

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Piddington & Wheeler End Parish Council held in Piddington Village Hall on Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 7.30pm

Attendance - Chairman - Mr T Willett, Cllrs Mr J Smith, Mrs W Pitcher.

Buckinghamshire Councillor – Cllr O Hayday, Cllr D Hayday.

Clerk – Mrs H Glasgow.

Members of the public: 2.

286.1 Public & Buckinghamshire Councillor Questions

A Parishioner asked if the foliage on the Old Oxford Road can be cut back. Cllr Willett will have a look at this. It is unlikely that Buckinghamshire Council will cut this area. Council may need to consider asking Buckland Landscapes for a quotation.

It was reported that a loud motorbike has recently disturbed people late at night. It Parishioners are concerned regarding noise nuisance they should contact the Police.

A Parishioner raised concerns re smart meters. The Parishioner has contacted Thames Water and will report back re the correspondence.

286.2 Attendance and acceptance of apologies for absence.

Cllrs S Digby, P Brown, O May.

286.3 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests relating to items on the agenda.

None.

286.4 To confirm the Minutes of the July 2023 Meeting.

Council confirmed the minutes to be a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

286.5 Clerk's report and Correspondence.

1. It was noted that Cllr James Day has resigned. The Parish Council will advertise the vacancy.
2. Correspondence (non-resident) Council to comment –

Re Chipps Hill – "I drive through Chipps Hill reasonably regularly. The verges on both sides of the road are excellent for both plants and butterflies. I believe that the plants are regularly surveyed as part of Plantlife's monitoring scheme. As far as I can tell, those verges have not been cut for at least a couple of years. Hence, scrub is rapidly encroaching, to the detriment of both plants and butterflies. I think a local farmer used to cut those verges. Is there anything you can do to get those verges cut?"

It is true that cutting the verges when the wild flowers are out (i.e. flowering in the spring and summer) would not be a good thing to do. The flowers need to be able to set seed. But if verges are never cut, then they will rapidly scrub-up; brambles and trees will soon dominate, rapidly covering all the available area, and hence the flowers will be lost.

There is excellent advice about managing road verges available from the charity Plantlife. From its website it is possible to download free two guides on how best to manage roadside verges for flowers. Those guides are:

Managing grassland road verges: A best practice guide

and

The Good Verge Guide

The former guide states "Species-rich grassland is maintained on an annual basis, using cut-and-collect operations wherever possible. Cutting is timed to late summer or early autumn to enable wild flowers to set seed."

The latter guide states "Some form of verge management is essential to maintain flower-rich habitats. Without regular management, studies have shown that most grassland flowers disappear rapidly."

If verges are not cut once a year, then scrub will very soon 'take over', and the wild flowers will be lost. The verges alongside Chipps Hill already demonstrate the scrub is invading, rapidly reducing the area available for wild flowers. It

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is not too late to cut those verges this year. Doing so will return them to an optimal condition for the impressive wild flowers that grow on them. I hope that they can be cut sometime this autumn/winter”.

The Parish Council Chipps Hill management team are looking at the trees.

3. A note from Darren Hayday - we have finally managed to get the pavement alongside the A40 sided out. From WW up to Old Dashwood Hill.
4. A resident complained about the weeds on footpaths, particularly on Wellfield Road. I reported this to Bucks Council and received the following response -

“Thank you for your report regarding weeds, due to the limited budget we have for 2023/2024 we will only be treating noxious weeds on the public highway. All other weeds on the grass verge will be cut back as part of our grass cutting schedule which is published on the Buckinghamshire Council website.

Noxious weeds which will be treated as prescribed in the Weeds Act 1959 are.

Tuberous thistle - *Cirsium tuberosum*

Very rare perennial species of calcareous grassland in Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Cambridgeshire made extinct in 1974 but re-introduced since 1987.

Melancholy thistle – *Cirsium heterophyllum/helenoides*

An uncommon erect perennial plant of damp northern meadows, woodland edges and verges. Leaves unlobed, green above, whitish and cottony beneath, elliptical with a tapering point. The margins toothed or with soft spines. The stem is grooved, winged and cottony, bearing large usually solitary purple flowering heads.

Carline thistle – *Carlina vulgaris*

A biennial plant of short calcareous grassland with very spiny leaves, cottony beneath with a short unspined flowering stem, 10-20cm, rarely up to 60cm. The flowering head is ringed by horizontally extended straw coloured rays.

Musk thistle – *Carduus nutans*

An annual or biennial species of calcareous grassland with flowering stems 100cm in height, discontinuously winged. The large flowering heads are usually solitary and drooping.

Meadow thistle – *Cirsium dissectum*

A local perennial plant up to 80cm high resembling a slender melancholy thistle, distributed through the southern half of lowland England and Wales to north-east Yorkshire. Dwarf thistle – *Cirsium acaule* – A stemless perennial thistle with a solitary flower head borne in the centre of the leaf rosette. Found on short and calcareous grassland in south and east England to Yorkshire.

Common ragwort – *Senecio jacobaea*

Young plant: Young plants of common ragwort are evident from the autumn to early June as low rosettes in pasture and on bare ground. The leaves of these young plants are extremely variable, either undivided or simply divided into terminal oval and smaller lateral lobes. These are usually a deep bottle-green, tinged purple, and slightly glossy on the upper surface.

Adult plant: In their second or subsequent years the rosettes mature and produce flowering stems from late June onwards. These are between 30-100cm tall, carrying dense flat topped clusters of bright yellow daisy-like flower heads each 1.5-2.5cm across. The leaves on mature plants are strongly divided into narrow lobes with the bases clasping the non-woody main stem. The flowering stems die back after producing seeds.

Broad-leaved dock – *Rumex obtusifolius*

Young plant: Seedlings emerge from September through to summer with an opposite pair of narrow diamond-shaped or strap-like cotyledon leaves. The true leaves then emerge one at a time unrolling to form a roughly oval or elongated heart-shaped structure that is green but tinged with purple. Plantlets regenerated from root fragments more closely resemble the adult plant. Broad-leaved docks usually remain vegetative for their first year.

Adult plant: This dock which has a perennial rootstock produces a basal rosette of large, broad, oval to oblong leaves up to 25cm long with a strong central vein and rounded, backward pointing lobes at the base. Flowering is from late June onwards with the stems typically up to 100cm tall but sometimes reaching 150cm. The flowering stem is loosely branched with numerous clusters of small reddish-brown flowers which have more the appearance of seeds. The flowering stems die back after producing seeds. Broad-leaved dock is distinguished from curled dock by the broader leaves. The fruit is roughly triangular with one or two swollen seeds. The thin wing or membrane surrounding the seeds has an irregularly toothed edge. The long tap root of this plant is more prone to be branched than that of curled dock. Both species are widespread and can hybridise so that intermediate plants occur.

Curled dock – *Rumex crispus*

Young plant: The seedlings are very similar to those of broad-leaved dock but the true leaves may have a more pointed tip. As with broad-leaved dock the plants can be regenerated from root fragments caused by soil disturbance or heavy treading by animals or humans.

Adult plant: The leaves of curled dock are narrower and more elongated than those of broad-leaved dock, usually tapering to a point and with wavy undulating margins. Flowering is from late June onwards each year, when the plants can extend to 100cm or even 200cm in height. The flower and seed clusters differ from broad-leaved dock in that they are much more closely and densely arranged. The flowering stems die back after producing seeds. The fruit lacks teeth on the wing, is oval/triangular in shape, usually with all 3 seeds swollen, although with one often larger than the others.

Creeping thistle – *Cirsium arvense*

Young plant: Seedling plants form small rosettes with a pair of opposite simple and unstalked oval cotyledon leaves. Paired light green true leaves are arranged at right angles to the cotyledons. These have wavy edges, weak spines and the upper surface supports hairs or weak bristles. Plantlets regenerating from root fragments more closely resemble the adult plant.

Adult plant: The adult plant forms an extensive root system which can be exposed on digging. The flowering stems extend 30- 100cm or more in height from the shoots which emerge out of the rootstock each spring. These stems lack spines, wings, furrows or ridges. The leaves are elongated and narrow with a wavy and strongly spined margin. The upper surfaces are quite glossy or waxy, whilst undersides are cottony or downy. There are separate male and female plants which can be distinguished by their different flower structures. Loose clusters of purple flower heads, each between 1.5 and 2.5cm long and around 1cm wide, are borne on the branched stems, from the end of June each year. The flowering stems die back after producing seeds

Spear thistle – *Cirsium vulgare* other common names: Scotch Thistle, Bell Thistle

Young Plant: Seedling plants appear from autumn until April in pasture and on bare ground. The cotyledons differ from those of creeping thistle in that they are borne on short stalks. The true leaves are also longer and more bristly with a downy appearance to the upper surfaces. The seedling plants quickly form rosettes which remain for at least one year before producing flowering stems.

Adult plant: The flowering stems begin to emerge from the rosettes when the basal leaves reach 15-30cm in length. These stems typically reach 30-100cm in height, but taller specimens occur. Stems are cottony or minutely hairy, bearing discontinuous wings and leaves which are also spiny and deeply lobed. From July onwards plants produce large purple flower heads 3-5cm long by 2-5cm across, in loose clusters forming the stereotype image of a thistle. The flowering stems die back after producing seeds".

5. I received a complaint about a motorcycle driving around the village very late at night. From what I understand this is a resident returning home from work.

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6. Correspondence from Piddington Village Hall –

“It was decided at the last Village Hall Committee meeting that unfortunately due to rising prices we are going to have to raise the cost of hiring the village hall to £11 an hour. This will take effect from 1st September, 2023 and we do hope that you will be able to carry on supporting us in the future”.

7. Buckland Landscapes agreed to repair the play area matting and football nets.
8. Vacancy.
9. Simon met Buckland Landscapes re what is required for the grass/hedge cutting.
10. Updated the AED unit info on the online system.
11. Updated the website and facebook page.
12. Completed the previous online payments.
13. Checked the AED unit.
14. Issues can be reported at www.fixmystreet.com or using the app FixMyStreet.

Correspondence Received - If Councillors would like a copy of any of the documents listed below please advise the clerk

1. News for Town and Parish Councils from Buckinghamshire Council
2. Buckinghamshire Council - Move more to win prizes!
3. Buckinghamshire Council - Do you still need to respond to the annual canvass?
4. Buckinghamshire Council - Know your numbers and make a start to a healthy heart
5. Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust update
6. 20mph speed limits in Buckinghamshire
7. Buckinghamshire Council – An update from Martin Tett
8. Buckinghamshire Council - Go back to school sustainably this September
9. Buckinghamshire Council – Money Matters
10. Buckinghamshire Council - Eliminating hepatitis C: Buckinghamshire's Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service achieves milestone
11. Buckinghamshire Council - A safe haven in Buckinghamshire
12. Vote for Buckinghamshire Design Awards People's Choice winner
13. The latest news from Crimewave Ltd - August 2023
14. Police & Crime Bulletin Aug '23
15. Give teens a chance – Foster with Bucks
16. Council's new 'Energy Doctor' scheme is helping low-income households save money
17. Chilterns Conservation Board e-news
18. Bucks Household Recycling Centres continue to get top marks from residents
19. Buckinghamshire Council insists Day Travelcards must stay

286.6 Finances

Approval of the income and expenditure July 23

Clerks Salary	£602.88	
BC Pension	£232.81	
HMRC	£156.03	
Expenses	£10.80	Fuel
TBS Hygiene	£74.40	Environmental Waste - July
TBS Hygiene	£93.00	Environmental Waste - August
Buckland Landscapes	£465.50	Grass Cutting – July
Buckland Landscapes	£465.50	Grass Cutting – August
West Wycombe Estate	£250.00	Rent – Piddington Rec
HSBC (dd)	£5.00	Banking charge

Income £0.00

Opening Balance 25/07/23	£23,766.56
Less approved Expenditure	£1,218.02
Income	£0.00
Total as at 06/09/23	£22,543.54

286.7 To discuss the installation of smart meters

A Parishioner raised concerns regarding the installation of smart meters. The Parishioner is currently corresponding with Thames Water.

286.8 To discuss allotment rents

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to hold the allotment rents.

286.9 To discuss the website

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to develop a new website. The Chairman will write an email to the current supplier.

286.10 Planning Applications – None.

286.11 Members Questions and statements.

Buckland Landscapes reported the grass matting around the swings is in good condition. Cllr Willet will check this.

Cllr Smith will obtain some parking cones for the Dashwood Public House.

Council agreed to reconsider the request for the children’s football training.

Councillors will organise litter picks in October.

285.12 Date of next meeting

To confirm the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th October 2023 in Piddington Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at – 20.21.

Signed..... Dated.....