

Annual Residents Evening Questions

A number of questions were raised and they were either written down anonymously and read out, or asked by residents personally.

All five Parish Councillors were in attendance, as well as Clerk to the Council Jan Hyatt and other Parish Council staff. The Chair, Cllr Marilyn Robson (MR) hosted and gave the majority of answers to general questions. Mr Dean Cronk (DC) attending on behalf of Hampshire County Council Highways (HCC) answered questions about road adoptions.

1. **Allotments** – *‘Will people who live near Elvetham Heath have the opportunity of having an allotment on Elvetham Heath?’*

Answer: MR gave an overview about the allotments. As six residents asked for allotment provision to be looked into, the Parish Council has a duty to try to find space. The issue of allocation of any allotments which are created is complex as there are several lists and they have differing details and numbers. Hart Allotment Association recently distributed a survey to everybody on their waiting list asking them to confirm that they would like to remain on the list. They have provided the Parish Council with the names of people on Elvetham Heath from this list.

MR confirmed that if permission is granted for the allotments, they will be for Elvetham Heath residents only, as their precept will provide some of the funding. There was agreement from many residents present that this should be so.

The current plans have ten allotments and a number of parking spaces. It has been suggested to the Parish Council that twenty smaller plots and slightly less parking would be a more sensible solution. The Parish Council will proceed on this basis.

2. **Road Adoptions** – *‘Why have some roads not been adopted?’*

DC said that the roads have to be of a certain standard before HCC can take them over. The problem is that although HCC has a bond from the developers, there is little incentive for the developers to bring the roads up to an adoptable standard, and HCC has little ability to compel them to do it. DC answered several other questions about the standards required for a road to become adopted.

Several observations were made.

- The condition of the main road is poor.
- Barriers near Whitewater Road need moving as they have fallen into the road.

DC said that HCC carries out emergency work, or takes action on all roads if necessary, whether public or privately owned.

Cllr Manning asked him if it worth residents writing to and petitioning the developers? DC said that this can't hurt.

A question was raised about what can be done about cars racing on straight parts of road. There is also an issue that Harrow Road is a 'rat run' where people race through to beat those going along

Elvetham Heath Way. It was asked if bollards could be installed to close off a section so that it is not a through- road? The discussion concluded that this would just move the problem elsewhere.

A speed checking device was used for a week on a long stretch of Elvetham Heath Way and there were very few people clocked at speeds over 40mph, therefore it wasn't considered to be a problem.

Several residents raised the issue of children crossing the bridge just outside Elvetham Heath to get to Calthorpe Park School. There are hundreds of them dodging cars and the problem will get worse each year as more children start going to the school. The idea of having a zebra crossing was mentioned. DC said that there must be a very big benefit to having one for it to be considered, as statistics show that they cause one accident a year, whether from a pedestrian being hit, or a car shunting into the back of one which is stopped. The benefit would have to outweigh the risk and the pedestrian vs car ratio would need to be looked at.

3. Park & Ride – *'What is happening at the Park & Ride area? Shops/Parks?'*

MR said that EHPC is in the process of taking over the management of the area. Bollards are being put in so that it can provide overflow parking when events are on.

The area still belongs to the developer but there can be no development on the site in the medium term.

4. Bus Shelters – *'Bus shelters – can they be cleaned and maintained?'*

DC said that on un-adopted roads it is the responsibility of the developers. For adopted roads there is no agreement with Adshel for maintenance like in other areas. They therefore don't appear to belong to anybody. There was a suggestion for having Perspex in them.

'Can there be a bus shelter at the turning circle?'

There isn't any formal agreement that the buses can stop there, so it's unlikely.

5. Pavilion – *'What time will the pavilion close in the evening and how will it affect nearby homes?'*

MR said that the plans were on display and planning permission was being applied for. The latest time it was likely to be used would be 9.30pm on Thursdays and Fridays and earlier on other days.

6. Older Children – *'Can there be some form of play area for the older children – 10+ since if they don't play football, skateboard or scooter, there's next to nothing for them to do!!'*

A similar comment was made: *'there are a lot of children on the Heath aged between 10-14 years old who have nowhere to go and nothing to do. This is an ongoing situation and needs addressing in a positive manner and urgently.'*

MR acknowledged that there will be an increasing number of children reaching this age group and that as part of the plans to refurbish the park, some equipment for older children would be provided. The feeling was that although a zip wire would be good for those of a certain age, the older children don't want equipment, but rather somewhere to go to hang out together.

The Scout Leader, David Millen pointed out that anybody can try Scouts.

It was agreed that this needed further consideration, the first stage would be a meeting of those interested with members of the council.

7. **Litter** – Comments were posted on the wall about litter:
- *‘Morrisons should be formally asked to clean up litter.’*
 - *‘Access to litter picking equipment to assist keeping public areas clean and tidy of litter.’*

It was mentioned that there is lots of litter outside Morrisons which causes a problem. MR said that EHPC would invest in some litter pickers which can be borrowed. David Millen said that in the coming weeks, 19th/20th Elvetham Heath Scouts would be litter picking and washing road signs.

8. **Trim Trail** – *‘I think we should have a trim trail around the footpaths and open space for both adults and children. They can’t be too expensive to create and would help residents save money on very expensive gym fees.’*

MR said that EHPC would look into whether these could be added somewhere.

9. **Roundabout** – At the junction of Turner’s Way and Wintney Street it is nigh on impossible to see cars approaching from the west Hundreds direction. Please can a zebra crossing or at least some warning lights be situated nearby? It s a very dangerous area to cross.

MR said that EHPC would monitor the situation and see if any reduced landscaping would help.

10. **Neighbourhood Watch** – *‘Does Neighbourhood Watch exist here or is it just stickers on windows?’*

MR said that it does exist and details can be found on the PCSO section on the Police website.

11. **Garages** – *‘A number of garages/sheds have been broken into very recently. How are we pressuring the Police to do something about this problem?’*

MR said that it was unfortunate that the Police couldn’t be at the meeting. If anybody sees anything they should notify the Police by calling 101.

12. **Signage** – A question received by email: *‘could some proper street signs be put up, on the fence on the footpath at the front entrance to the flats?’*

MR said that EHPC would respond to say that it is a matter for the residents to organise some signs.

13. **Picnic Benches** - A question received by email: *‘I was wondering if there was a way I could apply for funding for 2 picnic benches in the park opposite us on Elvetham Heath?’*

MR said that EHPC would contact the resident who asked the question.

This relates to the Mounts Way open space. As there were no local residents at the meeting it was decided that the opinion would need to be sought of those living nearby. It was noted that these benches could become a ‘hang out’.

Other questions and comments:

There was a suggestion from a resident at the meeting that the newsletter should be electronically distributed and EHPC should organise email address collection. MR said that it could be looked into but wouldn't replace the printed version. It is available on the website to read electronically. Also, the new website will be more interactive with lots of information.

A question was asked if people in a rented house have as many rights as homeowners and MR said that all residents, whether renting or owning a property have the same rights.

A member of the fete organising committee asked for helpers for the village fete which is on Saturday 16th June.

A question was placed on the wall at the end of the meeting: 'Can we have school signs on the Heath near/on way to school. I have seen 1 sign which is almost outside the school warning drivers that children are about/crossing. More are needed, especially around Turner's Way/pond roundabout/road. What about also "Twenty is plenty signage?"

MR's response is that often signs provide distraction or are missed, but perhaps the best idea would probably be to contact the school and see if it is something they feel is needed.

There is a danger that too many signs provide distraction or are missed. However, it is worth talking to the school about this as Highways would probably need their input before taking any action.