



Dodington Parish Council

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **Community Leisure & Environment Committee** held the Council Chambers adjacent to Dodington Parish Hall on **Monday 21st October 2024** at **7.30pm**.

PRESENT: Councillors Adrian Hutton (Chairing Meeting), Sarah Hurley, Paul Hulbert, Jean Thomas, Richard Evans, David Fitt and Oliver Lodge

Also present: Hannah Saunders – Clerk to the Council – Clerking the Meeting.

1. Apologies for absence and request for approval

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Chris Zapata, Sandra Jee, Karl Tomasin, Louise Harris, Christine Howard and Laura Pearson Tong.

2. Declarations of Interests Under Localism Act 2011 and Requests for Dispensations

Cllrs Paul Hulbert and Oliver Lodge declared an interest in Item 5 on the agenda – as they sit on Wapley Bushes Conservation Group Committee.

3. Parishioners Questions

None

4. Approval of Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting on 9th September 2024

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes, as printed and circulated, be confirmed as a true record. Cllr Adrian Hutton signed a copy of the minutes.

Matters arising – not covered off during course of agenda: -

Clerk confirmed that WECA have now been around and updated the bus timetables in local bus shelters (Item 4).

Contractor has carried out half of the work at Lilliput (Item 8).

No movement with LNAP / Climate Emergency (Item 12).

Clerk confirmed that YTC officer – was willing to show members around the Armadillo the following day (22nd October 2024 at 5pm) Members had received email regarding this. (Item 13).

5. Grant Applications to consider

Members had all received copies of application and accompanying paperwork from Wapley Bushes Conservation Group – and were given an opportunity to ask questions of Cllr Paul Hulbert / Oliver Lodge.

Cllr Paul Hulbert confirmed the up to date bank balance - and the approximate cost of 3 large projects that group are planning. This gave members a clearer idea of the financial situation of the group.

There were no further questions.

Cllr Paul Hulbert and Oliver Lodge left the room.

Clerk confirmed that the monies £3000 had been budgeted for and were available. It was proposed by Cllr Sarah Hurley and seconded by Cllr Jean Thomas and RESOLVED to award £3000 to Wapley Bushes Conservation Group.

6. Shireway Community Centre

It was noted that land adjacent to the community centre (that had been used for tipping) hadn't been included with the purchase by Paul's Place – and was now up for auction / sale. Clerk had forwarded the particulars on to members – being auctioned by Allsop Commercial Auctions on 5th November 2024.

Members had viewed details – and there were some queries on boundaries – but Clerk reassured them that they were correct as had checked historical documentation. It is a tricky lot – being 18 acres – half of which is freehold and the other half (nearest the road / where entrance is) being leasehold (SGC being the land owners). There are 58 years left of the 99 year lease. Clerk has requested further information and the legal pack – but this has yet to be forthcoming. Guide price of £50k. **PMN – this was amended on 23rd to £30k.**

After due consideration members RESOLVED that at this time they didn't want to put a bid in for the site – as there were too many questions and concerns unanswered currently. Clerk to keep members up to date with progress – or if any information is forthcoming from Allsop.

7. Car Park / Shops at Heron Way

Item was on agenda regarding the planting schedule for land adjacent to the car park – following request from councillor.

Clerk confirmed that ground staff had tended to the grass and strimmed it once or twice now, and prior to any planting commencing – some work needed to be undertaken to make the soil good for planting (there are a lot of tree roots left and the soil will need feeding).

It was agreed that quotes should be sought for this work – looking to undertake it in the new year – and after discussion – it was felt to try and do the whole perimeter at once – but if this didn't allow – do the longer side of fence (westerly facing) first. Clerk will bring quotes to next meeting.

Photos were shown of the great clean up work carried out by Culverhill DofE students outside the shops. It has made such a difference – and DPC are now in a position to get the planters – so that they can be put in situ. I

After discussion it was agreed to maximize monies available to go with wooden planters in the first instance (as the recycled self-watering ones from companies such as Amberol are very expensive)...Look to spend half budget on planters and getting the delivered / in situ and that leaves rest for planting and maintenance. Members liked the idea of planters made by the Chilli Charity – Clerk to get some quotes.

8. General Tree Suveys

Members had received brief summary of the results of the recent tree surveys – prior to meeting - and with aid of site maps Clerk explained further the works that had been highlighted. (See Appendix 1 attached to these minutes).

Officer's recommendations were taken into consideration and schedule of work was drawn up: the Burial Ground being first site to work on. Followed by Lilliput Park (Clerk confirmed the planning application had already been submitted for working on the TPO'd trees at Lilliput). It was agreed to wait until works re Circular Footpath at QEII were embarked on and to deal with the couple of tree's highlighted then. Woodchester – is a matter of keeping an eye on and

reassessing. Finally, it was agreed to arrange a meeting with tree consultant up at Wapley to discuss desire lines / designated footpaths in more detail prior to carrying out any work.

9. QEII to receive updates

Circular Footpath – Project Support Assistant had had a meeting with tree consultant and Andrew Sanders from SGC to assess which tree's / area's were going to need cell web protection under the path for root protection. Andrew couldn't get on with drawing up the plan for the tender document – until this report had been received....so reached a bit of a sticking point. In the meantime, Clerk has been looking at other documents...that will be required for Contract Finder and getting them updated / ready. Question to councillors :- When it comes to receiving tenders / summarizing them and presenting them – would they rather this be done by Andrew Sanders or by PSA and Hannah?

It was felt that as Andrew had experience in this area as landscape architect he was better placed to handle this – plus officers are very busy currently.

Yate Utd FC– following recent meeting with club – it was agreed that if they could sort out issue of parking on a Sunday then we could look at getting the 3rd pitch (by MUGA) marked up for them – and sort out some storage. Clerk had given them details of contact at Abbotswood School and Cllr Sarah Hurley suggested that they contact Business Manager at Culverhill too.

1st Abbotswood Scouts – members had read letter received from scout group – regarding fact they are losing their storage facility (Bromford are going to be demolishing block of garages to develop new affordable homes)...As such they need to find somewhere else locally for large camp items to be stored. They were approaching Parish Council to see if they could help – and were wondering if there was room by QEII?? Clerk has looked at QEII by changing rooms – and realistically there isn't room for a second container either in compound or by changing rooms, however, following meeting with Paul's Place at Shireway – it may be that they could offer up a corner of car park. Members pointed out that there used to be a container on site – so it may be that scouts could make use of that one. It was agreed that sadly in this instance Parish Council couldn't help – but would make introduction to Paul's Place.

10. Wapley Bushes

Graffiti Cllr Paul Hulbert wasn't any further forward with Network Rail cleaning graffiti...

Memorial Bench – Following the recent Wapley Bushes Conservation Group committee meeting it was agreed to permit memorial benches so long as they were in keeping with the natural environment. It would be necessary to limit number of benches, and to only allow benches with backs along the pathway between Besom Lane and Shireway.

As landowner – Clerk to liaise with resident that has requested this.

Tree Works / Autumn 2024 plan – Clerk informed members that the latest Ash Dieback work would be completed by end of month (this to include extraction of all timber and stump grinding). There has been some damage to the footpaths in doing the extraction – but looking to carry out some work early November to reinstate them accordingly. Cllr Paul Hulbert has met with contractor to look at priorities from a WBCG angle – and he confirmed that the new notice boards have now been ordered. Following agreement the previous week on Do's / Don'ts signage – drafts were circulated – and approved following minor amends.

11. Play Area's & POS

Clerk confirmed no issues of note – RoSPA inspections due to be carried out over next month or so, all work that was highlighted on previous inspections has been carried out.

For future agenda – pathways around Lilliput need to be looked at.

12. Grounds Maintenance Tender Process

The working group meeting was arranged – but due to councillors availability – and Budget taking greater precedence – date set aside was used to look at budgeting process for 25 – 26.

Clerk has done some work on the tender information in the meantime – and presented this to members.

After due consideration it was agreed to extend the radius for interested parties applying (from 25 miles to 40 miles approx.). It was also agreed not to look at a one year contract but ask for prices for 3 and 5 year contracts.

Ideally, DPC are looking for one contractor to quote for all – however – with memorial garden and burial ground being more sensitive area's would consider these being looked at separately.

Remaining information required is very similar to what was advertised in 2020, Clerk agreed to get tender onto contract finder by end of month.

13. Summer Playscheme 2024

Members had received presentations from both Swift Sports Coaching Ltd and Mr Nigel Ball regarding offer for 2025 – and for a future meeting – Clerk / PSA would pull report with costs and recommendations together.

Clerk was in position to present results of survey following Summer Playscheme 2024 – and took members through these (copy of which can be seen Appendix 2 attached to these minutes).

The overall rating of the scheme run in 2024 was excellent with parents grateful for the free scheme and the longer days. The children enjoyed time to meet up with friends and range of activities on offer.

14. Swift Sports Coaching Ltd Christmas Party

Swift had put an offer to DPC of hosting a Christmas Party in the Parish Hall on December 23rd 2024. There were 2 proposals – one that could offer spaces to 32 children from 9am to 3pm or the second proposal running 2 sessions (9am – 12noon and 1pm – 4pm) which would offer 64 spaces (32 children at each session).

Each child will take home Christmas craft and also a christmas present.

Clerk confirmed hall was available, and that there were some monies in budget to help towards cost of this.

Members RESOLVED that they should run with option 2 – maximizing the number of spaces for local people.

They duly discussed whether there should be a small charge for party and after consideration it was RESOLVED to charge £5 / family – household. This wouldn't pay for the event – but it would help towards the cost – and was felt to be good value.

15. Allotment Association

ClIr Richard Evans gave a brief report following the recent AGM. He confirmed that the committee were all re-elected and that there is a deputy treasurer helping Steve – as Steve wants to step down next year.

Presentations went well – particularly to Betty and Charlie – who were very surprised and very pleased with their bench. They had a lady come and talk from Wotton about Birds of Prey / Owls. Numbers of attendee's was down which was disappointing – so they are going to send a

questionnaire out to all plot holders to find out what they want from the committee, and future AGMs.

Clerk confirmed that the compensation for the water leak had come through. Cllr Adrian Hutton stated that water would soon be turned off for the winter.

As the time was approaching 9:30pm members took a vote on whether

16. Finance Matters

Members reviewed CL&E Budget YTD and EMR funds – confirmed all in order at end of September 2024 (month 6) – 52.2% spent – so on target.

Clerk explained some of the Ear Marked Reserves budget lines to new members...and what they could / couldn't be utilized for (in particular Section 106 funds)

17. Budget 2025 – 26

Taking on board recommendations from Full Council following preliminary budget meeting – members reviewed objectives and discussed costings.

Clerk illustrated first draft with agreed amounts – and this saw an increase of 30% in the CL&E budget. Clerk explained that if certain EMR's were utilized then this could reduce the increase to approx. 17%.

Clerk to send these details out to members to review – and highlight area's that will need to be agreed upon at next CL&E meeting (25th November 2024).

18. Items to Report

Cllr Jean Thomas reported hanging brambles along footpath by fitness equipment in Lilliput Park.

Cllr Paul Hulbert reported on willow tree that needed some pruning at Wapley (to make access to the meadow easier).

Clerk reminded members that Raysfield Annual Fireworks display would be taking place on Sunday 3rd November 2024

The next meeting for the Community Leisure & Environment Committee Monday 25th November 2024 (Council Chamber) – starting at 7:30pm.

As there was no further business – the meeting was closed at 9.53pm with Chair thanking everyone for their time (and apologising for running over).

Signed Committee Chair

Date 25th November 2024

APPENDIX 1

Dodington Parish Council – Summary Findings of Tree Surveys Undertaken in 2024
(Prepared by Project Support Asst, 16/10/24)

Wapley Bushes Nature Reserve – 22/09/24					
Area	Species	Comment	Works Recommendation	Priority	Next Steps
C2 (Ancient Woodland)	Ash x 3	Stage 2 ADD present. Much is within the interior woodland and can be monitored. Desire lines should be blocked (see note below).	Block desire lines (see note below). T1 – ash – w3w//cake.fluctuate.fleet – monolith to 6m, coronet cut. 2 x further ash need monolithing. Works still requiring action from previous survey (see note below).	3	Meet with Phil Dye (who surveyed), discuss dead-hedging recommendation. Plan for tree works required Autumn 2025 and gather quotes in Spring 2025.

A notable comment in the report:

“Ash Dieback Disease (ADD) continues to be present within the main woodland, C2, although mainly within the central area away from the designated footpaths. Desire lines dissect the woods, allowing access beneath these trees. It is advised that access via this network of unofficial paths is blocked using dead hedging, which in turn will provide habitat and wildlife corridors.”

It was also noted that there is outstanding tree work from previous surveys with area C2, which officers are aware of and will include in future work programmes.

Dodington Parish Council will need to apply for a Felling Licence in 2025, as the current licence expires October 2025. We will also need to apply for permission against the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) at Wapley Bushes.

Wapley Burial Ground – 20/09/24					
Area	Species	Comment	Works Recommendation	Priority	Next Steps
Near entry gate	Rowan	Stem nearest path in decline. Central trunk removed.	Remove declining stem on path.	2	Officers have checked tree and believe it should be felled. Concerned tree would become too heavy if a limb removed. Asked local tree surgeon for opinion and they also believe it should be felled.
Burial ground	Ash	Pollarded to 4m.	Re-assess in full leaf for signs of ADD, if noted then remove.	2	Re-assess in 2025.

Lilliput Park – 18/09/24					
Area	Species	Comment	Works Recommendation	Priority	Next Steps

NE side – by Lilliput Court	Sycamore	Dieback	Remove upper declining limb overhanging garden at 15m.	2	Seek quotes for works required at Lilliput Park.
NE side – by Lilliput Court	Sycamore	Dieback in upper canopy	Remove dead and dying limbs in upper canopy, reduce overall height back to healthy canopy height.	2	
SE side – by Lilliput Avenue	Norway Maple	Low foliage over footpath	Crown lift to allow 3m clearance over path.	3	
SE corner	Field Maple x 2	Growing from Rick face at top of bank. Canopies overhanging garden. Dead hanging branch and further deadwood over garden side.	Remove dead wood and hanging branches over garden.	2	
S side – in hedge facing Kingfisher Rd	Prunus spp	Dieback leaving large dead branches.	Remove dead branches.	2	
S side – by footbridge	Elm	Dead tree.	Remove.	2	
NW corner	Ash and elm	Dead elm	Fell dead elm. Reassess ash when in full leaf for signs of ADD, remove if noted.	2	
By basketball court	Oak	Dieback noted in upper canopy leaving major deadwood.	Remove moderate to major deadwood.	3	

A notable comment in the report:

“G3a and G3c – Sycamores – These two trees are growing along the edge of G3 and overhanging gardens. Both are showing signs of dieback in the canopy, leading to dead branches. It is recommended that the deadwood and dying/sparse limbs are pruned out of the canopy and the trees are reassessed in Summer 2026.”

The Parish Council will need to apply against TPOs on some of the trees requiring work at Lilliput Park. Project Support Assistant to do asap.

QEII Playing Fields – 20/09/24					
Area	Species	Comment	Works Recommendation	Priority	Next Steps
Western side (adj. to Witcombe)	Cherry	Growing from hedge. Sparse upper canopy. In decline.	Assess canopy in late Spring 2025.	2	Reassess in Spring 2025.
Western side (adj. to Witcombe)	Field Maple	Growing from hedge. Sparse upper canopy. In decline.	Assess canopy in late Spring 2025.	2	Reassess in Spring 2025.

Note from Project Support Assistant:

“I had a visit with Chris Wright of Silverback Arb as part of the separate exercise track project, as we needed advice regarding cell web protection. He will provide a separate report for this, with any recommended tree works as part of the project e.g. pruning and reducing trees along the track route.”

Woodchester – 20/09/24					
Area	Species	Comment	Works Recommendation	Priority	Next Steps
North end	Horse chestnut	Canker present with exposed cambium on trunk and into canopy. Signs of bacterial wetwood also in lower limbs.	Reassess in Summer 2026.	2	Reassess in Summer 2026 (likely to be covered during next round of tree surveys).
North end	Horse chestnut	Canker present with exposed cambium on trunk and into canopy. Sparse canopy.	Reassess in Summer 2026.	2	Reassess in Summer 2026 (likely to be covered during next round of tree surveys).
To east of tilted roundabout	Hornbeam	Sparse canopy	Apply sugar solution to rooting area in March 2026 (advice on making solution is within report).	2	Apply sugar solution to rooting area in March 2026.
To west of play area	Hawthorn	Sparse crown and leaning to the east.	Apply sugar solution to rooting area in March 2026 (advice on making solution is within report).	2	Apply sugar solution to rooting area in March 2026.

Summary of Officer’s recommendations:

1. Organise a meeting with Phil Dye at Wapley to look at desire lines and recommendations for closing off, dead-hedging, timeline and signage/communication. In attendance – officers and representatives of Wapley Bushes Conservation Group. Phil’s rate is £85 per hour plus VAT.
2. Apply for Felling Licence renewal for Wapley Bushes in April 2025.
3. Gather quotes for work required at Wapley in Spring 2025, with work beginning September 2025.
4. Gather quotes for work required at Lilliput Park. Work to be carried out as soon as possible.
5. Quotation being prepared by local tree surgeon for the Rowan at Wapley Burial Ground, which needs clear-felling as soon as possible.

APPENDIX 2

Dodington Parish Council Summer Playscheme – Feedback Report

Prepared by Project Support Assistant, 10th October 2024

We received 25 completed surveys.

Some forms were handed out to parents at the end of the sessions, but as many were missed, Swift Sports kindly posted a survey to every family. These went with business reply envelopes to ensure an easy way to return surveys. DPC also put out a Facebook post to encourage feedback via email to the Info@ address, however no responses were received.

1. Overall, how would you rate Summer Playscheme?



2. What did your children like about Summer Playscheme?

This was an open-ended question and answer, below the themes of the responses are categorised:

Likes	
Friends/meeting up	10
Range/variety of activities	7
Archery	7
Staff	5
Sports	4
Magic	2
Playing outside	2
Making slime	2
Science	2
Football	2
Crafts	2
Olympic Day	1
Police visit	1
Rugby	1

A few other comments were made from a parent/carer perspective:

- *“For parents – location was good and hours children were there.”*
- *“The fact they could stay all day and take packed lunch.”*
- *“That the Council facilitated the scheme. The activities put on for the children were varied every day.”*
- *“It is great that it is community based and everyone is local.”*

3. What did your children dislike about Summer Playscheme?

This was an open-ended question and answer, below the themes of the responses are categorised:

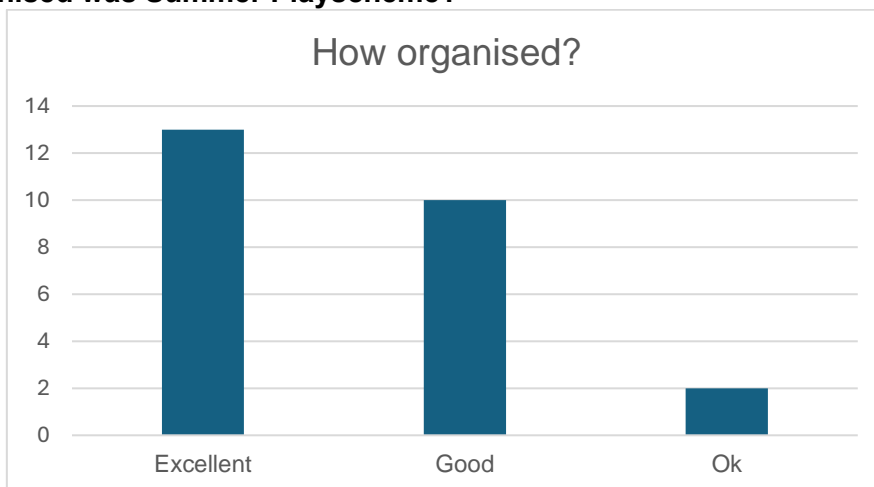
Dislikes	
No tuck shop/sweets	4
Different to last time/previous Playscheme	2
Activities not varied enough	2
Not enough crafts	1
Too sports-based	1
Rules not adhered to/enforced/fair	1
Unable to fetch water bottle once outside	1
Felt it was more for younger children	1
Break and lunch too long	1

One parent/carer said: *“Surveys not sent to all attendees, therefore full representation not gathered from parents”*. Admittedly, surveys were not handed to all parents at the end of the sessions as planned, however Swift Sports addressed this by posting out.

Another parent commented: *“People taking over the lunchtime movie, so unable to watch it properly or hear it.”*

A negative comment was made about a staff member, which hasn't been included in the data due to the nature of what was said.

4. How organised was Summer Playscheme?



5. Any other comments?

This was an open-ended question and answer, below the themes of the responses are categorised:

Comments	
Gratitude/thanks	10
Child(ren) enjoyed it	8
Staff friendly/helpful	5
Organisation could be better	2
Behaviour of other children	1
Wasn't allowed back in Hall to get water bottle once out on school field	1
Preferred format of 2023 Playscheme	1
Personal comment about staff member redacted	1
Lack of communication about changes	1

“So grateful as a parent to have help with free summer playscheme. Gives parents help to work as times are hard for people at the moment.”

“The staff were absolutely fantastic with my son helping him transition and ensuring he was happy. If he didn't want to participate in an activity he wasn't forced. He absolutely loves crafts so one of the days he made a large cardboard craft which he was so proud of. Thank you for a wonderful week, it has really helped him grow in confidence.”