

**Annual Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council  
Held on Thursday 7th May 2009 at 7.30pm at Much Birch  
Community Hall**

**1. Election of Chairman**

**Resolved:** John Jones elected as Chairman

Declaration of acceptance of office sign by chairman

**2. Election of Vice Chair**

**Resolved:** Dave Davies elected as Vice Chair

**3. Members elected to following working groups**

**Planning Working Group**

JJ, DD, GS, VS, MS & AC

**Finance Working Group**

JJ, VS, MS

**Employment Working Group**

JJ, VS, AC

**Members elected to outside bodies**

Steiner Academy (1)

VS - If VS unable to attend MS would attend

**Present:** Mr J Jones (JJ) - Mr D Davies (DD), Mr G Simms (GS) Ms V Short Mrs A Cook (AC)  
Mrs M Swift (MS))

Also in attendance: Kath Greenow Parish Clerk,  
Also present 5 parishioners, C.S.O Fiona Witcher

**4 Apologies** accepted from Ward Cllr R Smith & Alison Cook

**5. Declaration of interest on agenda items**

None declared

**6. RESOLVED:** Minutes of Annual Parish Council meeting on 01/05/2008 agreed & signed.

**7. RESOLVED:** Minutes of 02/04/09 agreed & signed

**8 Annual Footpaths report:**

**Report from footpaths officer, Cllr. Glen Sims and assistant footpaths officer, Mo Ross, to the Clerk of Much Birch Parish Council. 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009.**

Over the last year a good start has been made on inspecting the condition of the footpaths. This is an ongoing process that will take many more months to complete. Our intention is that at the end of that process, we will have an accurate and up to date survey of the condition of the all footpaths in the parish.

We were happy that the Parish Council agreed to submit an application to join the Parish Path Partnership Scheme. We believe that this scheme offers a good opportunity for community involvement in safeguarding the future of our footpaths. We note that the role of volunteers is important, welcomed, and valued, and are pleased to report that there is a small group of parishioners who are happy to help in this important preservation work. There is a good awareness in the group of health and safety issues, and we are pleased to see that training is available to those of us who may wish to use light machinery in order to carry out maintenance work. We are fortunate that Cllr. Sims is a builder by trade, and can guide and advise us in our work. We understand that considerable sums of money are saved by Herefordshire Council by the uptake of this scheme, and this can only be a good thing for tax payers given the current economic climate.

On 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009 Cllr. Glen Sims attended a workshop at Brockington on "The Public Rights of Way". The workshop was given by Mr Rob Hemblade the Interim Parks, Countryside and Leisure Development Manager of Herefordshire Council.

The workshop covered such topics as, the definition and categories of rights of way, the Definitive Map, relevant legislation, modification orders and how to apply for them, and the evidence needed for any modification. The workshop also covered the use of mechanically propelled vehicles in the countryside, and maintenance and improvements, including improving access for all (in line with the Disability Discrimination Act). Participants were taught about enforcement, and the laws that govern it. Lastly the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme and the Herefordshire Local Access Forum were explained in more detail. Cllr. Sims felt that it had been very worthwhile attending the workshop and that it will help him and his assistants in their work on the footpaths.

The Definitive Map is an important part of the work of officers caring for footpaths countrywide, and we need to bear in mind that any footpaths and bridleways created before 1949 which are not recorded on the Definitive Map by 2026 will be lost for ever. Parishioners have already identified one path which runs from Eden Lane, Barrack Hill over the fields to Warren Farm in Aconbury parish. We appreciate that the Parish Council has notified the Rights of Way Manager at Herefordshire Council of the need to have this path included on the Definitive Map, and would ask the Clerk if she would be kind enough to periodically enquire as to any progress on this matter. This path was walked again two months ago, and we report that the stile is still missing, and the path still blocked in the manner described in Donatella Lecci's letter of 8th February 2008.

We are pleased to confirm that work has been carried out to MB23, but have to say that although there is a considerable improvement on the previous dangerous condition of the entrance to the path, the quality of the work was not that good. Perhaps here was an example of something that might have been carried out with more care and pride in the work, had it been executed under the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme.

We wish to report that the wooden fingerpost footpath sign at the Barrack Hill end of MB27 has been knocked over and is lying diagonally on the grass verge opposite 'Gilston'.

We wish to encourage all walkers, whether parishioners, or visitors, to report any problems they encounter when walking the footpaths of this parish. With this in mind, we would like to suggest that there are regular reminders placed both in the newsletter and on the website, in which people are asked to report any problems to Cllr. Glen Sims on his home telephone number, 01981 540052 in the evenings.

### **9. West Mercia Constabulary report**

Report given by C.S.O Fiona Witcher outlining no crime report available for the parish at present. The police are changing their logo from WEST Mercia Constabulary to West Mercia Police. Pact Meeting on 26/05/09 at Much Birch Community Hall. C.S.O's are to be trained to use a speed gun.

### **10. Ward Councillors Report:**

Report read out in annual parish Meeting 07/05/2009

### **11. Public forum**

Matter raised about Footpath from King's Thorn Bus stop towards Much Dewchurch near Kimberly cottage Footpaths officer to investigate & report to Parish Council

## **12. Clerks report:**

2 SID's in Parish at present until the end of May

No further information to report.

Clerk asked to contact road safety team ref the SID at Much Birch School doesn't seem to pick up vehicles speed quick enough.

## **13. lengthsman.**

Cllrs to email any suitable identified work for the lengthsman between meetings to the Clerk.

Road repairs required

Pot hole at Pages Pitch near Cyprus Cottage Clerk to contact HFDC highways and ask for the pot hole to be attended to.

**14. RESOLVED:** That the annual footpaths report and synopsis of Chairman's annual report to go on to the website and newsletter

## **15. Planning**

No planning applications received for comment

## **16. Meetings**

Awaiting training dates form HALC due out in late May

Noted as:

Equality & Human Rights Commission- Public Sector Duties

West Mercia Police Authority- Policing Matters Info

HALC-Training & information corner

## **17. Correspondence**

Herefordshire Council- Parish Freighter Service

West Mercia Police Authority- Policing Matters in Herefordshire

Much Birch Parochial Council - letter of thanks for donation to grass cutting & church clock

The Steiner Academy Hereford – Invitation to open day

Herefordshire Council – Commons Act 2006

Equality & Human Rights Commission – Public Sector Duties

HALC-Information Corner

Herefordshire Council- Parish Freighter information

## **18. Finance**

**18.1 RESOLVED:** To adopt internally audited Accounts for 2008/09

**18.2 RESOLVED:** To adopt internally audited end of year bank reconciliation 2008/09

**18.3 RESOLVED:** To transfer £2000.00 into new Community Projects account

**18.4 RESOLVED:** To pay invoices/Payments from 18.5-18.9

18.5 Much Birch Community Hall £126.00

18.6 Annual Allianz insurance premium £381.61

18.7 A4 Office Products £36.78

18.8 HALC Annual Subscription Fee £227.46

18.9 Clerk Expenses (postage) £9.36

19 Noted remittance of HFDCP3 Grant

19.1 Noted remittance for 1<sup>st</sup> precept payment for 2009/10

19.2 Noted remittance of Eon payment

## **20. Matters raised for next meeting (no Discussion)**

Further hire of SID

King's Thorne Sign

Flashing Speed sign along A49 near the Pilgrim Inn

Parish Plan update

**21. Date of next Meeting noted as 11/06/2009 @ 7.30pm Much Birch Community Hall**