

# Wickham Bishops Parish Council

*Parish Councillors:*

I S F MacGregor (Chairman)  
 Mrs A Mickelsen (Vice Chairman)  
 H M Bass  
 P J Bates  
 Mrs R Johnson  
 S J Nicholas  
 Mrs R M Pink CBE  
 B F Sayers  
 I D Wardrop



*Parish Clerk:*

Mrs L J Rowland  
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<b>MINUTES</b>	
<b>Of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Boardroom</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>
<b>15/063</b>	<p><b>Those Present and Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p><b>In the chair:</b> Cllr MacGregor</p> <p><b>Present:</b> Cllrs Bates, Johnson, Mickelsen, Pink, Sayers and Wardrop; the Clerk</p> <p>Apologies for Absence were accepted from Cllrs Bass and Nicholas.</p> <p>There were thirteen members of the public present. Mrs Christine McDonald was introduced as the Community Agent for Maldon, representing an initiative that supports older people and their carers.</p>
<b>15/064</b>	<p><b>Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework</b></p> <p>Cllr Johnson declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 15/073 application OUT/MAL/15/00220</p>
<b>15/065</b>	<p><b>Approval of Minutes</b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Pink, seconded Cllr Wardrop.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Johnson, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015 be approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Johnson, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p>
<b>15/066</b>	<p><b>Reports on Progress of Previous Minutes' Items</b></p> <p>15/016 The overgrown hedge on Tiptree Road cannot be trimmed until after the nesting season. Item held over to July.</p> <p>15/016 The Public Rights of Way Inspector has recommended a LHP request to re-surface the Handley's Lane byway.</p> <p>15/038 The litter pick letters and poster were completed. Item closed.</p> <p>15/038 The blocked ditch in Kelvedon Road has been scheduled for clearing 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> April. The road will be closed at this time due to concurrent carriageway works.</p> <p>15/051 The overgrown vegetation on The Street was cleared by the householder. Item closed.</p>
<b>15/067</b>	<p><b>Chairman's Report</b></p> <p>The Chairman began by thanking the Clerk for submitting Wickham Bishops' entry to the annual Best Kept Village competition.</p>

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<b>Of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Boardroom</b>	
	<p>The Chairman was pleased to report that two parishioners had volunteered to help with the air raid shelter project. A draft lease has been prepared by ECC and is now under review by the Parish Council's solicitor.</p> <p>In company with the Planning Committee Chairman Cllr Sayers and District Cllr Bass, the Chairman had attended the opening of an attractive Affordable Housing Scheme in Manuden.</p>
<b>15/068</b>	<p><b>Clerk's Report</b></p> <p>The Clerk reported that March had continued to be busy due to year-end accounting and several controversial planning applications. With the members of the Planning Committee and Cllr Wardrop, the Clerk stated that she would be attending MDC's one-day training on Planning.</p> <p>A free CD containing the trestle bridge artwork has been promised.</p> <p>Tasks for the month ahead include supporting the air raid shelter legal work, arranging the internal audit, compiling the annual report and starting the annual VAT claim.</p>
<b>15/069</b>	<p><b>Correspondence Requiring Decisions:</b></p> <p>There was insufficient information available to resolve to adopt the red telephone box from BT. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to write to BT to establish the practical considerations of kiosk adoption.</i></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the Parish Council would not mark VE day on 8<sup>th</sup> May but would consider a VE/VJ theme for the August village picnic. Proposed Cllr Sayers, seconded Cllr Johnson.</p>
<b>15/070</b>	<p><b>General Correspondence to Note:</b></p> <p>There was no correspondence to note.</p>
<b>15/071</b>	<p><b>Policing &amp; Neighbourhood Watch</b></p> <p>There were no future street meets or Community Engagement meetings scheduled locally. PC Keene is trying to arrange PCSO cover for the area due to the current PCSO being long-term sick. <b>Action:</b> <i>The Clerk to report on PC Keene's progress at the next meeting.</i></p> <p>The Clerk read out a report from the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator stating that other than thefts from sheds and petty vandalism there was little crime of note in Wickham Bishops in the previous month. NHW continues to search for a replacement Co-ordinator; the current Co-ordinator is thought to be leaving in November.</p>
<b>15/072</b>	<p><b>Public Forum</b></p> <p>A member of the public residing along the access road off Witham Road by the 30mph sign reported that he and his neighbours are considering a request for a road name for the access road. As the dwellings currently share a postcode and road name with Witham Road properties, deliveries and visitors relying on SatNav have difficulty in finding their addresses. MDC has indicated that the request would need the backing of the Parish Council. The Chairman stated that the Parish Council would be happy to be involved in the process as required.</p> <p>A member of the public spoke against planning application HOUSE/MAL/15/00169. Four members of the public spoke against and one member of the public spoke in support of planning application OUT/MAL/15/00220. A member of the public spoke in support of planning application OUT/MAL/15/00267.</p>

**MINUTES**

**Of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Boardroom**

**15/073**

**Planning Applications and Decisions**

Applications:

**HOUSE/MAL/15/00169 Avon Cottage 14 School Road Wickham Bishops**

Ten letters of objection had been received.

It was noted that proposal would convert Avon Cottage into a 2-storey dwelling, unlike its near neighbours along the south side of School Road. Properties on the opposite side of the road are 2-storey dwellings; however the land to the north is lower. The Parish Council concluded that the proposed upper floor of Avon Cottage could allow overlooking down into the opposite properties affecting the amenity and privacy of those properties, contrary to RLP policy BE1 – *Design of New Development and Landscaping* and emerging LDP policy D1 – *Design Quality and Built Environment*. The Parish Council considered that the additional width and bulk would result in a cramped appearance and the higher roof would materially affect the skyline view along the south of School Road. The overall effect would be out of keeping with the character of the street, again contrary to RLP policy BE1 and LDP policy D1. It was also recorded that an appeal to build a new dwelling in the neighbouring garden was dismissed primarily on grounds of height and bulk.

The Parish Council further noted that the proposed garage would be sited forward of the existing building line and in the front garden, contrary to the Wickham Bishops Village Design Statement.

**Resolved:** the Parish Council recommended REFUSAL. Proposed Cllr Sayers, seconded Cllr Wardrop.

**OUT/MAL/15/00220 Barn Hayes Beacon Hill Great Totham**

Cllr Johnson took no part in the discussion and vote due to a declared non-pecuniary interest.

Eight letters of objection had been received.

Comments included the presence of adders, grass snakes, slowworms, deer and other wildlife which would be adversely affected by the loss of habitat and the light pollution the new dwellings would generate. Concerns were also expressed that development would remove part of the green separation between Wickham Bishops and Great Totham. Other objections reported that the slope to the land and existence of springs could cause drainage problems and flooding issues to the existing properties on Kelvedon Road.

The Parish Council noted that the application site is undeveloped open green-belt land forming part of the separation between Wickham Bishops and Great Totham and lies outside the settlement boundaries of both parishes, in an area accessed by the busy road of Beacon Hill. Despite the 30mph speed limit this road is known to be difficult to join safely due to frequently speeding traffic, as evidenced by the nearby Speedwatch site and recorded data. Beacon Hill lacks pavements and the new dwellings would be distant from most local services requiring use of the private car for many journeys. Councillors reported that Wickham Bishops has no identified need for additional bungalows following the recent approval of the Snows Corner development. Councillors considered that the application was therefore contrary to the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development, LDP policies S1 – *Sustainable Development* and S8 – *Settlement Boundaries and the Countryside* and due to the dwelling type was contrary to LDP policy H5 – *Rural Exception Schemes*. For these reasons this scheme is also contrary to RLP policies H1 – *Location of New Housing*, H2 – *Infilling Housing in the Countryside*, H10 – *Rural Exception Sites* and S2 – *Development Outside Development Boundaries*.

The Parish Council noted that the application site lies in a Special Landscape Area, with Character of Wooded Farmland. This area is characterised by open and wooded farmland with distant views of a rural nature. The proposed dwellings and landscaping would be visible to the properties adjoining the site along the east side of Kelvedon Road and would alter the rural character of the area and is therefore contrary to RLP policies CC6 – *Landscape Protection*, CC7 – *Special Landscape Area* and LDP policy H4 – *Effective Use of Land*.

**Resolved:** the Parish Council recommended REFUSAL. Proposed Cllr Sayers, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.

## MINUTES

### Of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Boardroom

#### **OUT/MAL/15/00267 Land East Of Malone Cottage Maypole Road Wickham Bishops**

Three letters of objection have been received.

The Parish Council noted that a previous application 14/00582 had been refused in part due to layout and urban form and impact on highway safety and efficiency.

It was recorded that the site lies outside the settlement boundary. Councillors considered that the need for smaller and affordable housing in Wickham Bishops as identified in the Village Design Statement and by the Parish Council housing survey was fully satisfied by the granting of permission for application 13/01151. No need was identified for larger housing in the housing survey. The Parish Council therefore did not accept the need for this additional housing. This application therefore did not meet any of the conditions of LDP policies S8 – *Settlement Boundaries and the Countryside* and H5 – *Rural Exception Schemes* and hence policy H1 – *Affordable Housing* does not apply. For these reasons this scheme was also contrary to RLP policies H1 – *Location of New Housing*, H2 – *Infilling Housing in the Countryside*, H10 – *Rural Exception Sites* and S2 – *Development Outside Development Boundaries*.

The Parish Council noted that the site lies in a Special Landscape Area, with Character of Wooded Farmland. RLP policy CC7- *Special Landscape Area* requires developments to conserve or restore the character of the area. This part of the village is characterised by open and wooded farmland with recreational facilities including playing field, tennis courts, Scout headquarters and national cycle route. The proposal would change the rural and recreational character of the area into an urban landscape, damaging the village feel on entering Wickham Bishops and was therefore considered contrary to RLP policies CC6 – *Landscape Protection*, CC7 and LDP policy H4 – *Effective Use of Land*.

Also contrary to LDP policy H4 and also RLP policy BE1 – *Design of New Development and Landscaping*, the proposed housing was thought to be beyond the capacity of local infrastructure such as drainage, schooling and roads. Maypole Road is a busy main road between Maldon and Witham that is subject to speeding and some additional traffic would be generated directly onto this key distributor road, exacerbating safety problems. These concerns also applied to the proposed access via Great Totham Road, where it would open onto the main pedestrian route for Wickham Bishops schoolchildren, where there is a sports field and car park entrance opposite, a neighbouring Scout camp headquarters and hall-for-hire. Great Totham Road bends at this point such that sightlines are short, and on sporting and scouting event days, during weekly club sessions and daily school drop-off and pick-up times the narrow road is highly congested with resulting reduction in pedestrian and on-coming vehicle visibility. The Parish Council therefore concluded that the proposal is contrary to RLP policy T2 – *Transport Infrastructure in New Developments*, the guidance and advice contained in the NPPF and LDP policy T2 – *Accessibility*.

An immediate neighbour of the site is Prances Scout Campsite which hosts scout troops, jamborees, campfires and open-air camping. Issues of safeguarding would arise contrary to RLP policy BE1. Conflict between scouting activities and residential requirements would be inevitable, thereby impacting the amenity of a neighbouring property contrary to LDP policy H4 and RLP policy BE1. This could lead to a reduction in economic activity at the campsite, contrary to the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development and LDP policy S1 – *Sustainable Development*. Finally, the site borders Great Totham parish boundary and forms part of the green separation between Wickham Bishops and Great Totham. Development of this site would cause coalescence of the two villages, contrary to the NPPF.

**Resolved:** the Parish Council recommended REFUSAL. Proposed Cllr Sayers, seconded Cllr Pink.

#### **Snows Corner Update**

Cllr Sayers read out a report from Mr. James Taylor, Development Director for English Rural Housing, giving an update on progress of the Snows Corner development FUL/MAL/13/01151.

<b>MINUTES</b>	
<b>Of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Boardroom</b>	
	<p>Planning consent was given on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The landowner has selected a local developer for the 15 open market homes, on the part of the site accessed from Witham Road. The part of the site to be accessed from Tiptree Road, which will contain the 12 affordable homes, is in the process of being transferred to English Rural Housing. Subject to sign-off of planning conditions, building control requirements and consultations with highways and utilities, work on site is expected to commence later this year.</p> <p>The weekly decision lists were noted.</p> <p>It was further noted that applications HOUSE/MAL/15/00079 8 Heathgate Wickham Bishops and HOUSE/MAL/15/00115 &amp; LBC/MAL/15/00116 Carters Station Road Wickham Bishops had been approved by MDC.</p> <p>Cllr Sayers concluded by thanking the Clerk for her help on planning issues over the previous year.</p>
<b>15/074</b>	<p><b>District Council Report</b></p> <p>The Clerk read a statement from District Councillor Bass in which he apologised for being unable to attend due to a district Planning Meeting and thanked the Councillors for their help and support, particularly on planning matters.</p> <p>Members of the public were urged to copy the District Councillor with their planning comments should they wish.</p>
<b>15/075</b>	<p><b>EALC Report</b></p> <p>Cllr Pink gave a report on a future visit of the Chairman of the EALC and details of the Thurstable Hundred Committee.</p>
<b>15/076</b>	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>Cllr Johnson read out a statement from St. Bartholomew's Church supporting the invoice for the Youth Group funding.</p> <p>The balances were noted and the list of payments agreed.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the Parish Council increase the Clerk's weekly contractual hours by 1 to 13. Proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Johnson.</p>
<b>15/077</b>	<p><b>Monthly Councillor Surgeries</b></p> <p>The 21<sup>st</sup> March Surgery report was noted. There were six visitors with four queries.</p> <p>Attendees for surgery on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 11.00am to noon are Cllrs MacGregor and Pink.</p> <p>The dates of future surgeries were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 23<sup>rd</sup> May</li> <li>- 13<sup>th</sup> June</li> </ul>
<b>15/078</b>	<p><b>Salt Bag Partnership Review</b></p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That due to the mild winter salt bags did not need replenishing and therefore the Parish Council would not take part in the Salt Bag Partnership for Winter 2105-16. Proposed Cllr MacGregor, seconded Cllr Mickelsen.</p>
<b>15/079</b>	<p><b>Progress Reports from Committees and Councillors – No Decisions Required</b></p> <p>Cllr Bates gave a report on the Superfast Broadband presentation that he had attended. By June 2016 every home in Essex should receive a minimum speed of 2Mbps. Speeds may be checked at <a href="http://www.speedtest.net">www.speedtest.net</a> There are no plans to extend fibre connectivity to the other village cabinets.</p>

<b>MINUTES</b>	
<b>Of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Boardroom</b>	
	<p>Councillors reported littering along Maypole Road and Witham Road, where traffic speeds are often exceeding the 30mph limit. <b>Action:</b> Cllr MacGregor to request that MDC litter-picks these areas.</p> <p>There have been three separate complaints from parishioners about the bus stop at Snow's Corner, regarding the obstruction caused by buses, the lack of shelter in inclement weather and the muddy surface at the alighting point through the winter. <b>Action:</b> Cllr MacGregor to contact MDC to establish if the bus stop can be moved to a safer location.</p> <p>Cllr Mickelsen stated that Footpath 17 has been privately opened to the East Anglian Farm Ride organisation by the landowner, and explained that this is entirely lawful although horses should give way to public users of the footpath. <b>Action:</b> Cllr Mickelsen to provide an article for the Parish Magazine explaining the law and highlighting safety considerations.</p> <p>The Annual Report will be distributed with the June 2015 Parish Magazine.</p>
<b>15/080</b>	<b>General Village News</b>
<b>15/081</b>	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b>  Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015 Planning Committee Meeting at 11.30am  Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015 Annual Meeting of the Council at 7.00pm  Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015 Annual Parish Assembly at 8.45pm</p>
<b>15/082</b>	<p><b>Close of Meeting 9.55pm</b>  Items for May agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chairman's Annual Report</li> <li>- Annual Accounts approval</li> <li>- Community Agents presentation</li> <li>- Snows Corner update</li> <li>- LHP request for Handley's Lane re-surfacing</li> <li>- Further agenda items for consideration to the Chairman and Clerk by Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May</li> </ul> <p>Items for future agendas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VE/VJ day picnic theme</li> </ul>

Notice is hereby given that, should there be plans to discuss, a Planning Meeting will be held on **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015** at 11.30 am in the Village Hall Boardroom. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

**Please Note** any plans to be discussed will be listed on the Parish Council noticeboard (outside One Stop) prior to the meeting.