



MINUTES OF MEETING OF EAST WOODHAY PARISH COUNCIL
21 October 2024
19:00 East Woodhay Village Hall

Chairman: Cllr Hurst (Chair)

Present: Cllrs G Dick, R Donoghue, M Rand, K Titcomb, S Cooper, C Roots, D Blakeway

Clerk: Amy White

Item 1: 32/24 Apologies

Cllr Thacker sent his apologies.

Item 2: 33/24 Declarations of Interest

None.

Item 3: 34/24 To approve Meeting Minutes of 22 July 2024

The Minutes of 22 July 2024 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman, Cllr Hurst.

Item 4: 35/24 Actions from meeting of 22 July 2024

Item	Action	Owner
19/24	Cllr Donoghue will contact the Charity Commission regarding East Woodhay Recreation Grounds charity, to work out whether to continue with the charity- Actioned . Cllr Donoghue has sent out an explanatory document to the council of what EWPC understands at this point; however, there is still a lot that is unknown/unclear. Both recreation grounds are currently registered as charities. Further action: a working group to be established to fully understand the charities and ownership of the Heath End recreation grounds.	Cllr Donoghue
29/24	Cllr Dick to ask HCC whether a SID pole can be sited a) along Church Road (past the Copnor turning, heading towards East End) and b) the entrance to East End from Woolton Hill. Actioned - see Highways report on the website.	Cllr Dick

Item 5: 36/24 Public Participation

No one was present.

Item 6: 37/24 Borough and County Councillor Reports

Cllr Thacker has sent an update on the HCC cuts that have just been announced (see here: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20241410FutureServicesfinaldecisions>)

Action: Cllr Hurst asked the council to send their views on Cllr Thacker's update on HCC cuts to the Clerk for EWPC to send a formal response.

Item 7: 38/24 Planning Update

Please see most recent Planning Minutes on the EWPC website.

The BDBC East Woodhay Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring report has been received.

CIL: £3964.55 has been received for the Mount Road development which includes the 25% Neighbourhood Plan uplift.

Item 8: 39/24 Amenities Update

Please see most recent Amenities Minutes on the EWPC website.

Cllr Blakeway had sent a proposal to the council for a boardwalk upgrade from Trade Street entrance to the first gateway. This is a partnership with HCC, who will be leading and owning the project completion. The overall cost of the project will be £23102. The proposal is attached to the end of the Minutes.

EWPC has £10000 held in reserves for a boardwalk project. *Full council agreed for the reserve to be used for the project with HCC.*

Item 9: 40/24 Highways

The latest Highways report can be found on the EWPC website. It includes information on Hollington Road closure and the most recent finger post signs which have been broken in Woolton Hill.

Action: Clerk to report broken finger post signs in Woolton Hill to PCSO.

Item 10: 41/24 Finance Update

Bank reconciliation 30 September 2024:

Natwest: £29896.56

Redwood: £33251.25

TOTAL: £63147.81

a. Accounts for payment:

The Clerk presented the accounts for payment approval- see end of Minutes for full payments and receipts for August, September and October.

b. 2nd quarter update

All budgets are on forecast. The budget summary to date is attached to the Minutes. The main risk identified was tree work but there is no quote received yet for identified maintenance. As noted in item 8, the £10000 reserve held for the boardwalk has been allocated.

Item 11: 42/24 Items to carry forward to next meeting

Standard items. Councillor Roles and Responsibilities.

Actions from Meeting of 21 October 2024

Item	Action	Owner
19/24	A working group to be established to fully understand the charities and ownership of the Heath End recreation grounds.	Cllr Hurst
37/24	Cllr Hurst asked the council to send their views on Cllr Thacker's update on HCC cuts to the Clerk for EWPC to send a formal response.	Cllr Hurst/ All Cllrs
40/24	Clerk to report broken finger post signs in Woolton Hill to PCSO.	Clerk

Proposal for Funding for Boardwalk Replacement

The boardwalk which runs along part of the footpath from Trade Street to Fullers Lane is a vital part of Woolton Hill's infrastructure. It enables year-round use of the only footpath that connects the community with the varied and wonderful countryside to the West and Southwest of Woolton Hill. Without it, the wooded marshland through which it runs would be impassable. The boardwalk also gives access to the wild daffodils and bluebells which are so attractive in Spring.

The boardwalk is in constant use every day and as a result has suffered from considerable wear and tear. This is not just because of the heavy traffic of walkers but also because it is now more than twenty years old and is made of wood. Situated in a bog, it has been continuously rotting and has needed constant upkeep, with support timber and planks having to be replaced with increasing frequency. As the planks deteriorate, it has also become potentially unsafe, with trip hazards of loose netting and gaps in the walkway. The first section is the most damaged, but all the boardwalk has needed piecemeal repairs at a cost over the years of £8,000 to EWPC.

Fortunately, Hampshire County Council has agreed to majority fund the replacement of the first section of the Board Walk which runs from the start of the woodland below Trade Street to the first gate which adjoins the land beneath Abbey Wells – approx. 120 metres (see map below). The replacement will be made of recycled plastic bearers and posts with timber slats covered with grip strips. To have total plastic would be prohibitively expensive, but the slats with grip strips should be longer lasting and safer than the current bare wood covered with chicken wire.

HCC have formally confirmed the funding by email. HCC Capital funding will provide £15,000. To access the funding EWPC has agreed to a £10,000 contribution. The cost of the first 120 metres is budgeted at £23,102 of which £15k will come as a grant from HCC and £10k will come from the PC's reserve already allocated to this project. The release of the reserve has been approved by the Finance Committee. If there is an underspend as budgeted it will be put to the renewal of the remaining boardwalk. Any overspend is the responsibility of HCC (unlikely as the principal costs are for materials – not labour).

For the replacement of as much as possible of the remainder of the boardwalk, HCC have been liaising with AONB for a grant. HCC have indicated that the AONB is looking favourably at the proposal and have been discussing £45k which they have available this financial year to

end of March 2025. However, to release this the AONB need to see that the first part of the boardwalk has been replaced, i.e. there is a commitment from HCC and EWPC to deliver the original finances and undertake the work.

So, to obtain the £45k from AONB in this financial year the initial project needs to move as quickly as practicable as the AONB would also want the remaining part of the boardwalk completed in this financial year.

Timetable wise, as soon as HCC receive our £10k for the first section the materials will be ordered. The lead time for the delivery and for work to start is about 3-4 weeks, and once it is here HCC rangers and volunteers will get on with the installation, probably one volunteer session a week with extra ranger time added when possible.

With one session a week, each completing 12 metres installation, the first 120m section should take 10 weeks. Work can take place during bad weather, but not during storms and when weather warnings are issued. Although the path will have legal closure during the work, with notices to this effect, there will be nothing physically preventing people from walking along the boardwalk during the times and days when work is not taking place.

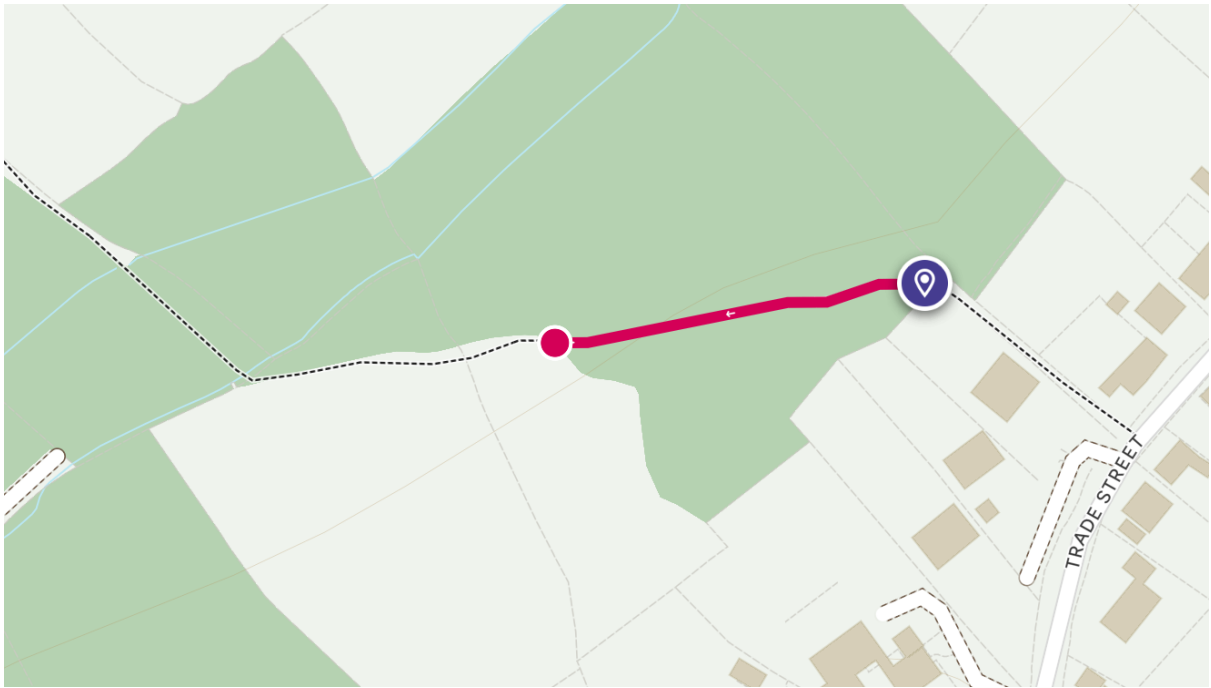
The Community Engagement Ranger in the Countryside Team at HCC will be the project manager. I will coordinate with them on behalf of EWPC reporting to the Amenities Committee. He/she will handle management of the resource and all health and safety issues of the build. Work will be carried out by HCC regular volunteers and rangers. We also intend to set up a boardwalk working party.

Building materials will be delivered to the entry to the three Abbey Wells houses on Trade Street next to the start of the footpath (see picture below) and then carried down by volunteers to the final location storage area (see picture below). HCC is the landowner of the adjacent land where the material will be stored. The residents of the Abbey Wells houses have been approached and given permission for the temporary storage.

As HCC own the structure and are responsible for it as Highway Authority there are no risks to EWPC should the replacement project go over budget. The HCC team will manage any issues arising from the build. It will be incumbent on EWPC to help keep the community informed of the project and its progress.

I'd be very grateful if you could indicate your support for this project by email to me and Amy White.

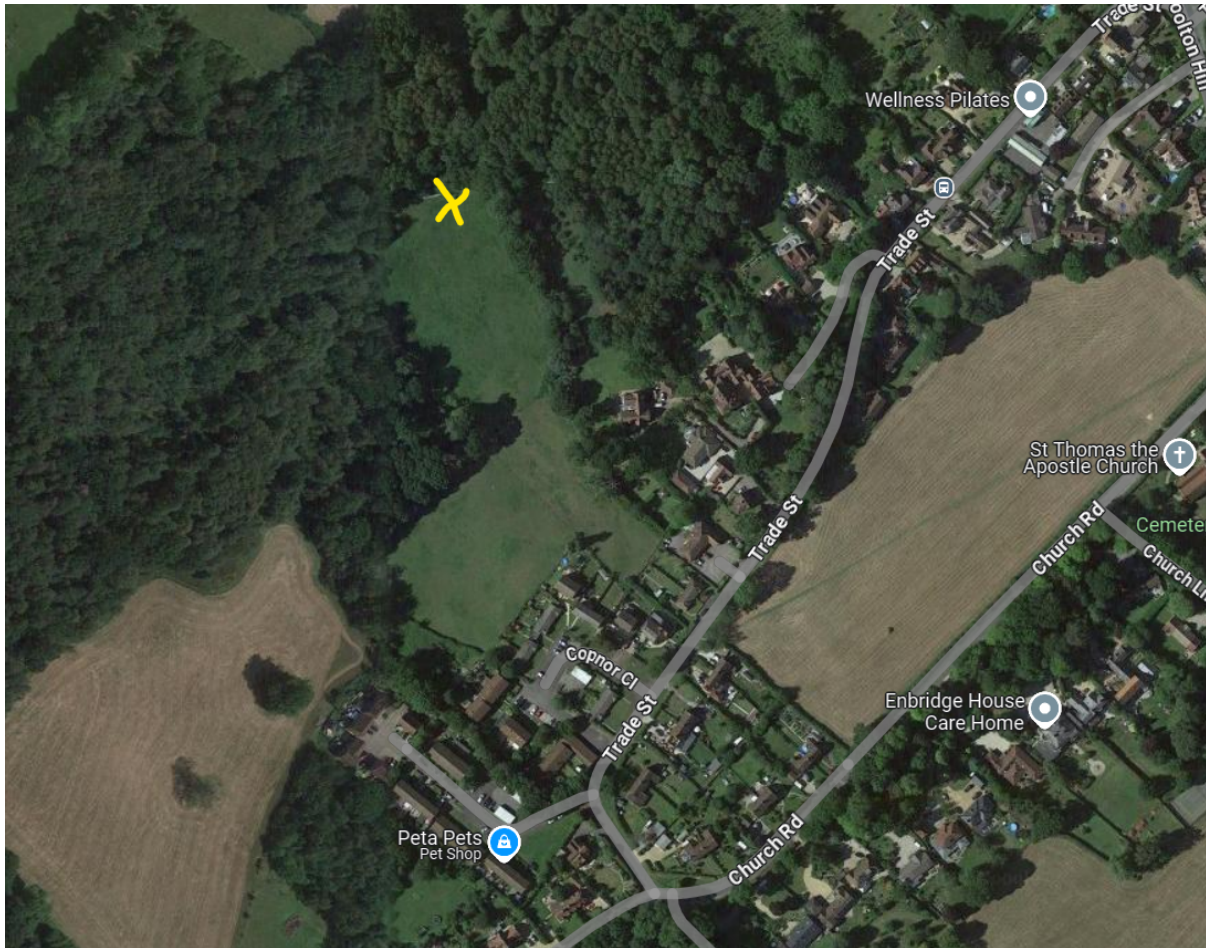
CLlr Denys Blakeway 03 October 2024



Section of boardwalk to be replaced marked in red



Interim 24 hour storage area for new boardwalk materials



X marks proposed final storage area for new boardwalk materials

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The cost for the first 120metres (up to the first gate which is in a poor state) of the boardwalk is £23,102. This is a confirmed quote from the boardwalk suppliers.
- This amount is for reconstituted plastic for the base and treated wood slats with impregnated upper grip strips. To have total plastic would about double the cost.
- HCC have approved £15K for the project on the basis EWPC pays £10K towards the cost.
- HCC will manage the project using ranger and regular volunteers.
- EWPC will be responsible for local communications – Denys Blakeway will coordinate, assisted by other Councillors.
- The path will be legally closed during this work which will take about ten weeks
- HCC have also been liaising with AONB for a grant to replace nearly all the remaining part of the boardwalk, certainly all which is at issue and potential issue. HCC have been discussing £45K which AONB currently have available in this financial year to end of March 2025. AONB are very supportive of the work being proposed. However, to release this the AONB need to see that the first part of the boardwalk has been replaced. i.e. there is a commitment from HCC and EWPC to deliver the original finances and undertake the work.

- It is anticipated that about 10 one day tasks each completing 12 metres will be undertaken for the first part of the project. Work will be done on one day per week for this initial project.
- To obtain the £45k from AONB in this financial year the initial project needs to move as quickly as practical as AONB would want to also complete the remaining part of the boardwalk all within this financial year. Indeed, there may well be some weeks where the weather means work is not possible.