

Reports for 13th May 2009 Walford Parish Council Meeting

1. Footpath Report- Cllr M Downey

The contractor is replacing missing sign posts where necessary and during March cut back overgrowth around all signs and stiles at the roadside

2. Lengthsman Report

Cllr Freeman has asked that he be allowed to submit a report every two months as he did not think enough happens to make a monthly report worthwhile.

3. Forest Green – Application for Registration as a Green - Clerk

Cllr G Jones kindly provided a marked map of the site. Mr Michael Hoddinott kindly met the Clerk to help with the application as he was in favour of the land being registered as a green. We agreed that after all the official papers and letters of support had been read, we were still unable to go ahead with the registration.

We need evidence that a 'significant number of residents have used the green for games, walks, blackberrying etc within the previous twenty years or that such activity ceased within two years of this application'. All the letters that we have received referred to usage up to about fifty years ago.

In a 2002 High Court judgment, "the court did not accept that 'significant' in this context would mean a considerable or substantial number but that the number of people using the land had to be sufficient to signify that the land was in general use by the local community"

Mr Hoddinott who has lived opposite Forest Green for about 20 years can only remember two or three children gathering there occasionally during the summer holidays to play and make dens. This is scarcely 'a significant number of residents'.

I have obtained copies of an Evidence Questionnaire in Support of a Claim for Registration as a New Green Unless we can somehow find local people to complete these, I can only suggest the alternative is to wait for 12 years and a day from the day that maintenance work began at the site and that this maintenance is continued once or twice a year. We can then make an application for registration. The very overgrown fenced path that joins with WA 91 to Chadwyns Farm could perhaps be cleared as a next step.

4. Walford Links Cycle Path – Cllr P Heath

Still waiting for HC's nomination of rights of way negotiating officer,

5. Report from HALC SAM – 20th April 2009 Cllr B Vine

Prior to the routine business, a guest speaker addressed this quarterly meeting : Mrs Bobbie Hadley the Communications and Community Liaison Manager for ESG Herefordshire Ltd - the Edgar Street Grid Project management company

Despite the current economic down-turn, this project is now on-going. There will be several stages in the development of the 100 acres Hereford city site which is due to complete in 2014. There's been a 12 month long public consultation on the project and the initial work on a flood alleviation scheme at Credenhill has started. This will mitigate flooding along Edgar Street and Newtown Road from the Yazor Brook. The planning application for the new livestock market is due soon and subsequently the application for the east-west link road will follow

The intention is to build an urban village of around 1000 houses of which around 1/3rd will be designated 'affordable'. An education centre will offer degree level education and there'll be a transport hub centred around the railway station with a new Divisional Police HQ nearby. A new civic building and possibly a new library will be built in the Catherine Street area. In addition there'll be new shopping, recreation and leisure facilities with the overall aim 'to make Hereford city the destination of choice for living, shopping, leisure and tourism for city, county and out of county people'!

Several handouts were provided and there's a dedicated project website = www.esgherefordshire.co.uk and a permanent project display in the Hereford Butter Market

In the general discussion that followed many concerns were raised about traffic management and car parking provision along with querying the need for the extensive retail development when around 54 shops are currently vacant in the city

The agenda for this and minutes of the previous meeting are attached. During the business meeting the following points were raised :

notice was given of the HALC office move from Rotherwas to Berrows House near the Police Station HALC is seeking Central government funding for the next local elections in 2011 and is still awaiting feedback to queries raised with HC of the 'lessons learned' from the failures in the 2007 election process

The meeting was reminded that PCs can form Working Groups comprising PCllrs and 'ordinary' members of the parish but that these groups do not have any powers to make decisions. They are only fact finding and make recommendations to the PC. HALC is querying whether non PCllr members of a working group are subject to the same declarations of interest as PCllr concerns were expressed that 106 agreements have been removed from planning gain but it was said they can still apply to attach conditions such as to specify local occupancy of affordable homes several PCllrs were concerned that HC are unbeknown to them carrying out Housing Needs Surveys in their parishes and seeking to allocate affordable housing numbers to those parishes based on seemingly limited consultation. One parish with a population of only around 350 was being asked to suggest locations to accommodate 9 affordable homes

7. Walford School – flashing lights and 20mph limit. Clerk

You may have noticed that these lights have not yet been installed as promised by 31.03.09. I enquired at HC and discovered that the Department for Transport, which has to approve the scheme, was not happy with the plan because of the layout of the road. New plans were submitted; approval received by email last week. Now the police have to approve. And then timings have to be agreed with the school. Our time will come!