

# **BROADWAS AND COTHERIDGE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF AN ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH**

**HELD ON Sunday 2nd MAY 2021 VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Burrows, Worrall, Dale, Guest, Pearce, Mrs Carole Hirst the Clerk.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** District Councillors Walton and Chambers and 2 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllrs Cullen, Chambers,

### **Welcome from the Chairman**

The chair explained the purpose of the meeting and thanked all concerned for the reports that had been received. He noted that due to the Pandemic the Parish Council had been unable to hold a Parish Meeting last year, but wanted to this year despite the limitations a virtual meeting could have on this type of meeting, which was intended to reflect on the contributions of all to the parish and to focus on the coming year.

The chair explained that the agenda would serve as guide to address this and turned to

1. Report from the Village Hall Management Committee. G Winkworth briefly spoke to the report and there was discussion as to the plans of the committee and how these might fit with some of the ideas and priorities the Parish Council was looking at.
2. Report from District Councillor Walton. The chair thanked him for his full report and asked if he would care to highlight particular matters for the parish. Cllr Walton reflected on the activity over the year in respect of planning and development matters, and how this had positively impacted on the relationship between all concerned. There were a number of questions and discussion.
3. Report from the Path Warden. This was gratefully received and noted. A formal thanks was conveyed to Heather Dale, who had decided to step down from this role, and it was agreed to notify and liaise with WCC re looking for some one to build on and take forward this important role.
4. A question was asked re whether there were other reports requested. The Chair explained that all known organisations and individuals had been asked. It was agreed that the Chair would follow up with the Primary School as those present were keen that their experience and views should be heard.
5. The Chair asked the meeting to focus on the report from the Parish Council and as with other reports asked for any comments or observations. Discussion followed and it was agreed that it captured activity and achievements in the past year. It was noted that the second half of the report set out the basis for our priorities for the coming year and that these reflected consultation to date as well as learning in the context of our statutory responsibilities. It was suggested and agreed that further consultation would need to take place and that there would be a need to refine some clear next steps. The Chair reported that he and Cllr Worrall had been discussing the possibility of another “meet your neighbour” event in July.
6. The Parish Clerk advised the meeting of the steps being taken to fill current and forthcoming vacancies and responded to a number of questions. The Chair confirmed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be considering 2 applications for co-option and that once the necessary arrangements had been completed by MHDC 1 other and a pending vacancy would be recruited to.
7. The Chair asked if there was any other business. None was raised.

## 8. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution and closed the meeting.

### Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 2nd May 2021 from the Chairman

- ☀ This report provides a summary of what the Parish Council has done and achieved in the 12 months up until 31st March 2021.
- ☀ The report also looks to the coming year and reflects the intention of the Parish Council to consult with Parishioners about its plan and priorities for the future.
- ☀ The past year has been an unusual year and for many people and businesses a difficult one, and the Parish Council will want to support recovery.
- ☀ The Parish Council serves the communities of Broadwas and Cotheridge. The Parish is a part of the Malvern Hills District Council Broadheath ward and the District Councillors are David Chambers and Daniel Walton. The County Council ward is Hallow and the County Councillor was Phil Grove (This seat is up for reelection in May 2021).
- ☀ The Parish Council has up to nine 9 councillors and during the year the following councillors held office
  - ☐ Eric Dale
  - ☐ Robert Pearce
  - ☐ Jeff Guest
  - ☐ Keith Brooks (stepped down at the end of March 2021)
  - ☐ Magda Cullen
  - ☐ Jacqui Worrall
  - ☐ Richard Burrows

(Eric Dale was Chair until January 2021. Following Eric's resignation as Chair, Richard Burrows was elected into that role.

In March adverts were placed for 2 vacancies and these are expected to be filled shortly.)

### The Past year

- The Parish Council has met regularly and we have welcomed members of the public to attend. As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic meetings have been held on line, this has brought some challenges but also opportunities. We did not hold an annual parish meeting last year due to pandemic restrictions, but apart from that it has been "business as usual".
- The Parish Council is fully compliant with all the regulations and requirements placed on it, and we continue to look at ways we can improve the service we offer, for example we continue to make the website as useful as possible and are working on a new complaints policy.
- Parish Councils have a limited role but hold some important responsibilities, especially in respect of planning and development processes and where there are community assets such as the Berryfields recreation area and Broad Green SSSI.
- Councillors are volunteers and act as an important link between what matters to our communities and parishioners in the wider context of district, county and national government. As such we seek to find out what is important to parishioners to ensure that their views are listened to, taken into account and represented. Sometimes as a Parish Council we have to form a particular view on a matter (often to do with planning and development) which collectively represents a "best judgement" as to what is best for the parish.

### During 2020/21 we have

- Considered and submitted responses on all new planning applications and have sought to monitor the enforcement of conditions and other breaches of planning regulations.
- We have met with parishioners to discuss a range of issues
- We have taken specialist advice when it was important to address complicated and controversial planning matters
- We have sought to cooperate with and hold to account District and County Councillors and the officers of the respective organisations who have a direct interest in the lives of parishioners and the community.
- We have launched a process to set broad objectives and priorities to steer the Parish Council over the next 3 years to help ensure that we do the best job we can. We are currently seeking parishioners views and ideas.
- We were able to finalise a large grant to the Village Hall Committee, so that they along with funding they received from other sources were able to progress the much anticipated extension to the village hall.
- We decided to reduce the amount of funds we held by way of reserves, by reducing the parish precept (this is money set aside for the Parish as a part of the Council tax). If we need further income in the future for any new developments we will look to raise funds and if necessary adjust the parish precept.
- The Parish Council has sufficient income to meet its commitments and there are arrangements in place to make sure that the budget is carefully monitored, and this is reported on at meetings and is a matter of public record.
- We continue to make small amounts of grant funding available to local groups who are contributing to the wellbeing of the parish. This is something we want to look at developing further.
- We have taken the first steps to becoming a Dementia Friendly Community , which means that there will be opportunities for all of us to become more aware of and provide support to those affected by dementia.
- We have engaged with the process of revising the South Worcestershire Development Plan. In particular we have joined with five other parish councils in raising concerns regarding changes in the methodology for ranking settlements for future development.
- We have continued to look for ways in which we can help and support parishioners who may need help by ensuring that we are aware of the wide range of services and support there is available, and we intend to progress this further, especially as the pandemic has shown us how important it is to make sure that people know what help they can get.
- We have benefited from people telling us about what is important to children and young people who live in the parish or come to school here, and this included hearing from pupils about some of their ideas. We want to continue to try and get views from not just the young people, but from all those who live and work in the parish.
- Berryfields Playing Field remains an asset valued by many, and in the past we have invested in a range of equipment for adults and children, and local football clubs have used the site. This year the annual bonfire night did not take place but hopefully it will resume. We started to look at whether there is a need to consider further development of this site, and in 2021/22 we hope to bring forward some proposals, having consulted with parishioners
- The Broad Green SSSI continues to be supported through Natural England and the Parish Council has been awarded a commendation for the standard of maintenance.

- A number of parishioners have made it known that they feel it is important that as a Parish Council there may be more we can do to promote environmental and climate change initiatives, and we are pleased that the Village Hall is installing an air source heating system. We will in the coming year be making sure that we are connected to District and County Council initiatives to do with community assets, the environment and addressing the impact of carbon reduction and climate change.
- We have regularly liaised with West Mercia Police over the continued concerns many parishioners have in respect to road safety and speeding on the A44, and have welcomed the limited presence of mobile speed enforcement cameras in Broadwas. It is clear however that there is more that needs to be achieved.
- We have regularly reported and liaised with the various agencies including Worcestershire County Council, Severn Trent Water, to ensure that faults and hazards on the roads in the parish are attended to.
- Local Businesses are a vital and important part of the parish, and for many the past year has been very challenging. We have also seen more people working from home. The Parish Council continues to try to balance the important and essential contribution business plays in a rural community.
- Much time has been devoted in the past year to taking up the opportunity to bring “fibre to premises” broadband to the parish. The Parish Council has acted as the Community Fibre Partnership which has made it possible to attract government funding along with funding from Worcestershire County Council. The coming year should see 2 parts of the parish (Cotheridge and Little Green) having this installed, and hopefully in June when the new government funding scheme starts Broadwas village will be able to benefit. We are grateful to the many parishioners and businesses that stepped forward to commit to this scheme. We also understand that for some people faster and more reliable broadband is not a priority. All being well 2/3rds of the parish should see the replacement of copper wires with fibre by the end of 2022 or before.

#### The coming year(s) and working toward having a plan

- We will continue to welcome parishioners to our meetings, and councillors will continue to reach out to listen to concerns and ideas people have.
- We will continue to welcome parishioners who want to become councillors when we have vacancies and will be open to involving those who may want to contribute in other ways.
- We will continue to work closely with the elected District and County Councillors and welcome their attendance and involvement.
- We will continue to work with officers of the District and County Council as well as the other organisations who work with them and have an interest in the parish.
- We will continue to observe and meet the statutory responsibilities we have and ensure that the way we conduct ourselves meets standards and is transparent.

During the coming year in addition to the above we will work towards refining and finalising how we will progress the following priorities, which reflect what we are required to do and what parishioners have thus far indicated are important.

1. Ensuring that parishioners have the opportunity to contribute to any proposed developments within the parish.
2. Further develop our website and the ways in which we communicate and share information

3. Continue to work with and hold to account District and County Councillors to ensure that all agencies and organisations are working together and are able to demonstrate that they understand the needs of the parish.
4. Contributing to formal planning, development and enforcement processes to ensure that these reflect the best interests of the parish and meet high standards
5. Look at whether there is more we could do to promote or develop community assets, i.e. developments that would improve the parish and the wellbeing of parishioners.
6. Continue to maintain the Berryfields recreation area and identify whether there is a need for improvements.
7. Explore with Parishioners a more focused approach to improving road safety and speed reduction in the Parish.
8. Continue to support the various groups and local organisations that make an important contribution to the parish including the Village Hall Management Committee and its plans.
9. Look at ways in which we can use the limited funds we have available to support existing groups and new ideas that will enrich opportunities for parishioners.
10. Continue to develop ways in which people provide care and support for each other and to ensure that parishioners know where they can get help and support from
11. Continue to promote the importance of making sure that parishioners are safe and protected, so that they know what to do if they are concerned that someone may be at risk of harm.
12. Continue to act as a Community Fibre Partnership in order to ensure that the whole parish is able to have full fibre connectivity.
13. Look at whether there are other whole parish opportunities to contribute to “carbon reduction and climate change” strategies.

Parish Councillors are grateful for the support they receive from parishioners as they undertake their roles as volunteers and for the support provided by the Carole Hirst Clerk to the Parish Council.

Parish Councillors are happy to be approached to see if they can help, and can be contacted either through the parish clerk or the website

<https://www.broadwas-cotheridge.com>

### **BECOMING A PARISH COUNCILLOR.**

This year's team has dwindled to 6 councillors and a clerk. The minimum number of councillors that allow us to operate is 3. We need more volunteers to serve. So, if you feel you can help, then please let any of the councillors know. There are 10 meetings through the year, and it would be a great loss if the community did not have its own Parish Council. We now have a co-option policy which can be found on the Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council website.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

### **Appendix 1. ANNUAL REPORTS:**

**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR:** Cllr. Daniel Walton

In my first year as a District Councillor and I know for David's previous term also we would spend much of our time visiting people in our ward. When problems or issues occurred, we could call out and deal them with on the spot. We look forward to visiting Parish Council meetings and being involved in person – and it's very much why you want to become a Councillor - but the last year has been a strange time to be a District Councillor.

I know we've spent no less time helping people. In fact, due to the ease at which meetings can now be called and everyone be expected to be there I suspect we've both spent a lot longer in meetings than ever before and I've spent a lot longer on the phone or replying to emails which is great. The issues of residents have been slightly different. Especially under the first lockdown there were a lot of Covid related questions, especially around the rules and what people could safely do. We would have reports of people not following rules and a big increase in the number of reported planning infringement as more was done without planning whilst people stayed at home and more people noticed it going on ... as they stayed at home.

The Council completely changed with people moving to home working and the way it which we operated at the Council house completely changing. Our meetings went fully online and viewable on YouTube. Whilst people stuck at home run out of things to watch on Netflix we found meetings more widely watched.

Over the last year the ability for residents to tune into planning committee meetings that affected them or watch them back has been a real plus.

As the first lockdown went and we re-opened at the start of July we entered a strange summer where people were incentivised to eat out, mask wearing was still pretty new, and numbers of new infections were falling. For the council things didn't really alter. Our panel on Covid recovery got under way highlighting business support and support for the most vulnerable as areas of concern as we came out of Covid.

Business support was good with a superb response from the council to send out grant funding from the government to local businesses. All businesses were dealt with quickly and this along with business rates being paused, VAT support and the Furlough scheme supported local businesses including those most hit on our high streets, our tourist sector and those food stores not offering take away. Of course, we knew we would unfortunately see a rise in unemployment which we have done.

The recovery panel reported on what was needed in terms of economic development and communities support and as we move towards the end of the third, and hopefully final, lockdown a lot of those actions will now be swinging into action with a significant boost to Economic Development.

It will be good to get back to face to face Parish Council meetings whilst I don't think, between us, we've missed many Parish Council meetings throughout the year. It was also good to be involved in local groups supporting those isolated throughout the various lockdowns. It was also good that through the pandemic our communities' team were able to link up with so many more residents and resident organisations which has created some long-lasting links with villages.

To help us get there we are seeing a good role out of the vaccine. Over 70% of people over 16 have had at least one dose of the vaccine in Malvern Hills with people over 45 now able to book. The three counties showground is also fully operational as a vaccine centre.

Infection rates are at their lowest since August and we're heading towards Step 3 on May 17<sup>th</sup> when indoor leisure/ entertainment and hospitality is due to re-open with restrictions on numbers and mixing.

We are working with colleagues from Public Health to support the vaccine rollout programme looking at tackling vaccine inequality and hesitancy amongst certain parts of our community

On meetings, a court hearing has taken place in the High Court to hear arguments for allowing councils to continue with virtual meetings after 6 May. It would seem madness for us not to be able to continue to meet remotely until the vaccination program has been a little wider.

The case is being brought by Hertfordshire County Council, Lawyers of Local Government and the Association of Democratic Services Officers. They are arguing that councils already have the powers available to legally hold virtual meetings and do not need the Government to introduce legislation.

A judgement in the case is still awaited but is expected to happen sooner rather than later given the timescales involved.

We continue to prepare, at MHDC, for the fact virtual meetings may not be possible after 6 May.

As we come out of the third lockdown and for many the most difficult our recovery plans start.

We have been allocated just over £70,000 to support people returning to high streets safely and to help build back better through the recently announced ERDF Welcome Back Fund. The fund can be used by local authorities towards the following:

- Boost the look and feel of the high streets by investing in street planting, parks, green spaces, and seating areas to make high streets welcoming.
- Run publicity campaigns and prepare to hold events that will boost footfall and encourage people back into the high streets and thereby supporting local businesses.
- Install and refresh signage and floor markings to encourage social distancing and safety.
- Improve green spaces on high streets and town centres by planting flowers or removing graffiti.

For more information, please read the Welcome Back Fund Guidance.

Over the coming year we will report more on how we continue to support economic development in this ward and across Malvern plus how we support the most vulnerable in society, of which numbers have increased through joblessness and other issues linked to Covid.

In terms of economic development our executive committee have just agreed that £500,000 is allocated from councils priorities reserve to support the implementation of economic recovery activities.

Taken directly from the Economic Development report:

1.1 The Covid pandemic has created unprecedented disruption on the community but also a significant and long-lasting effect on the Malvern Hills economy and its workforce. A global and UK recession, changes in working practices, furloughed staff, and significant increases in unemployment (particularly amongst young people) plus introduction of social distancing measures has drastically affected a number of sectors but especially those on the high street, hospitality and leisure businesses.

1.2 Malvern Hills also shares other economic challenges common to many areas, including creating the skilled workforce for the future, digital connectivity, impact of Brexit, effect of climate change and need for businesses to be more sustainable, along with tackling persistent pockets of deprivation.

1.3 Over the last year the Economic Development teams work has been dominated by economic recovery activity. The Council has promoted, liaised and supported on the delivery of grants totalling well over £30 million to thousands of businesses across the district since the start of the pandemic as well as producing business and tourism e-bulletins received by over 2,500 businesses regularly with the latest news and regulations.

1.4 We have developed a Town Centre Recovery plan, secured Reopening High Streets Safely and now Welcome Back funding to support our five town centres and appointed a Town Centre Recovery Officer to focus on this area. The Reassuringly Local campaign and other promotional activities such as Christmas trails have been launched to encourage local shopping in build up to Christmas and beyond.

1.5 Apprenticeship and graduate grants targets have been met despite Covid-19 impact on many businesses and a new apprenticeship bursary scheme has been established to help young people overcome barriers to training.

1.6 We have launched the new Visitor Economy Action Plan. Updated the Visit The Malvern's website including blogs promoting local businesses during Covid. The website received over 300,000 sessions/visits, with over 1 million page views.

1.7 It is clear the shock of Covid on the economy will be felt for many years to come and we must support business to adapt to meet future needs and opportunities. The allocation of reserves to the Malvern Hills Economy Recovery Fund will enable the Council to play its part in supporting its local businesses, workforce, and communities.

The Malvern Hills Economic Recovery Fund (MHERF) will provide the financial resources to deliver the following programme of initiatives -

- (a) Future Workforce Initiative – Grant programme to support businesses to take on apprentices, graduates, and other trainees. This will also include provision of bursaries direct to young people to help overcome barriers to taking up training, apprenticeships, and jobs.
- (b) Event Development Budget – Funding to support new events development across the District with a focus on generating footfall to town centres and attracting visitors to the area. This funding could also be used to match crowdfunding opportunities for new events.
- (c) Town Centre Transformation Scheme – Development of town centre plans and bringing forward investment opportunities. Delivery of grant support scheme for high street traders to support investment in shop frontages, E-commerce set up, and development of marketing plans and rebranding.
- (d) Community Broadband Fund – Reserve funding to enable the Council to act as the legal entity to assist in unlocking gigabit capable local Community Fibre broadband schemes across the District.
- (e) Economic Development Team Graduate placement – Providing annual year in industry placement opportunity to a graduate to support across the ED Team and deliver recovery related project activity.
- (f) Low Carbon Economy support – Funding to support the delivery of support initiatives to the Malvern Hills low carbon economy identified from the findings of the emerging Worcestershire Low Carbon Economy Study.
- (g) Sustainable Tourism Development Fund – Funding will be used to support development of sustainable tourism products, a green tourism grant scheme and introduction of a local green mark accreditation.
- (h) Marketing The Malverns Fund – Raising awareness and developing The Malverns brand to encourage more overnight stays and increased visitor spend in the local economy.
- (i) Growth and Innovation Advice Programme – Working in partnership with Worcestershire LEP and the Growth Hub provide an additional resource to target local businesses providing guidance on support and funding available to assist their business growth and innovation of new products and services.
- (j) Rural Business Development Scheme – Grant support scheme for rural business growth and investment leading to employment plus investigation of rural business hub facilities across the District to support home and flexible working practices.

Our better links with communities and this economic recovery fund will be part of the answer to Covid as we not only look to recover but also build upon some of the things we have learnt through the pandemic.

Planning has had an interesting year, with more pressure on it as I said above but we are continuing to put more resources in to cope with a continuing higher demand on services.

The Government has announced that it is proposing to change the law to enable mobile network operators to increase the width (by up to either 50 per cent or two metres) and height (up to a maximum of 25 metres) of existing mobile masts without the need for council planning approval. New masts will also be able to be built up to five metres higher - meaning a maximum of 30 metres in unprotected areas and 25 metres in



protected areas, subject to prior approval on siting and appearance by the planning authority. The consultation will run until 14 June. In a previous consultation response on this issue, the Local Government Association expressed strong opposition to the weakening of local planning controls and stressed that the best way to deliver improved digital connectivity for communities and businesses is for Government and mobile operators to work with councils.

Rushwick has been dominated by planning applications and appeals but also by great people coming together and supporting each other through Covid. On development there was a delay in the next stage of SWDP due to Covid and now we expect to see the next stage and public consultation in Autumn of this year. I am pleased that the Parish Council have now had a chance to see plans as they are now – which I've been lobbying for a long time – but I have also been lobbying for the plans as they are currently to be shared with the public given the delays but this has not yet been accepted. I continue to want residents of Rushwick to be involved in this as early as possible – to see proposals not just on housing but also on proposed new infrastructure.

In Lower Broadheath Earls Court Farm/ West Worcester is about to get under way this year and discussion over that development which was passed as part of SWDP have been ongoing for the last year. Beyond planning the community in Lower Broadheath came together through the pandemic and special praise has to be given to The Bell and The Lower Broadheath Community Store. Both deserve a lot of credit.

Within Broadwas and Cotheridge enforcement seem to be constant throughout the year with sometimes as many as eight ongoing enforcement cases. We're now left with issues around drainage in Church Lane which we will sort this year and I believe better communication with the Parish Council and planning.

It has been a pleasure to serve as District Council for the last 12 months, however odd it's been. I feel that we've been able to remain reactive and proactive despite circumstances but I know we're both very much looking forward to things returning to normal. I've tried to cover some of the things that have happened over the last 12 months but also what we're now looking at going forward. With Parish Councils hopefully returning to face to face meetings soon we can put Covid behind us and look at a lot of the good things that are happening – returning to a re-vamped Broadwas Village hall, hopefully getting to visit Lower Broadheath school again soon and speak to the children and see the new part of the school, even get to visit the Garden Club in Rushwick again and the arts festival weekend in Cotheridge. It all feels like a long time ago.

#### **VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE: Geoffrey Winkworth**

A copy of this report is attached to these Minutes.

The last year has been the most momentous in the history of Broadwas Village Hall. Not only by virtue of the effects of Covid 19 lockdowns but also the extension project that has fairly much taken over Management Committee business and occupied a large part of my personal time and that of the treasurer, Sharon Downes.

During 2019 when planning the project, which we expected to start around Easter 2020, we had envisaged that the hall could remain open for business during the early part of construction work as this would take place outside. It is often said in military circles that a plan for action usually holds good until the first contact with the enemy.

The last planned activity that I undertook was to attend, with Sharon, a meeting of Knightwick and Doddenham Parish Council on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 to explain our project to them with the hope that they might contribute to our funding. Four days later, as we all remember, came lockdown. All hiring of the hall was cancelled, and our builder's timetable was suspended. Although Knightwick and Doddenham did make a very valuable contribution we had no idea when we would be able to start work. The delay unfortunately provoked an attack of cold feet on the part of our own Parish Council which caused me a great deal of anguish but eventually we did get a digger in the ground at the beginning of November 2020.

Since then, the work has proceeded fairly much without a hitch losing only a few days for weather. With hindsight though closure due to Covid has played into our hands because it would not have been possible to keep the hall open during the building work. Apart from some topping and tailing the job is now complete and has come in within budget. Inevitably though the brand-new appearance of the extended part

highlights the need for redecoration and improvement of the existing parts. People who go to the hall on election day the 6<sup>th</sup> of May will I am sure be surprised at the transformation.

By agreement with Timesavers, we suspended the cleaning contract at the beginning of lockdown but have retained the contact point and booking diary with them. The gardening contract is not active during the Winter, so outgoings have been modest. This has been compensated for by a grant from Government to all small businesses and community organisations to cover loss of income during lockdown.

Let us hope that from June we will be in a position to restart 'normal' activities and begin to make full use of the improved facilities at Broadwas Village Hall.

A painting and decorating team was there on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Heating system now commissioned and switched on as of Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April. Builder finishing off the slabs outside his work is dependent on weather outside. In case of inclement weather he will work on indoor flooring. Wednesday is a cleaning day in readiness for the election on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Cleaners contract reactivated from 1<sup>st</sup> May.

### **PATH WARDEN REPORT: Heather Dale**

Thanks to some regular users of the Broadwas footpaths we are being updated on stile and path conditions.

Dog walkers are having problems using the stiles as landowners have used wire on the lower struts to manage their stock. The County will supply free metal gates to landowners to replace old stiles on legal footpaths.

Landowners and some tenants have been circulated with a memo concerning stile replacement and how to access the County about these free metal personal gates.

Their response has been positive so far but the following comments have been made about walkers' detrimental behaviour:

1. Fences being cut with wire cutters - this is actually criminal damage and if caught will be treated as such.
2. Dogs chasing sheep and in one instance killing a ewe - if the owner is asked to control the dog and fails to do so we are within our rights to shoot the dog.
3. Leaving gates as they find them - two herds of cattle in two fields, one herd being young small cattle, the other being much larger adult cattle and obviously separated for a reason, the gate was then left open and they all become mixed up. I would suggest that whoever did that wouldn't have wanted the task of separating them with the total amount of cattle being in excess of 80!!
4. Our fields being used as a whole with people throwing sticks for their dogs out into the field.
5. People not picking up after their dog and when they do they hang the offending item on hedges and trees.
6. People not remaining on the public right of way because of the mud - wear correct footwear.

Public footpaths are exactly what they are, they are a right of way, not a right to stay and certainly not a right of ownership. They are there to be enjoyed by everyone whilst respecting the countryside as a whole together with other people's property.

County maps with footpath labelling are available for the public to use and report problems at:

[www.worcestershire.gov.uk /environmental services/countryside and leisure/public rights of way/public rights of way interactive map](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/environmental-services/countryside-and-leisure/public-rights-of-way/public-rights-of-way-interactive-map)

The parish website was updated with this information and several parishioners have been given this link personally and found it very useful!

Cllr. Guest conveyed his thanks to Heather Dale for all her hard work and to say she will be sorely missed. This was endorsed by other Councillors.

Signed.....dated.....