



# Latimer & Ley Hill Parish Council Meeting | MINUTES

13 June 2023 | 7.30pm | Ley Hill Memorial Hall

## ATTENDEES

CLlr Anne Birkett (AB), Cllr Steve Thorp (ST), Cllr Chris Harris, Cllr Rae Bramwell and Claire Leek (Parish Clerk)

## AGENDA TOPICS

### | Agenda topic 1 | Apologies for Absence

Cllr John Drewery

### | Agenda topic 2 | Register of Interests

None

### | Agenda topic 3 | Public Quarter Hour

No members of the public present

### | Agenda topic 4 | Approval of May Meeting Minutes

Formally approved by all. Signed by Chairman and Clerk to upload to website.

### | Agenda topic 5 | Finance

- a. **Approval of May finance reports.** The finance report was approved and will be uploaded to the website.
- b. **Period of Exercise of Public Rights.** The clerk proposed the Parish Councils dates of the period for the exercise of public rights will be Monday 3rd July – Friday 11 the August.

**Action: Clerk to comply with requirements of external auditors by June 30<sup>th</sup>.**

- c. **Quotes for Approval - Streetlight electricity.** The quote for renewing the electricity contract with SSE for the next 12 months (from 1 Aug) has been received. The overall annual bill will increase by 70% due to the current market. Clear Utility Solutions are the energy contract partner provider for BALC, and as members, the parish council are eligible to benefit from a discount which is delivered due to community bulk purchasing. The Clerk is exploring the prices of a contract through Clear Utility Solutions and will present the overall estimated costs from both to the parish council for a decision at the July meeting.

**Action: Clerk to work with Utility Solutions and produce two quotes for comparison in July.**

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## | Agenda topic 6 | Burial Ground

- a. **Annual Update from Burial Ground Administrator.** Please see Appendix 1 for full report from Jenet Hill. Jenet will be leaving the position at the end of June and the burial ground administration will pass to the Clerk.  
.Action: Clerk to arrange handover meeting with burial ground sub-committee.
- b. **Review of walkaround by Parish Council.** The Councillors met at the burial ground for the annual walk round and discussion of any works required. Summary of the discussions and actions below:
- i. The letters to heaven post box will be positioned next to the remembrance garden and a plaque will be purchased reading "This is a dedicated place where you can post letters to your loved ones".  
Action: Clerk to arrange a plaque, Chris Harris to arrange for post box to be mounted on a wooden post
  - ii. The laurel bushes in the remembrance garden have grown too large and have taken over the area. This is not providing the ideal area for ashes to be scattered at the burial ground and needs addressing. It was suggested the PC obtain quotations for the removal of the front laurel bush, and the removal of both. This is likely to be a large job requiring machinery to dig out the stumps. Once cleared the decision as to what to replace them with will be required. Suggested we ask the maintenance contractor if he has any suggestions, and other burial grounds. It was proposed we create a new area for ashes to be scattered in the top corner of the grounds. This will be discussed further.
  - iii. The trees in the burial ground have grown substantially. The councillors looked at each of the trees and although they appreciate the privacy and peace the taller trees bring to the burial ground, agreed to look into the removal of one large conifer within the grounds, and a couple of conifers from the front hedgerow.  
Action: Anne Birkett to ask Paul Empson for a quotation for the removal of the laurel bushes and conifers.
  - iv. The ivy around the trees needs to be cut back again, and there are a number of plots that are overgrown with weeds or self seeded bushes that need attention. On the walk round with the burial ground sub committee a full list of these will be drawn up and next of kin contacted where possible. If there are no contact details, the maintenance contractor will be asked to trim back/remove the overgrown bushes on these plots.  
Action: Clerk to ask maintenance contractor for a price to remove the ivy around all trees.
  - v. There are a number of maintenance issues around the burial ground that were noted. The three gates need staining, and the smaller gate at the bottom (front) corner needs some minor repairs. The coronation bench needs some TLC, washing and re-staining and possibly a few repairs to the wooden slats.  
Action: Chris Harris to carry out staining of the gates and repairs to small corner gate. PC to enquire with a local resident to ask if they would be willing to look at the bench following a lovely job on the benches in the village last year.
  - vi. The grave diggers hut also needs some maintenance, this is likely a bigger job. It would be good to stain the side facing the church as this is looking tired.

- c. **Letters to Heaven Postbox.** As above (item 3b i)

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**| Agenda topic 7 | Planning**

**a. Planning applications for consideration**

- i. **PL/23/1817/FA - 4 Birch Tree Grove, Ley Hill.**

No comments.

**b. Enforcement.**

- i. **EN/19/0149 – Land at Rowan Tree Farm** – The notice is served from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023. The PC will continue to be informed of any updates by Buckinghamshire Council.

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**| Agenda topic 8 | Council Business**

- a. **Closure of The Crown.** Following the very sudden closure of The Crown, the PC will write to the brewery to ask them to remove the pub benches from outside the front of the pub in order for the grass to be cut by the regular visits from Buckinghamshire Council, and enquire as to the plan for a new landlord to take over.

**Action: Clerk to write to the brewery.**

- b. **Pruning of Hedges.** Hedges along Middle Road have once again overgrown and are now impeding the highway. This is despite very regularly asking Buckinghamshire Council to attend and cut the hedges. This will be logged on Fix My Street and an email sent to the Local Area Technician. A household in Ley Hill have been waiting to hear from David Stowe at Buckinghamshire Council regarding their proposed plan to cut back the overgrown area on The Green outside their property. David Stowe has agreed to meet them on site to agree what can be done however, no date has been set.

**Action: Clerk to report overgrown hedges on Fix my Street and email LAT.**

- c. **Activity Trail.** Some items of equipment need inspecting to make sure repairs are not needed, including the throne seat which has developed a crack and needs to be checked for stability.

**Action: Steve Thorp to investigate and report back if any maintenance or repairs to the equipment is required.**

- d. **Latimer Green Bollards.** A large vehicle has hit the large bollard at the top of the Green and knocked it out of the ground. This will continue to be an issue with the increased frequency of large lorries passing through the village. This will be reported on Fix my Street, and will be followed up by email to David Stowe and the LAT. There has been no response from Buckinghamshire Council regarding the handing over of The Green to the PC.

Action: Clerk to report displaced bollard on Fix my Street and email LAT.

**A.O.B**

- a. **The Swan.** The pub has not been open in approx. 6 weeks. As it is a licensed premises should it be open? PC to check with Enforcement team at Buckinghamshire Council.
- b. **Coronation Bench.** Agreed to location, outside The Crown near to the newly planted tree. Clerk to confirm location with RoughStuff Oak.
- c. **Trees.** The newly planted trees have started to suffer due to recent warm weather. A plea to water trees nearby to residents houses will be circulated in the newsletter.
- d. **Flood Report.** Following the site visit from the Flood team at Buckinghamshire Council, the PC have received a report which will be circulated internally. This is not for public consultation.
- e. **Highways Farm O Licence.** Recent O licence application was refused and the property are appealing this decision. Cllr Thorp may be invited to attend a tribunal hearing in London (date TBC) on the matter.

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**Meeting Closed at | 9.15pm |**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Anne Birkett (Chairman)  
Latimer and Ley Hill Parish Council

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**Next Meeting | 19 July 2023 | St Mary Magdalene Church Hall, Latimer**

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## Appendix 1

### Tylers Hill Burial Ground - Annual report - June 13th 2023

Burials - One full burial on June 8th (Greenland), one ashes burial due on June 29th (Kenna)

Our other income has come from new memorials, additional inscriptions to existing memorials and new plot purchases.

At our meeting at the Burial Ground last year, the replacement of the fence by the cottages was in hand with the purchase of whips but as has been noted, the very dry summer proved fatal to the endeavour and other solutions are in hand.

I also mentioned that I thought a topple test was required. After further investigation and understandable concern at the financial cost to the Parish Council, it became clear that the Parish Council had no legal requirement to carry out a test but it was advisable to do so on a regular basis. I was grateful to John Drewery for his willingness to take over the project.

It has been a privilege to hold the role of Burial Ground Administrator, a role that did not exist before I joined in 2008 to help the then Parish Clerk Roz Walter. Up until then, administration was very much a paper and 'in the head' knowledge. There will always be paperwork but the vast majority of our history is now searchable in Excel. There are systems for digitising the plot map e.g. Pear Technology which we have not thoroughly explored, but this is probably the way forward for ease of searching by the public as well as the Parish Clerk. Currently the information from the four original registers is held on an external drive and an image bank is almost complete which would allow digital images of the register pages to be looked at in detail.

I will be guiding Claire through the procedures and will continue to help as needed.

Thank you all for your unfailing support in sometimes trying circumstances and I know you will continue to support Claire as she takes on this role.

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