

# Sydenham Parish Council

## Minutes of an extraordinary Parish Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Present: Paul Stancliffe  
Alison Isherwood  
Roy Harrison  
Janet Potts  
Heather Mullins  
Apologies: Des O'Flanagan

### Grid:

This extra meeting was to discuss Roger Belson's proposal that the site meeting he has arranged for 22/23 June with Ewan Siret should be for PC members only, and also so that the two members not present at the last meeting, could be brought up to date with the grid discussions.

It was agreed that it is impractical to have a site meeting by the bridge, discussing the grid, without inviting representatives of the residents to be present.

It was also agreed that when we meet Roger Belson with Mr Siret we need to understand the pros and cons of both leaving the grid in place or removing it, and we need to be clear on exactly who is responsible for what. At our previous meeting with Mr Siret, although he came up with the design, he said that he didn't think at the time that it was necessary to fit a grid. It was fitted at our request, and Mr Siret made it clear that the PC would be responsible for keeping it clear of debris. Dave Read undertook to do this on our behalf.

However, the debris builds up very quickly after periods of heavy rain, and is very difficult to remove when the water is fast flowing. As a result the present grid is a flood risk to the adjacent houses if a major downpour occurs when nobody is available to clear it (ie in the middle of the night or away). The risk of flooding if the present bars remain, may be greater than the risk of someone being involved in an accident under the bridge, should they be removed.

If the grid was removed and not replaced with an alternative design, we need to be told at the meeting who is responsible if there is an accident. Is it an OCC responsibility to notify residents if the grid is removed, and responsibility put back with the parents to supervise their children? We also need to hear the pros and cons of the alternative grid design. The research that Des carried out showed that it is less likely for accidents to be caused by slipping and falling in.

It appears that the drowning incident which provoked the discussion leading to the grid being fitted, was actually caused by a man being caught against a culvert grid, and being trapped there by the force of the water. Thus although the PC decision to have the grid fitted seemed sensible and reasonable at the time, it was possibly misguided, and if the grid is removed a person falling into the water should be carried through the bridge, and could be rescued from the other side.

If the bridge belongs to OCC we need to be clear who is responsible for any accidents there. Currently we understand that the Parish Council would be liable for any flood damage to the adjacent houses, if the brook was to flood due to build-up of debris on the present grid.

### **Other matters discussed:**

#### Community speedwatch:

A meeting was held with Jacky Maddon and an officer from OCC to discuss the use of the Sentinal camera. The camera could be available in 2-3 weeks, and would be manned for a 1 hour slot, with the officer nearby to keep an eye on the equipment – volunteers would not be required.

The camera takes a 10 second video and puts all the information (registration number, speed etc) onto a smart card which can then be downloaded onto a spreadsheet. The Police/PCSO would then follow up any evidence of speeding with letters – the severity of which depends on the number of offences caught on camera around the district – the 1<sup>st</sup> letter is a warning, if caught a second time on another occasion by any other similar camera the letter states the police are taking the matter seriously, and then if the driver is caught a 3<sup>rd</sup> time the police will prosecute.

The two suggested sites are the layby on Thame Road and opposite Slade Farm.

Signed ..... Date .....

Footpaths and Bridleways :

Mrs Archer has let us know that there are 80+ orchids on their plot and, including rare bee orchids – she has put canes and signs round them to protect them on Footpath 4 – she wanted to let us know they are there and is happy to show people round if they phone first. This news to be spread by word of mouth rather than via the newsletter as the orchids will be past their best by the next publication date.

A problem has been highlighted on bridleway in front of The Jays – the path is waterlogged even when other paths elsewhere are dry. HM to ask OCC to have a look at clearing the overgrown vegetation, and see if there's a blocked spring or similar cause of the water.

Tony from the Ramblers Association has walked the footpath down Sewells Lane and round to Holliers Close today, and will be reporting back to AI.

There followed a discussion on possible alternative routes to the Phoenix Trail if the current proposal proves not to be viable, and if it is not possible to divert around houses who are opposed to the current suggested route.

Date of next meeting:

Due to availability of councillors it was suggested that the next meeting be moved from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 24<sup>th</sup> June – HM to check the availability of the OSR.

The meeting finished at 9.45

Signed ..... Date .....