. Applying the good practice of ploughing around field margins would help prevent this. The long term damage caused to soil structure through compaction as a result of using large, heavy agricultural machinery on saturated ground. Was it appropriate to proceed with harvesting the maize crop in such wet conditions, knowing the damage that this would cause?
- c. Stop the practice of mono-cropping maize on multiple adjoining fields on a hillside.
- d. Be more aware of the impact on Otterton village and the damage to surrounding lanes of using large heavy, agricultural machinery.
- e. Be more aware of the dangers of driving large, heavily laden agricultural vehicles at speed along narrow village roads and lanes causing risk to pedestrians where, in the absence of footpaths, they have to walk in the roadway. These large vehicles travelling at speed make accessing main roads from blind or restricted driveways hazardous, even frightening. (This is a further argument for a 20mph speed limit on the village roads especially with regard to heavy agricultural and commercial vehicles).
- f. Be aware that despite the use of a road sweeper, cars parked beside and houses facing onto the village roads were splattered with dirt. Stones were left alongside the road causing a hazard to cyclists and further damage to vehicles. Greendale should be expected to compensate affected house and car owners. In addition, soil on the village roads was washed into Otterton Brook and into the Otter as silt.
- g. Ask Greendale to justify how the damage caused by transporting maize over long distances to produce bio-gas can be claimed to be good for the environment?

2. Raise the above concerns with CDE as the landowners and request them to make their

tenants more aware of good farming practice and the impact of their heavy machinery

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on Otterton residents.

3. Raise the above concerns with EDDC. Damage to the land and wider environment is taking place within East Devon AONB.
4. Make DCC aware of concerns regarding the impact of heavy agricultural vehicles driving at speed through Otterton and the surrounding lanes and roads. Question whether it is appropriate for these vehicles to be used for transporting maize over long distance resulting in damage to roadsides and disruption to normal traffic flow?

Geoff Porter. 34, Fore Street, Otterton, EX9 7HB