

**MINUTES OF THE HVRA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
3RD OCTOBER 2017 AT HUGHENDEN SMALL HALL**

CONFIRMED

WELCOME

Janet welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guest speakers from the National Trust, Neil Harris, Property Manager for Hughenden, Bradenham and West Wycombe, and Joe Mayled, Area Ranger & Guide. David Bailey, General Manager, sent his apologies as he was the planned speaker.

ACTION

1. PRESENT

Janet Idle (Chair)	Angus Idle (Co-Chair)	Peter Cannon (Treasurer)	Rosemary Hewitt (Secretary)
Al Bowyer	Christine Bowyer	Jerry Morley (Vice-Chair)	James Perkins John Dockett

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Becky Bonnerjea, Anna Burniston, Andrew Capey, Paul Jenner, Lin Smith and Heather Dempsey who has withdrawn from the Committee. Roland Wales, Rev'd Keith Johnson, Cllr Peter Gieler and Cllr Hilda Stearn who had to attend a HPC Meeting.

Road Reps who do not attend meetings:

Virginia Foster Alison Gieler Dave Mynors Carole Palmer Clare Atkinson for a while

Reports, written or verbal are welcome from all members, whether they attend meetings or not.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 5TH SEPTEMBER 2017

The Minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting with the following amendment to **Item 8b) Bryants Bottom**. Delete paragraph and add: A planning application submitted by a resident for a 5-bed property in a garden plot next door was refused some time ago. It went to Appeal but was subsequently rejected by the Planning Inspectorate. WDC has asked him to apply for retrospective planning for a viewing platform that he had built in his rear garden. A decision is awaited.

AI

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES – None

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer reported that subscriptions continue to come in. Unpaid advertising revenue still to be received amounts to £590 and he had written to the advertisers in August explaining that he is the new HVRA Treasurer and again at the end of September to chase-up the outstanding sums.

To date total income is £5,955 and total expenditure is £4,552, resulting in an excess of income over expenditure of £1,402. So far 39% of the anticipated subscriptions have been received and the Treasurer is in a quandary because according to the HVRA Constitution subs are due to be paid by the first meeting in July. He felt that this has slipped somewhat and as there may be a number of Road Reps who are unaware of the position he is in the process of making contact to encourage them to get the subs in during the current year, and inform them that they should be collected by the end of June. Several Committee members commented that this is not always possible as their own commitments prevented them from collecting subs so soon after the AGM.

PC

6. HVRA COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6a) Cryers Hill - JI had observed in the Bucks Free Press that new houses were due to be built in Gt Kingshill and queried their location.

6ai) The planned Parking Restrictions for the layby parking near Gt Kingshill School will be in place shortly, and since the opening of the new Pre-School parking in the vicinity has got worse.

6b) Bryants Bottom - Nothing to report

6c) Uplands – JI had contacted WDC to verify whether the rumour that a rich Indian intended to build a mosque on the site was “fake news” or not. It would appear that it was.

6d) Church Farm – A decision by WDC on a retrospective planning application is awaited.

- 6e) **Bucks County Council Plan – new.** It would appear that BCC have a considerable amount of money to spend on infrastructure prior to commencing any future housing developments in the county,
- 6f) **WDC New Local Plan –** to be issued later this month prior to further consultation.
- 6g) **Road Reps’ Reports –** to be dealt with later.
- 6h) **Orchard Close -** A Road Rep is needed.
- 6i) **Bucks Street Association -** Ann Smart who lives in Boss Lane has recently been appointed the Ward Co-ordinator for Hughenden Valley, Cryers Hill and Bryants Bottom.

GUEST SPEAKERS FROM THE NATIONAL TRUST

The Chairman introduced Neil Harris and Joe Mayled. (Please see the Addendum on Pages 4 & 5 for the full report). She thanked them for their very interesting talk and for answering our questions, adding that we should work together where possible because we both have common aims in wishing to protect our beautiful countryside. JD said he could promote future events, especially as Christmas time approaches.

JD

7. POTTER QUIZ – 21 October

AB reported that because the date had clashed with half-term several teams had dropped out but pleased the numbers were now up to 80 – 90 people because a few teams had confirmed in the last week. Help was needed in the kitchen from 2 pm onwards to prepare the food for the buffet, and CB will be contacting previous helpers. JI would like help setting up tables at 2pm.

CB
JI

AB said that this will be his last time organising the event and someone with new ideas will be needed to take over.

8. WEBSITE

John Beveridge (Bev) had written to the Co-Chairs about “*communicating with the whole village, magazine and website*”. At short notice, AC had kindly written-up a piece about this in which he noted that the Hughenden Facebook group had 748 members. This topic will be brought forward to the next meeting for discussion. JP suggested that in the meantime someone puts something on the Hughenden Valley Facebook page. JI has selected photographs for the website to pass on to AC.

AI & JI
? who ?
JI

As the Village Notice Board is a means of communicating to people, AB had previously spoken to the Shop Manager (LJ) about acquiring one because the HVRA had pledged £450 for its purchase. AB will contact her again.

AB

9. HUGHENDEN NEWS

JD asked if a Road Rep for Orchard Close had come forward. He had sent out his first chase-up request for items for the Winter Edition which will be available at the start of the last week in November.

10. OTHER REPORTS

10a) Speedwatch/NAG – RH reported that despite the absence of PC Lee Turnham the small team of volunteers had still managed to carry out Speedwatch sessions, and had noted the registration numbers of more than 50 speeders each time. More volunteers are needed to swell the team.

10b) Village Hall - The Shop Lease has not yet been signed. The Football Club wishes to sign theirs. A lot of work has been carried out in the Village Hall recently e.g.: new doors throughout have been fitted and Bev is working on lots of jobs.

The Village Hall AGM is due in December but as it is open to all residents of the village who can vote it will now be held in mid-January. The two Charities, one for the Village Hall and the other for the Field, have been merged and they are working on a revised Constitution.

10c) The Village Shop is very popular and the coffee shop & cabin are often very full. The Rev Keith Johnson will be there for 2 hours each Monday morning to chat and get to know residents. The Street Association Co-ordinator will be there on Wednesday afternoons welcoming and chatting with vulnerable people etc. and Peter Gieler will be there from 1.30pm – 3.30pm on Thursdays in his capacity as a Parish Councillor.

- 10d) **Hughenden Parish Council** (as from Peter Gieler) - A request for support that the HVRA write to HPC about the use of drones by local estate agents to survey houses for sale. **HVRA**
- 10e) **HVDIG** – As there has not been another meeting, there is nothing to report. AI to research whether the Pumping Station is still pumping water because the stream is currently dried up. **AI**
11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 11a) RH reported that whilst carrying out recent Speedwatch sessions at Orchard Close it was evident that the boundary hedge of a nearby property has grown excessively, encroaching the pavement, thus narrowing it for all pedestrians, young and old, to walk safely and away from the danger of passing vehicles. AI will contact PG about this dangerous situation. **AI**
- 11b) As the Road Rep for Coombe Lane, AI had been copied into an email from Ian Stearn to Neil Bellamy that expressed his concern about an alleged parking zone to be located in the field adjacent to the boundary of properties on Coombe Lane. AI had replied that if this is the case, then their best protection lay with any planning application for this.
- 11c) **HVRA Tombola – 25th November**
As CA is not able to organise the Tombolas JI will do so this year. She will send out the flyers in due course and will need help from 9.30am onwards to set them up and will need lots of good quality items for the children’s Tombola. **JI**
- 11d) **Village Day 2018**
The HVRA has been asked to run a Water & Soft Drinks Bar instead of the usual Bucks Fizz stall to be located near to the main Bar and not in their usual position which is popular. Pimms also requested. **HVRA**
- 11e) **RAF High Wycombe - Visit to Bomber Harris Rooms & Tunnels**
AB has arranged for a visit for up to 20 people and lasting 1¼ hours to take place at 2.30pm on Monday, 30th October. He will email Road Reps and the first 20 will be on a first-come-first-serve basis. **AB**
- 11f) **St John’s Ambulance – First Aid Course**
Eight wish to attend but JI needs more people before booking a definitive date. Several members queried that as the date was not known they could not ascertain whether they were free to attend or not. October/ November had previously been stated. Cost is £25. **JI**
- 11g) **HPC – Best Kept Allotment Award** - The winner was Mrs Joy Christmas of Trees Avenue.
- 11h) **Drones** are not allowed to be flown when people are in the vicinity.
- 11i) **Street Association** – MS is going to share the role with JM for Wedgwood Drive and Coombe Gardens. **MS/JM**
- 11j) **The Art Exhibition** will be held on 13th, 14th & 15th October.
- 11k) **St Michael & All Angels Church – The Magic of the Strings**
Viennese Zither Classics and music from The Third Man to be held on Friday, 24th November.
Tickets £10 via Cllr Peter Gieler or £15 on the door.
- 11l) AI had received “A Parliamentary Review – A Year in Perspective”
- The meeting closed at 9.36pm

Signed.....Angus Idle.....

Date.....7th November

ADDENDUM

The Chairman introduced Neil Harris and Joe Mayled. Neil informed us that he is responsible for the National Trust's Buildings' Portfolio that includes Hughenden Manor and Estate, and covers a 9-mile radius from West Wycombe to Coombe Hill. David Bailey, the General Manager has been in post for the past 18 months. The main infrastructure project planned at Hughenden is connecting the Estate to the main sewer at Coates Lane costing £450,000. Currently sewage is pumped out weekly from the garden via the "nettle bed system" which was built for a certain capacity and now cannot cope. They want to connect the Stable Yard to the Manor and in future all the sewage will be taken off the site. The house will be closed for two weeks in January when some of the work will commence. Hughenden has 150,000 visitors a year and the parking charges at the new car park help towards the funding of the proposed works.

The other major project involves West Wycombe Park's raised Reservoir. The banks either side of the Grade 1 Listed Cascade that lies in the middle of the lake need strengthening, and to stop any inundation 6 metre piles will be sunk into the chalk banks. The £150,000 project will go ahead this winter.

One of the NT's main focal points is looking at their conservation work, whether it relates to the House and its contents, the countryside, lakes and villages, and doing it to the best of their ability, but it needs cash. They have a 10-Year Estate Management Plan that looks at how they manage their Countryside Portfolio, and where they can make more of their current assets they will. They have a duty to conserve barns, and where there is an opportunity of using current resources they will. The Trust holds property inalienable, meaning that they can't sell it, or alienable. Sometimes they buy property as alienable and then they can sell it to make a profit.

With regard to the NT's Land Condition Assessment (which was set up in 1995?), he and Joe have been looking at all of their land; 600 acres of farmland, and found that some of it is not in as good a condition as it should be. This Assessment is also looking at all farms in the whole country, and is a new thing for them. It entails working with their tenant farmers with a view to restoring a healthy, beautiful environment and improving their conservation work.

Joe spoke enthusiastically about how he has been putting his ideas down on paper, however radical they might be for the NT's 10-Year Plan. At Hughenden he has been looking at the 670 acres of woodland and farmland, including hedgerow management, and making the margins wider.

Al raised the issue that instead of vistas with hedges we now have linear woodlands.

Joe responded that farm tenants are responsible for looking after this and there are *machine shapers* that give a nice clean cut to hedges. On the Hughenden Estate these are in good condition and the parkland is a good example of that. Also, due to having cattle grazing the land, the cow pats attract flies that in turn attract Spotted Fly Catchers. So what they have been doing for years seems to be working although he concedes they could be doing a bit more woodland management that would involve the break-up of the structure of the trees because most of the trees are the same size with not much space to grow.

Access-wise, Joe spoke about the 4 walks that they have been revamping this year plus they have a new walk, the plan of which is being printed and will soon be in the shop.

The forthcoming Autumn Festival held from 10 – 17th October includes an Apple Weekend that will be spread out over two weeks, with a special offer for visitors coming during the week. They have Bee Keepers too and a Rustic Project Team who makes wooden items, plus apple tasting and some guided walks. Joe asked us to let him know if we wished to go along.

ALL OF
US

Importantly, Byways are restoring their record of Rights of Way (last recorded in 2009) and they want local people to look for a footpath that does not appear on a Definitive Map and let them know by completing a form, and if it is not already listed then it will be put on the map.

Q & A:

JP asked what the NT's policy is on dog bins.

ANS: Although there are dog bins at Coombe Hill and West Wycombe, on the whole they do not provide them because an ordinary waste bin can be used instead. The NT does not like ordinary bins because they attract rubbish and believe that most people who would use a bin, would also take their rubbish home with them. However, that said, their new policy is to change waste bins into dog bins in some places.

JP asked if the NT was planning to create a better children's play area at Hughenden.

ANS: Joe definitely wants to develop *the natural play trail* in the Orchard area where there is scope and to improve what presently exists among the trees adjacent to the main footpath from the car park to the House and Shop etc.

RH asked why the NT parking window screen stickers were no longer used at Hughenden because of the hassle she experienced in having to produce a membership card when driving there, and also why there is a charge for each passenger and not the car especially if people only wish to visit the restaurant and shop in the Stable area? After all, those people walking to this area are not charged anything at all.

ANS: The "parking" charges derived from visitors provide income for the work that the NT wants to carry out at Hughenden

Jl asked if there are any covenants on the land surrounding the Estate.

ANS: Neil responded that he was not aware of any extra covenants although they have protective rights over Covenants, eg: the Greenland Covenants by Lord Hampden (of W H Smiths). Most of the NT's Covenants are to do with the rural nature of the landscape. Basically, the NT has to be consulted on any planning developments and people have to work with them and agree a design. They have Covenants on the land from Valley Road up to Four Ashes Road that they bought from Rodney Griffiths who had lived at Brands House but there are no Covenants on the Property Spy Land. Covenants give them strength to comment on developments

The Chairman thanked Neil Harris and Joe Mayled for their very interesting talk and for answering our questions, adding that we should work together where possible because we both have common aims in wishing to protect our beautiful countryside that lies in the Chilterns AONB.