

Meeting of Great Alne Parish Council was held at 8pm on Tuesday 21st May 2024 at The Function Room, Maudslay House, Great Alne Park, Henley Road, Great Alne, B49 6HX

<p>PRESENT</p>	<p>Councillors Mr L Bowring, Mr I Millard, Mrs D Francis, Mrs L Bennett and Mr I Taylor (having been co-opted at the Annual Meeting earlier the same evening).</p> <p>15 members of the public in attendance.</p>
<p>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p>	<p>Apologies received from Cllr Kerridge. The Clerk did not receive a response about attending the meeting from Cllr Holmes.</p>
<p>2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES</p>	<p>Minutes from the March 2024 Parish Council Meeting minutes were approved by the Councillors.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>ACTION: to be signed by the Chairman and filed by the Clerk.</p> </div>
<p>4.</p> <p>4h. Affordable housing update by Sarah Brooke-Taylor WRCC Rural Housing Co-ordinator</p>	<p><u>OPEN FORUM</u></p> <p><i>Due to the delay in the start time of this meeting as a result of the overrunning of the Annual Meeting and Parish Assembly beforehand, the Chairman decided to change the order of the agenda so that the two guest speakers could present their item before the rest of the agenda items.</i></p> <p>The Chairman introduced Sarah to the residents and thanked her for attending the meeting to provide the update in person.</p> <p>Sarah started by saying that the sites that had been identified were only general locations – the feedback to the consultation seems to indicate that there is an impression that it will be the whole site that will be used for housing. This is not the case – it will only ever be a general location for sites, and not representative of the amount of land that might be developed.</p> <p>Sarah noted that GAPC had asked for the consultation to run until 8 April and then extended it until the end of April to ensure the information was shared to a wider audience. This has worked well as there have been a significant number of comments received. The feedback report from WRCC indicates the most preferred to the least preferred sites. Not everyone voted for all the preferred sites so there are some inconsistencies. It is also the case that not everyone will have allotted a preference across all 5 sites.</p> <p>Sarah had also received an email from a resident suggesting further potential sites. She will consider these sites and report back separately to GAPC. This will be treated as a separate issue so as not to confuse the two consultations. Furthermore, a landowner came forward at the Community Action Day regarding a site that had not been picked up in the desktop survey exercise, so that will also be considered by Sarah.</p> <p>The report on the main community consultation will be finalised by Sarah after this PC meeting and sent to GAPC. It will then be put onto GAPC’s website on the new page dedicated to rural affordable housing in Great Alne. The whole process will be as</p>

transparent as possible. Sarah is happy to be a regular attendee at our PC meetings and to answer any questions.

Cllr Francis said that the point about the size of the fields was an important distinction to make. Sarah reiterated – these are just the general locations. No specifics have been discussed with GPAC or landowners. Nobody yet knows the details on the number of homes or the mix of homes – or the size of the land being offered or required. Generally, such developments always start at approximately 1 acre for 10 plots, but this is very general. Although we have evidence of a need from the Housing Needs Survey, nobody knows how many of these needs might be satisfied.

Sarah commented that there were a few other misconceptions that we would iron out along the way. Local needs housing means local connection needs. There were 5 local connections identified on the survey, but it is irrelevant whether you have 1 or 5 – you just need to demonstrate a local connection for either rent or purchase.

The Chairman noted that there was an identified need for 16 homes, but this was not necessarily how many there will be. Sarah confirmed that currently there is no certainty on the mix of homes and no numbers have been discussed or agreed with anybody.

A resident enquired whether a brownfield rather than a greenfield site could be considered. Sarah responded that new sites tend to come forward during the process. Regardless of the sites that are put forward, it's about whether the landowner is willing to engage.

A resident then asked what she could do to challenge a site. She lives next to one of the sites where the access road will be within 20m of the back of her house, so she feels that her house is already blighted. The resident wishes to support some development but wishes to 'push back' on this particular site. The Chairman responded that the only time to formally object to a specific site is at the planning stage. But GAPC is very keen to consult with residents on the possible options at this stage – nothing is fixed yet and anything is possible. The feasibility of the various sites has yet to be evaluated – Sarah and the WRCC have data that will help GAPC to recognise that some sites are not going to be feasible. GAPC wants to be open through this process. There will be another public event; we have yet to ascertain when the best time is to do this – at what stage in the process etc.

The resident responded that there are only 3 or 4 houses at this location that will be affected. The Chairman said GAPC will listen to residents - however, there will be trade-offs. GAPC hopes to find maybe one site that is agreeable to everyone. It is not an easy process, but the council wants to be as open to views and opinions as possible.

Sarah continued that general development is not possible within a greenbelt setting. However affordable homes fall within the criteria of 'rural exception sites.' The development must be small scale and have the support of the parish council - who will listen to its residents. Any development has to meet an identified need. The need that came through on the survey was for 16 households looking for accommodation. This is about analysed need – not aspirational wishes. However not all of the dwellings are for social housing – some are for purchase for those wanting to buy their own home or, for example, downsizing.

In summary, Sarah said this is not about general development or big building projects or big money. It's about doing something for and with the community, not to the community - which is what a general developer would do. It's about the PC and the WRCC making decisions with the community.

A resident commented that Linfoot Oaks looks really good and has integrated really well into Great Alne. Sarah responded that the process will be the same - any new sites identified will be analysed to determine whether they are viable. This is why local needs housing takes so long – because the community has to be happy. It could take 5-8 years

<p>4i. Presentation by The Warwickshire Wildlife Trust on Water Resources</p>	<p>for this to happen – some don't happen at all – but it is the Parish Council that leads the process.</p> <p>Gina Rowe from the WWT provided an insightful and informative presentation on water resources and conservation of water. Gina also highlighted some of the proposals identified by Jake McAllister from the WWT for installing Natural Flood Measures in farmland surrounding Great Alne. A copy of Gina's slide presentation is available from The Clerk.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked both guest speakers for attending the meeting and for the information they had shared with the Council and residents.</p> <p><i>The Chairman then returned to the original order of agenda items.</i></p>
<p>4a. Representations from residents</p>	<p>None received.</p>
<p>4b. Alcester South SNT & crime statistics update</p>	<p>The Clerk noted that fortunately there had not been any reports specific to Great Alne in the last few weekly reports from the Alcester SNT. Most of the issues in Alcester and surrounding villages are related to vehicle crime and ASB.</p>
<p>4c. County Councillor's Report</p>	<p>A weekly report is available from the Alcester SNT team – or can be forwarded by the Clerk on request.</p>
<p>4c. County Councillor's Report</p>	<p>Cllr Justin Kerridge was unable to attend the PC meeting but had little to report. He commented that GAPC's relationship with the County Council appears to work so well that he is seldom needed. He reiterated that if he can help with any County matters, GAPC is to contact him or copy him in on communications.</p>
<p>4c. County Councillor's Report</p>	<p>Cllr Kerridge confirmed that he is very supportive of any cycle schemes and improved access for all rights of way (footpaths) – and is very keen to assist with such matters. Councillor Kerridge would like to congratulate GAPC for its successful funding applications to the SDC CCCF Scheme for climate projects. Cllr Kerridge would also like to remind GAPC that the councillor grant for community groups is now open until the end of June.</p>
<p>4d. District Councillor's Report</p>	<p>The Clerk has not received an update from Cllr Holmes for this meeting so will contact him to ensure there is a full update at the next meeting.</p>
<p>4e. GAKMH parish councillor representative's report</p>	<p>Cllr Millard provided the following update from GAKMH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EV Charger is under consideration with more details required from proposed installers who will meet committee. • Broadband Fibre also being considered after discussions with BT installers working in the village • Social Club sale has gone through - little is known about new owners currently • Jazz Concert cancelled due to lack of sales • Magic evening was a big success • Key dates going forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - D Day Landings 80th Anniversary - 6th June - 6pm - AGM - 19th June - Village BBQ - 29th June - Xmas Coffee Morning - 30/11

4f. Update on Great Alne Park

- Xmas is coming Lights - 1/12
- Xmas Supper - 13/12

Cllr Francis provided the following update:

- Adam, the site general manager, is awaiting the date for the Phase 3 show home handover.
- The West Entrance is going to soon be FOB only access to residents from 8am-8pm due to works starting on the East Entrance access.
- Work on the shop is ongoing and it should be open in the next couple of months.

Cllrs noted that following previous conversations with Ben Ling at IVG, the access to the West Entrance for Great Alne residents would be from 7am – 10pm. Cllr Francis was asked to follow up and confirm with IVG.

ACTION: Cllr Francis to follow up with Adam on the agreed gate opening times

4g. Climate Action Group update

The Clerk provided the following update:

On 19th April, the Climate Action Group submitted three applications for funding from SDC's Community Climate Change Fund for the following proposed projects:

- Flood mitigation measures;
- Water provision in the park for future community planting projects;
- Feasibility study for a Greenway between Great Alne and Alcester.

It was decided not to submit an application for the EV charging points as research for the project indicated that there were other, more suitable funding streams available – which are being explored further with GAKMH.

We are delighted to report that GAPC has been successful in all three applications and has confirmation that it will receive the full funding for all three projects. Legal agreements will be forwarded in the next week for signature, followed by the funds in due course.

The Climate Action Group will be meeting on 22 May to plan delivery of the projects and next steps.

5.

MATTERS ARISING

General Maintenance Update

a. Streetlighting – update on transition to LEDs

The Clerk has been notified from WCC Streetlighting team that the only outstanding job is one street column and lamp that has some technical issues with electrical cables being encased in concrete. Two contractors are required to deal with this lamp which is located on Nightingale Close. The issue with this is the financial liability for GAPC in resolving the technical problems is unknown. The Clerk is trying to find out further information from WCC Streetlighting, but they are very slow to respond.

ACTION: The Clerk to follow up with the Streetlighting team and report back at the next PC meeting

b. Bins- update on GAKMH black bin	<p>The Clerk confirmed that SDC has now replaced the black bin outside the hall. It is in a slightly different location in order to avoid the risk of it being demolished by a vehicle exiting the hall car park.</p>
c. Noticeboards	<p>The Clerk has been obtaining quotes from a number of organisations and local tradesmen for installation of the three noticeboards. The Clerk will circulate these to the councillors for consideration. The Clerk has been trying to contact the Community Pay Back Team (CPBT) to see whether they can assist with installation.</p>
	<p><i>ACTION: The Clerk will contact the CPBT again and report back to the councillors in due course. The Clerk will circulate the quotes to the councillors for consideration and approval in writing over email.</i></p>
d. Benches	<p>There are three benches in Great Alne and all need attention. One requires replacement wooden slats in certain areas and two require refurbishment. We could ask the CPBT for their help with these but, as above, we have had no response from them. The councillors debated whether we need the bench at the bottom of Park Lane and suggested we try to establish whether it is actually required. The Clerk will ask the CPBT team in the first instance, and then one of the councillors could consider approaching the Kinwarton councillor who is currently doing repairs to benches and other street furniture in the local area. In relation to the overgrown vegetation, the Clerk confirmed that the area where the new noticeboards are being installed will be cut back.</p>
	<p>ACTION: The Clerk will speak to the CPBT about assisting with the benches and will also obtain quotes from three tradesmen.</p>
e. Gates	<p>The gate post for the 5-bar gate at the bottom of Church Walk needs to be replaced as it is rotten. This needs to be attended to urgently as it is a popular path and is also an access for funerals at the church. The Clerk will obtain quotes for its repair as part of the maintenance tasks discussed above.</p> <p>The gates at the recreation ground were discussed at the last meeting and a team of local volunteers have offered to replace the pedestrian and farm gate. A quote for the materials has been circulated by Councillor Taylor for consideration and councillors will be asked to approve this quotation at agenda item 6h below.</p>
f. Highways	<p>The Clerk reported that a number of road surface repairs have been completed on some of the manholes /drains in the main village, which had been reported to WCC through the online reporting platform. Members from the FLAG will be meeting with our two area officers from WCC Highways at the beginning of June so we will be talking to them about proposed repairs on Pelham Lane and Sernal Lane.</p>
g. Verges	<p>The Clerk confirmed she had contacted Orbit about the condition of the grass verges following the recent installation of solar panels by Orbit and their contractor, Vincis. The call has not yet been returned.</p>

<p>h. Footpaths survey</p>	<p>Councillor Francis provided the following update on the footpaths survey:</p> <p>The path surveys have almost been completed and the information provided has been recorded in a spreadsheet, including the paths' RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status.. The key information from the survey sheets are areas where the scores could potentially be significantly higher than the 'current' scores. Especially scores that are currently in the red or amber zones but after improvement can move to either a yellow or green zone.</p> <p>The first priority and biggest impact is to improve the signage around the parish. This will be a relatively inexpensive win with high visible impact.</p> <p>Next focus will be on the significantly poor (red/amber) areas of the paths that need our attention - funds allowing.</p> <p>Cllr Francis and Bob Larbey met Richard Barnard on 21st May. Richard is the Paths Officer for Warwickshire County Council and is not only a very knowledgeable person about the paths, but also a useful ally in terms of supplying materials, potential funding and his legal expertise.</p> <p>From that meeting we were able to answer queries that some of our volunteers had regarding the paths and here (hopefully) are some of them answered.</p> <p>Definition of a public footpath</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpaths are defined as being for people 'on foot'. • Cyclists and horse riders accessing the path goes beyond the 'public right of way' and therefore the landowner is within their rights to prohibit cyclists/horse riders if they wish. • If horse riders damage a path (such as hoof holes), they are responsible for rectifying. • 'On foot' also includes the right of a walker to bring a dog as long as the dog sticks to the permitted path. If the dog strays off the path then the walker/dog are trespassing and are responsible for any damage caused by the dog. It is also worth noting that a landowner/farmer has the right to shoot a dog if the dog strays off the path and they believe the dog is endangering their livestock. Dogs have been shot by farmers around the Ragley estate in recent years. • There is no statutory fixed definition of how wide a footpath should be unless it is arable land in which case: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A path across an arable field should be 1m wide ○ A path along the perimeter of an arable field (along the hedgerow) should be 1.5m wide ○ If it's a bridleway across an arable field the width should be 2m wide and 3m wide around the perimeter. ○ Exceptions to these measurements are if it's recorded somewhere that a particular path needs to be a certain width. • Worth noting that a farmer must return a path that runs across a field after ploughing by flattening it, to the required width. <p>Enforcement – is the responsibility of WCC, not the PC.</p> <p>Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC is responsible for the upkeep of the <i>surface</i> area of the path only. • Landowner is responsible for roots, overhanging vegetation, hedges.
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Abandoning or altering footpaths

- Footpaths cannot be de-registered as a footpath without a lot of legal work and potentially a great deal of opposition from ramblers' associations and local residents. It will cost a significant amount in legal fees and it does not take much for an application to be rejected.
- Equally, to amend a footpath's line of direction is also difficult with an exhausting amount of legal paperwork and consultation to pass through. It's easier to stick with the existing path.

Ordering materials

- The PC to order via Richard's office for materials

Funding/Costs

- There is a small budget at WCC for funding for footbridges only. There is no funding available for any other asset (such as gates).
- All other funding to be met by the PC
- Richard has kindly offered to supply directional footpath disks free. We just need to give Richard the number required when we know the full number.
- Posts cost £14 each
- Metal 'footpath' signs cost around £50 plus installation.
- The 'Payback' team may be able to provide labour for post installation.

Other Richard Top Tips:

- Commission a consultant specialist to advise on the drainage issue with our paths
- When erecting signs, always take a proper compass. Not a phone compass.
- Get a 5-year maintenance budget organise together with a schedule of work for that period (the Clerk may already have something in place).

The interesting points here are that paths cannot be decommissioned. In the case of the paths towards the caravan site near Aston Cantlow off Henley Rd, the volunteers assessing that path quite rightly questioned the usefulness of these paths which, in parts, are completely impassable and perhaps are not used by walkers. Since paths cannot be decommissioned, this and other poorly maintained paths need to be included into a routine schedule of work to maintain them properly. The unsafe footbridge will be dealt with by Richard's office.

Richard's information also throws light on paths where walkers have opted to use a different route. Perhaps, for example, where a path goes diagonally across a ploughed field walkers opt (incorrectly) to skirt round the hedgerow instead. Therefore, if you see a path that appears to be different to where walkers actually walk, you can assume the map is correct and the walkers wrong. This means that when posts are being erected and directional disks fitted, they must be pointing in line with the direction of the path as shown on the map.

One last tip from the Salford Priors path survey team was to place a disk at the beginning and end of a path with the path's reference number so that members of the public can easily report maintenance issues. The survey teams need to decide where these disks could be fitted. There will be 2 disks per path. The wording would be something like 'you are entering path 180/AL 99a/1' along with a contact email address or website.

We will provide a further update on progress at the next meeting.

<p>i. Community Speed Watch / Road Safety Update</p>	<p>Cllr Millard provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Speed Camera now in possession of GACSW • Small group tested along with PC Gary Strain (our new representative for CSW) • Incredibly easy to use & no formal training needed. • We can now engage with all those who have shown interest with a simple session for all those who still want to be involved. • Email to be issued to all & then agenda drawn up with various dates to sign up to. Proposed variation of days/times etc. • Gary Strain has provided details in last day or two of new forms to be completed which can be done online apparently.
<p>5b.</p>	<p><u>Recreation Ground and defibrillator</u></p>
<p>a. Treeworks</p>	<p>The work on the ash tree at the Henley Road entrance has been completed. 40% has been cut back and the tree surgeon has carried out the work very sympathetically.</p>
<p>b. Damaged equipment</p>	<p>Cllr Bennett reported that the broken and consequently dangerous wobbly plank bridge has been removed from its location in the park and has now also been completely removed from the recreation ground. The support poles are still in situ as these are concreted in and not considered to pose a health and safety concern. The old noticeboard was removed from the recreation ground at the same time, following the glass being smashed by unknown individuals, who used the fixings on the broken plank to smash the glass.</p>
<p>c. Annual Park Inspection</p>	<p>In the next few weeks, we plan to use last year's Inspection report to assess what needs repairing or requires attention prior to this year's annual inspection and attempt to act on those findings to bring things up to an appropriate standard. Once this has been done, it's probably worth looking at how inclusive our current equipment and provision is.</p> <p>Cllr Bennett attended a webinar on 10th May entitled "Designing Inclusive Play Areas" hosted by a company called Proludic. It was very informative and gave food for thought.</p> <p>Cllr Bennett said she was quite shocked to learn how many people in the UK live with a form of disability, whether cognitive or physical. 9% of children have some form of disability, 4.2 million disabled people are living in poverty of which 320,000 are children. Some of those children may not have personal access to play equipment, so we need bear this in mind for any future plans we look at for the recreation ground.</p> <p>The Annual Park Inspection has been booked for August 2024.</p>
<p>d. Emergency access – right of way</p>	<p>The Clerk has located a deed permitting a right of way over the driveway of a property on Sernal Lane next to the park. Access through this route might be difficult due to the circumstances of the home-owner so GAPC may need to take a softer view. There is also access available off Henley Road by the play equipment. The councillors agreed that as we have a legal right to access via the property on Sernal Lane, it should be maintained as an access route and the emergency services may need access to both entrances. However, the councillors agreed that once we have the lengthsman scheme up and running we could offer their services to help keep the access way clear across the driveway and into the park.</p>

<p>e. Friends of the Park Group</p>	<p>Cllr Bennet said we were hoping to be able to resurrect the idea of a Friends of the Park group, with a view to holding periodic cleaning sessions as well as focussing on ideas for the future on how to make more use of the available recreation ground space. We would plan to engage all areas of the parish community, with a view to enhancing and improving the space to make it inclusive for all, whether young or old, those with physical or cognitive needs, or those who might be disadvantaged in other ways.</p>
<p>f. Summer park events</p>	<p>The Clerk has not heard any more about the actual events planned for June and July, but the staff of the pub have been liaising with residents who live next to the park to see if they are happy with the proposals. So far, the majority are very supportive, although one or two have reservations.</p>
<p>g. Community Planting plans</p>	<p>The feedback from the residents' survey in October 2023 indicated that residents are very keen to see more planting in Great Alne. GAPC is working on plans to do more planting in the park in the autumn – including what trees will be planted and where they will all go. 250 trees have been delivered from I Dig Trees and have been heeled in to veg beds in the Clerk's garden! The existing trees in the Coronation Copse require maintenance and attention and we will be working with the young folk at the next huff space session on these trees. Tree sponsors are asked to water their trees regularly now that summer is here, to remove the grass round the base of their trees and to top up the woodchips to act as mulch and to retain water.</p>
<p>h. Defibrillator</p>	<p>Cllr Bennett is going to be GAPC's councillor-lead on the defibrillator.</p> <p>She reported as follows:</p> <p>Following on from the discovery that the defibrillator in the telephone kiosk on School Road was not registered on a national network called The Circuit, there have been many communications with Community Heartbeat Trust.</p> <p>In the process of trying to get it registered, it was discovered that the pads which were attached to the defibrillator were out of date, resulting in a warning beep being emitted, which subsequently managed to drain the battery. The existing spare set of pads replaced the out-of-date ones, a new battery was ordered along with a spare set of pads. The battery has now been replaced and the new spare set of pads has been stored with the defibrillator. Now the defibrillator is showing as "Rescue ready" it has, as of today, been registered on The Circuit, which means the defibrillator in School Road will be able to be found via The Circuit/Defibfinder websites, but most importantly with all NHS ambulance services across the country. As long as we continue with the routine visual and physical checks it will remain registered. On the Defibfinder website there are now 3 defibs showing in the village – one at the school, one in the telephone kiosk and one at the Cricket Club. The one at Great Alne Park is not showing as being registered.</p> <p>Cllr Bennett will be registered on the WebNos reporting system, which means that there will be more than one of us to report any issues to ensure that the defib is consistently monitored and ready for deployment. A local resident with a significant number of years' experience in a nursing setting has kindly volunteered to assist with doing the weekly checks on the defibrillator as it is a particular interest of hers. This should prove helpful should Cllr Bennett or the clerk be unable to carry out the visual checks. They will still be the people recording the findings on WebNos to ensure we remain compliant, and the defibrillator remains "Rescue ready".</p>

<p>i. Kiosk</p>	<p>There is a Community Defibrillator awareness session arranged for Saturday 15th June at 10.30am at the Memorial Hall, to which everyone is welcome – no previous First Aid knowledge is required, simply a willingness to assist in a sudden cardiac arrest incident. The session will be run by Community Heartbeat Trust and was paid for back in 2021 when it had to be cancelled due to a surge in COVID numbers. There is no uplift in charge as we are rebooking for a later date, and the Memorial Hall, whom we have also paid, are not charging any more either as it is a rebooking for a community event. The awareness session has been advertised via the GAPC email distribution list, posters in various locations around the village, and the event has also been advertised on GAPC’s Facebook page.</p> <p>Cllr Bennett reported that quotes have been requested for the repainting of the telephone kiosk – we have been given a voucher by British Coatings Federation to enable us to obtain the correct paint free of charge. Once we have managed to engage someone to attend to the refurbishment of the kiosk Cllr Bennett will arrange to collect the paint from the designated place in Redditch. The Clerk noted we have only had one quote - for £400 - and the councillors agreed that this job should be done, and we should accept the quote (commenting that it was cheaper than what had been paid previously).</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>MAIN BUSINESS</p> <p><u>For Information:</u></p>
<p>6a. Flooding update</p>	<p>Cllr Millard provided the following report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission made to SDC for funding which was successful - Huge thanks to Roger Bennett & Ian Taylor for their work on this. • 4 quotes obtained for Gully Clearing & CCTV work so we can try and start with clear gullies throughout the village. 3 of the 4 contractors quoting walked the village with us & provided suggestions & solutions. • Roger Bennett has been using WhatsApp to keep in touch with Drain Guardians to understand what drains need attention. A spreadsheet has all of this information. • Further conversations are to be had with WWT on how they can assist in long/medium term in conjunction with Landowners. • Positive meeting held with Farmers and some commitments made in respect of ditch clearance which should help in Sernal Lane & Alne Cote especially. • Woodland Trust met us on site (Coffee Pot Wood) and subsequently had contractors clear some of the area around the stream that flows from the North side of the wood to the river. • Mr Bloor's representative, who owns the plot of land opposite Coffee Pot Wood, has suggested a site visit to see what we are asking them to do. This is to be discussed before they visit. • Great support from volunteers, and huge thanks to Roger Bennett & Ian Taylor who have achieved so much in last few weeks.
<p>b. Newsletter</p>	<p>The Clerk confirmed that a newsletter had been prepared and distributed covering the information from the Community Action Day on 2 March 2024 and details of the potential sites for an affordable housing scheme.</p>

<p>c. Update on auction of former social club</p>	<p>The building was scheduled to be auctioned by Cottons on 27th March 2024. GAPC understands that the property was sold just prior to the auction but has no further information at this stage.</p>
<p>d. Inaugural WALC Councillors Meeting</p>	<p>Cllr Bennett attended the first WALC Councillors meeting on 16th April 2024. Cllr Bennett reported that it was quite useful to hear the issues and concerns of other councillors in various locations in Warwickshire and West Midlands. Next meeting is 11th July. This meeting is specifically for councillors to raise any queries, concerns etc with other councillors and representatives from WALC, so worth attending.</p>
<p>e. UKSPF Final Review and Sign off</p>	<p>The Clerk confirmed that the UKSPF funding for the streetlight upgrade project - received from SDC - has been allocated as per the project application – and GAPC’s financial and contractual commitments on the UKSPF funding have been met.</p>
<p>f. Henley Road hedge</p>	<p>The Clerk had been to meet with the property owners on Henley Road with the large hedge impacting the footway. The owners are very conscious of the access issues for all residents – but are also mindful of their role as guardians of a historic feature in the village, as the hedge has been at that location for approximately 130 years (they have photos to demonstrate). Their property, and the hedge, is also in the conservation area. A number of options were considered. The owners have been advised that the hedge should be cut back slowly and over a period of time, and it can only be done in specific conditions (ie not in direct sunlight). The Clerk also suggested that underneath the hedge be ‘sided out’ to provide as much surface area of the footway as possible.</p> <p>Following the meeting, the Clerk obtained advice from a friendly local tree surgeon and he gave the same advice about the need to cut the hedge back in stages and over a period of time so as not to kill it. It is best to undertake any pruning in late spring.</p> <p>The councillors discussed the issue at length and agreed to see how the above plan develops over the next couple of months. The Clerk also mentioned that the owner had considered whether there was an option to reduce the depth of the grass verge. The Clerk said that neither GAPC nor WCC would be prepared to fund this solution and left it with the owner to consider further. The Clerk agreed that if this was a potential solution she would be happy to try to find out some cost information, but any such solution would have to be at the homeowner’s expense.</p>
<p>g. No Mow May</p>	<p>Both WCC and SDC are supporting No Mow May this year. Feedback from the ‘Making Great Alne Greener’ survey distributed to residents in October 2023 indicated that the majority of respondents were in support of GAPC also supporting the scheme. Therefore, at the last PC meeting, the councillors agreed that we would adopt No Mow May and encourage residents to do the same. The Clerk contacted Limebridge and advised them of our intention, and also GAKMH. One of the councillors commented that someone has cut a strip of grass on the area next to the service road on School Road – possibly to enable a visibility splay. We will get feedback from various interested parties during the course of May and reflect on how it went at the July PC meeting.</p>

	<u>FOR DECISION/ APPROVAL</u>
h. Repair to pedestrian gates at the recreation ground	As discussed at agenda item 5c above, the councillors approved the quotation provided by the group of residents to replace the pedestrian and farm gate at the Henley Road entrance to the park.
i. Approval of quote received by BCL Hydro – local hydrologist company	Cllr Taylor has been researching local hydrologist companies with the objective of providing GAPC with a professional overview of the reasons for the flooding issues in the parish. This will support that we are doing the right thing in terms of the activities undertaken or planned in the weeks and months ahead. The councillors discussed the relevant procurement requirements in our financial regulations and Cllr Taylor confirmed he has approached more than one potential supplier to obtain a quote. It was agreed that we would wait until we have signed the SDC funding legal agreement, and the funds are in GAPC's account before taking this further.
j. Approval of quote for drainage clearance work	Cllr Taylor confirmed that three quotes had been obtained for the drain clearance work. Of the three, Cllrs Millard and Taylor consider that the Subscan quote is the best and also the most comprehensive. It would include CCTV investigation work. The councillors considered that as part of the work includes drain clearance in Kinwarton Parish eg on Coughton Fields Lane, that it would be reasonable to ask for a contribution from Kinwarton Parish Council. The councillors agreed that it would be necessary to wait until the SDC legal agreement has been signed and the funds are in GAPC's bank account. GAPC is also committed to match funding against a portion of this, ie £1,000. We could also see if WCC Highways can provide some money and whether any of Cllr Kerridge's delegated highways budget can be used for some of these tasks.
k. Approval to obtain quotes for new .gov.uk email addresses	The Clerk explained that this is a recommendation under the new JPAG guidance (Joint Practitioners Advisory Group). This will not be a requirement until the next financial year but it is advisable to start the process earlier as it will take some time. The councillors are happy for the Clerk to start obtaining quotes for this.
l. Approval for a GAPC credit card	<div data-bbox="485 1361 1517 1435" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">ACTION: The Clerk to start researching and obtaining quotes</div> <p>The Clerk explained that the new model NALC Financial Regulations provide that no personal staff credit cards should be used for expenses. The Clerk sought approval for an application for a GAPC credit card through Unity Trust Bank, with the recommendation that GAPC's revised Financial Regulations be amended accordingly in due course. The Clerk also explained that the new signatories would need to be processed before the credit card application could be made. The councillors approved the request.</p>
m. Update on EV Charging points in Great Alne	<p><u>For discussion:</u></p> <p>Cllr Millard reported that research into possible installation of EV charging points suggested that there were more suitable sources of funding available for the type of solution that GAKMH would be interested in. The hall committee had considered the issue at a recent meeting and subject to further information, agreed in principle to the idea of EV charging points being installed in the car park. They would ideally be looking for a 22KW charger to be installed and managed by one supplier, with a certain percentage of the</p>

<p>n. Works next to Coffee Pot Wood</p>	<p>income being returned to the hall. The further details that were requested during the meeting would be provided - one of the potential contractors was coming to site to meet with the committee in June.</p> <p>Cllr Millard explained about the works going on at the small area of land next to Coffee Pot Wood. The new owner is turning it into a play area for his children and has now built a playhouse and is planting a variety of plants – including bamboo which is very invasive and completely inappropriate for that location. Cllr Millard and the Clerk had a very lukewarm reception when they went to speak with the owner – he refused to give them his name but said he had been in touch with the enforcement officer at SDC who was apparently happy with the proposed work being undertaken. Cllr Millard has been working with the Woodland Trust in relation to flooding at Coffee Pot Wood, so he is going to ask them whether they have had any contact with the new landowner or are aware of what he is doing. In the meantime, GAPC will continue to liaise with SDC enforcement on the matter.</p>
<p>o. Hedge at Nightingale Close</p>	<p>This concerns the overgrown hedge at number 23 that is now encroaching on the pavement and into the highway. It is very close to the junction with Sernal Lane and vehicles now have to drive in the middle of the carriageway in order to avoid it. Cllr Bennett has spoken to the occupier of the property, which is an Orbit property - so it is Orbit's responsibility to maintain the hedge. The Clerk said she would try to contact Orbit to see what the position is and would report back to the councillors in due course.</p>
<p>p. Lengthsman update</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><i>ACTION: Clerk to speak to Orbit and seek for these issued to be addressed.</i></p> </div> <p>Using the templates provided by WCC, Cllr Bennett is working on topping and tailing the contract for services for the lengthsman and has nearly finalised the risk assessment, with input having been obtained from WCC Highways. The role will then be advertised in the usual way and interviews arranged.</p> <p>The lengthsman's training will be done by WCC, and County have committed to providing PPE. In the meantime, this training has also been organised for the FLAG volunteers who will be working on physical aspects of the flood alleviation and prevention programme – the session is scheduled for the first week in June. WCC have also committed to providing basic PPE.</p>
<p>q. Website issues</p>	<p>The Clerk explained that SDC, who hosts the GAPC website, has withdrawn access to the content management system, meaning that the Clerk no longer has access to the back end of the website and cannot manage content. All uploads and text have to go through SDC's webteam. It is very frustrating, especially as we did not have any notice of these changes – SDC forgot to add us to their list of councils who were affected and required notification. The Clerk said it has been challenging, especially during the year end and audit period, although she said the webteam have been very responsive.</p> <p>The councillors discussed the issue and agreed that now was probably the time to consider alternative providers – it has been something that has been needed for a long time. The Clerk noted that apparently there are only three councils remaining with SDC – all others have found alternative providers. Parish Online seems to be a popular choice for a number of councils and would be worthwhile considering due to the functionality for features such as maps for footpaths, street furniture etc. The Clerk said she would see what other parishes use and canvass opinion from other clerks etc.</p>

The Clerk asked Cllr Taylor if he would be interested in doing some preliminary research for the council so that we can get a feel for alternative solutions. Cllr Taylor agreed that he would look into it.

ACTION@ Cllr Taylor to undertake some preliminary research into potential website providers and report back at the next meeting.

PLANNING

7. Planning applications

Between meetings, GAPC has submitted the following responses:

- a response of 'no objection' to planning application 24/00768/VARY – Alne Wood Park Natural Burial Ground.

The following are the planning applications recently submitted in the parish of Great Alne and their current status.

Reference	Received	Status	Address
24/01076/AMD	29/4/2024	Pending Consideration	Juniper Henley Road Great Alne Alcester B49 6HX
24/00768/VARY	28/3/2024	Pending Consideration	Alne Wood Park Natural Burial Ground Sernal Lane Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6JG
24/00559/AMD	5/3/2024	Approval of Non Material Amendment	Great Alne Park Henley Road Great Alne B49 6HS
24/00489/TREE	27/2/2024	Tree Consent with Conditions	The Spinney Henley Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HX
24/00434/TREE	20/2/2024	Tree Consent with Conditions	Woodbine Cottage Henley Road Great Alne Alcester B49 6HX
24/00241/FUL	31/1/2024	Pending Consideration	Alne Cote School Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HG
24/00242/LBC	31/1/2024	Pending Consideration	Alne Cote School Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HG
24/00041/LBC	8/1/2024	Listed Building Consent Approved	The Lodge Henley Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HR

23/03414/TREE	19/12/2023	Tree Works Approved	The Lodge Henley Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HR
23/03299/FUL	7/12/2023	Application Withdrawn	Crocketts Farm Alne Hills Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6JS
23/03066/TEL28	14/11/2023	Comments sent	PCP005 Henley Road Opposite Little Orchard Henley Road Great Alne
23/03039/TREE	13/11/2023	Tree Consent with Conditions	Great Alne And Kinwarton Memorial Hall Henley Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HL
23/02992/FUL	7/11/2023	Pending Consideration	Alne Cote School Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HG
23/02993/LBC	7/11/2023	Pending Consideration	Alne Cote School Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HG
23/02882/FUL	25/10/2023	Permission with conditions	The Lodge Henley Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HR
23/02812/VARY	18/10/2023	Variation Permitted with Conditions	Alne Wood Park Natural Burial Ground Sernal Lane Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6JG
23/02777/TREE	12/10/2023	Tree Works Approved	Stuart Cottage Park Lane Great Alne Alcester B49 6HS
23/02778/AMD	11/10/2023	Approval of Non Material Amendment	Maudslay Park Great Alne
23/02474/TREE	13/9/2023	Tree Works Approved	Whitts End Park Lane Great Alne Alcester B49 6HS
23/02421/FUL	11/9/2023	Planning Permission Refused	Alne Park Park Lane Great Alne Alcester B49 6HS
23/02292/TREE	29/8/2023	Tree Works Approved	Gunn Court Park Lane Great Alne
23/02079/FUL	4/8/2023	Permission with conditions	7 Linfoot Oaks Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6RG

	23/02038/TREE	1/8/2023	Tree Works Approved	The Lodge Henley Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HR
	23/01942/TREE	21/7/2023	Tree Works Approved	Coffee Pot Wood Henley Road Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HR
	23/01647/LDP	21/6/2023	Permission with conditions	7 Linfoot Oaks Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6RG
	23/01532/AMD	7/6/2023	Application Withdrawn	Maudslay Park Great Alne
	23/01519/FUL	6/6/2023	Planning Permission Refused	Alne Park Park Lane Great Alne Alcester B49 6HS
	23/01384/HHPA	19/5/2023	Householder Prior Approval Not Required	31 School Road Great Alne Alcester B49 6HQ
	23/01366/AMD	17/5/2023	Approval of Non Material Amendment	Maudslay Park Great Alne
	23/01352/AMD	16/5/2023	Approval of Non Material Amendment	Cutlers Farm Henley Road Great Alne Alcester B49 6HR
	23/01143/AMD	24/4/2023	Approval of Non Material Amendment	Great Alne Park Village Road Great Alne B49 6HS
	23/01144/AMD	24/4/2023	Approval of Non Material Amendment	Great Alne Park Village Road Great Alne B49 6HS
	23/01145/AMD	24/4/2023	Approval of Non Material Amendment	Maudslay Park Great Alne
	23/01114/LDE	21/4/2023	Existing Lawful Development - Permitted	Kingsway Park Lane Great Alne Warwickshire B49 6HS
		There are no submissions to be made to SDC following this meeting.		
8.	ACCOUNTS			
a. Progress against budget update	The Clerk provided an overall progress against budget report for the financial year 2023-24 which was considered and agreed by the councillors. Please refer to the minutes of the Annual Meeting held earlier on the 21 st May for further details.			

b. Payments for approval

The following is a list of invoices and payments presented for authorisation and paid since the last PC meeting on 26th March 2024. Any blue cells represent payments currently set up to be authorised by a second bank signatory.

27.3.24	Clear Insurance Management - OSR policy for cyber insurance - Invoice ref 532105039 (premium split three ways with ATC and BPC = £135.08 each)	405.25
27.03.24	Newtown Printers – Inv34484	30.00
28.3.24	Stratford News & Media (Order number B0054243) - advert for new c'llor	209.16
30.3.24	Limebridge grass cutting (Inv 2960)	296.40
31.03.24	Unity Bank Service Charge (quarterly fee)	18.00
1.4.24	Clerk's wages for March 2024	2155.69
1.4.24	Clerk's expenses for March 2024	325.78
1.4.24	HMRC payment. NICS - E'ers=£252.28 E'ees=£123.05, KB Inc tax = £307.40. Total for tax period 1 = £682.73	682.73
1.4.24	WALC/NALC Annual subscription fees Inv-832 (VAT ONLY RECOVERABLE ON THE WALC PART, NOT THE NALC PART)	323.20
1.4.24	SDC Annual domain cost, website and CMS licence-INV 2026285	324.00
4.4.24	npower Business Solutions (IN10122558) - electricity costs	142.03
5.4.24	GAKMH hire charge for FLAG meeting on 7.4.24	30.00
12.4.24	Heart of England Forest - huff space session on 6.4.24 (Inv ref SIN000231)	90.00
20.4.24	Expenses due to M Hicks (FLAG volunteer) for expenditure on equipment for drainage	26.57
24.4.24	Newtown Printers Invoice ref 34553	72.00

The payments list was approved by the councillors and there were no queries.

Bank Account Balances @ 14 May 2024: £51,203.01

- Unity Trust Current Account T1 ending 0348: **£18,513.53**
- Unity Trust Instant Access Account (reserves) ending 0351: **£32,689.48**

Money in:

- **£135.08** from Alcester Town Council for their one third share of the cyber insurance premium

<p>9. Correspondence since the last PC Meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £135.08 from Bearley Parish Council for their one third share of the cyber insurance premium • £120 from GAKMH being refund of hall hire charge paid directly to them erroneously by WRCC (GAPC had already paid it upfront) • £15,000 – first tranche of the 2024/25 Precept from SDC • £289.09 credit interest from Unity Trust Bank <p>Transfers: 26 April 2024 - £6655.99 (being the CIL monies received from SDC)</p> <p><i>The Clerk confirmed the following correspondence had been received:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Liaising with WCC and other groups and organisations re flooding b) Emails re Climate Action Group and 4 climate projects – various regarding funding applications c) Emails with SDC re SDC Community Climate Change Fund d) Emails about Rights of Way Improvement Plan and footpaths e) Liaising with WCC re streetlight upgrade and outstanding tasks f) Emails from residents re concerns over flooding and various matters related eg Flood Action Group g) Correspondence re councillor vacancy h) Emails with internal auditor re audit and AGAR i) Emails re noticeboards j) Correspondence regarding the park and defibrillator k) Emails re no mow May l) Various correspondence dealing with residents’ queries m) Emails re treeworks in the park n) Correspondence re huff space and Chatty Café. o) Alcester SNT Team: weekly police report.
<p>10. Meeting dates for the year ahead</p>	<p>Due to the late hour, the councillors agreed that the Clerk should send an email canvassing dates for the PC meetings for the year ahead and obtain written agreement over email. The Clerk will then add these dates to the website.</p>
<p>11. Date and venue of the next meeting</p>	<p>Tues 16th July – venue TBC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p><i>Councillors are reminded of their duty to consider all aspects of equal opportunities, crime prevention, unlawful discrimination, biodiversity of the natural habitat, and other best practice when making decisions at the meeting.</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">The Meeting ended at 10.30pm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p>