

**MINUTES OF THE COMMONS & HAMS COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE MEETING 18 MARCH 2015 AT 19:30HRS**

PRESENT: Cllrs. B. Bowley (Chairman), A. Smith and C. Waller

IN ATTENDANCE: Sixteen members of the public.

1] *Apologies:* Cllr. M. Bannister due work commitments - accepted;
Cllr. A. Hay - no reason given.

2] *Declarations of Interests:* None made.

The meeting was adjourned for Public Question Time and then reconvened.
Comments from the public at the meeting are attached.

3] *Minutes* - The Minutes of the Commons and Hams Committee Meeting of 2 February 2015 having been previously circulated were signed off as a true and correct record. Actions

4] *Horses and related problems on Kempsey Common.*

Motion approved to recommend that the Parish Council undertakes a public consultation to determine the viability of a Commons Association for Kempsey Common and a Voluntary Code of Conduct for those grazing stock on the Common.

Cllr.
Waller

Motion approved to recommend that the Parish Council consults Malvern Hills District Council with regard to the enforcement of Commons Byelaws.

Cllr.
Bowley

5] *Register of Leased Rights.*

The Parish Council holds documents that may constitute an effective Register; the status of the documents to be clarified.

Cllr.
Smith

6] *Emergency vehicle access to gated Commons. **Outstanding action***

Motion from the Committee meeting of 2 February not yet actioned.

Cllr.
Bowley

7] *Purchase of cattle for Ashmoor Common.*

The search for appropriate cattle is ongoing.

Cllr.
Bowley

8& *Commons maintenance.*

11] A copy of the final version of the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust report is being sought. The report will act as a starting point for a sustainable programme of Commons maintenance.

Cllr.
Waller

9] *Byelaw signs. **Outstanding action***

The new byelaw signs have yet to be installed on Stonehall Common; the contractor to be advised of his obligations.

Cllr.
Bannister

10] *FAQ's.*

To be progressed through a Commons and Hams Working Party.

Cllr.
Bowley

12] *Power lines.*

No action from Glendales since the last meeting; Glendales to be contacted.

Cllr.
Bowley

13] *Commercial vehicles - Kempsey and Kerswell Green Commons.*

A response has been received from Teal Turf with regard to use of the track across Kerswell Green Common stating historic use and offering some help with infill of potholes. No documentary evidence of a right-of-way has been received. No response has been received from the caravan site adjacent to Kempsey Common; the Clerk to send a repeat letter to solicit a response prior to consideration of obtaining legal advice.

Cllr.
Bowley

The meeting closed approx 21:00 hrs

R C Bowley

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mrs V. Goodreds, on behalf of residents of Stonehall Common, requested a commitment from the Parish Council (PC) to support local residents maintain Stonehall Common. The volunteer group has already tackled clearing of a large area of gorse using machinery loaned by local residents and are seeking a financial contribution from the PC towards fuel costs which are currently being met by the owners of the equipment. Mrs Goodreds further requested a collaboration with the PC to develop an ongoing management plan for the Common for the years to come. These remarks were supported by Mrs S. Collins, Stonehall Cottage.

The Chairman responded that Committee appreciated the need for ongoing sustainable management of all Kempsey Commons and was working on the development of such plans. He welcomed the participation of the Stonehall Common community. Cllr. Waller felt that a good starting point would be the Worcester Wildlife Trust Commons Management report 1997 and a copy of the final report is being sought. It was agreed that Cllr. Waller would liaise with Mrs Goodreds and the Stonehall community to prepare a costed plan for the ongoing maintenance of Stonehall Common together with an indication of the financial contribution being sought from the PC.

In response to the suggestion that a cattle grid should be introduced onto Stonehall Common, it was explained this idea had been considered some years ago and been discounted on grounds of noise, inconvenience to many Common and road users and of cost. A further suggestion was made to fence the Common to retain cattle. It was left for any such ideas to be considered by local residents during preparation of the maintenance plan.

Mr D Morris expressed concerns over the width of the bridle path leading from Stonehall Common to the entrance to Kempsey Common. Vehicles could now easily access Kempsey Common and that the anti-trespass ditch needs re-instating. The Chairman explained that the bridleway is maintained by the Worcestershire Highways Department and undertook to take the matter up with them.

Mrs N Morris handed over one of the new Byelaws signs which she had found broken off of its supporting post at the Common Farm gate to Kempsey Common. The Chairman thanked Mrs Morris for salvaging the sign which would be re-instated.

Mrs J Burrows requested that the PC produce a newsletter /information sheet for Kempsey Common. There then followed a general discussion on management issues for Kempsey Common, including the role of Natural England and the responsibilities and mechanisms for the PC and for Malvern Hills District Council to enforce Commons byelaws. The Chairman explained the proposal for the PC to undertake public consultation on the formation of a Commons Association for Kempsey Common. Six members of the public present indicated that they would be interested in participating in a consultation meeting.