

Great Alne Parish Council Update – December 2020

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Wednesday 9th December.

TWO meetings will now be held (one after the other). Please email greatalne.parishcouncil@googlemail.com for the link to register for the meeting. We have added additional security measures to ensure only residents/people with a genuine interest can attend.

Great Alne Parish Council Parish Assembly - 9th December 2020 - 6.15-7.00pm.

All Parish and Town Councils throughout England are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting (which we call the Parish Assembly to try and avoid confusion!).

The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for the Parish Council and other local organisations to explain what they have been doing over the last year.

The meeting also enables village residents to have their say on anything they consider is important to the people of the parish.

This event was originally due to take place on the 16th May but was cancelled due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

The draft minutes from the 2019 Parish Assembly can be found on the website:<https://www.greatalne-pc.gov.uk/.../2019%20Great%20Alne...>

We would be delighted if any local groups would like to talk at the meeting. Please contact greatalne.parishcouncil@googlemail.com by Friday 4th December if you would like to be involved.

Great Alne Parish Council Meeting - 9th December 2020 - 7.00pm onwards (rescheduled date following the cancellation of 16th November meeting)

You are very welcome to attend both or just one of the meetings. If the Parish Assembly finishes early, the bi-monthly Parish Council meeting will still not start until 7.00pm.

The meetings will be held via Zoom. The Chairman will ask residents to remain muted. Should a resident wish to speak we will ask that they press the virtual 'raise hand' button which will alert the chairman that they wish to speak.

In order to try and keep the meeting as succinct as possible, an update is provided below to be read by Councillors (and residents should they wish to) ahead of the meeting.

We would politely request that if any residents have anything they wish to raise, please do so in writing to the clerk, 3 days ahead of the meeting where possible. Email address below.

Should you have any queries, please contact the clerk, Joanne Bullingham on 07833 790 375 or via email at: greatalne.parishcouncil@googlemail.com.

You can join zoom for free by following this link: <https://zoom.us/>

CORONA VIRUS SUPPORT

The contact details, should you require any help from the Alcester Community Resilience team, remain the same:

Alcester Community Resilience:

Helpline: 07707 598379

Email: alcester.response@outlook.com

Alcester Community Resilience is also on Facebook

4a. Alcester South SNT & crime statistics update

The following report has been made to the police since the 16th September meeting:

- Damage. Sernal Lane, Great Alne. Ball bearings fired at car causing damage to the glass and panels. Between 1pm and 3.45pm Saturday 31st October. 0288 31/10/2020
- Vehicle Crime. The Maples, Great Alne. Front and rear number plates unscrewed and stolen from vehicle. Overnight 24th & 25th November. 0101 25/11/2020

An update from the Alcester South SNT on any issues of local interest has been requested and will be provided at the meeting.

4b. Update on Great Alne Park development

Ben Ling confirmed that in line with the current (Tier 3) lockdown restrictions, everything will remain closed to residents of Great Alne for the time being.

The following update was provided by Jez Conen (Senior Development Manager) on 18th November 2020.

“General Progress”

Work has been progressing well despite the pandemic. The current phase of work comprises 68 units with 44 cottages and 24 apartments. We have had supply issues with certain materials and carpet supply is a real problem at the moment. We are expecting the first phase of cottages to be handed over to new residents at the end of November. We expect the remaining cottages to be complete by mid-December. The two apartment blocks are likely to complete in January.

Hoarding

Our board have approved a budget to replace the hoarding on Henley Road with signage and enhanced landscaping subject to planning approval. We also understand that there was disappointment within the parish due to the removal of the mature hedge and poor quality of its replacement. We have therefore persuaded our board to enhance the budget to allow for a more mature hedge to be planted in front of the timber fence. I have sent an indicative plan showing the proposed revised landscaping and signage which I would be grateful if you could share with the Parish. We have yet to share this with planning officers so early feedback would be helpful. The

design of the signs has yet to be finalised but it is intended that they will be very similar to the concepts we previously shared with you.

East Entrance

We have commenced discussions with the highways authority and planners regarding the timing of the opening of the east entrance. Our board have supported delaying the opening of this entrance so we can keep construction traffic separated from our residents' access. Our safety advisers have identified this as a significant risk. We hope the residents of Great Alne can help support us with this strategy.

Phase 3

We are still reviewing options for Phase 3 but it seems likely that we will not be making significant changes to the consented phase. We expect to make a final decision on the scheme in January and will share plans for any changes with the Parish as soon as we are able.

Farm Shop and Medical Centre

Work is nearing completion with the new medical centre. We expect to be able to hand over the accommodation to Alcester Healthcare in December 2020.

Work has commenced on the fitting out work to thatched building which will operate as the village shop. We hope this will open in the first quarter 2021."

The Parish Council have been contacted by two residents of Park Lane who have serious concerns about the delayed opening of the East Entrance and the impact this is having on Park Lane. Communications received by these residents will be shared at the meeting and the Parish Council will discuss the issues raised. If you have any comments you would like to add, please email greatalne.parishcouncil@googlemail.com or request the details to join the meeting.

4c. Memorial Hall's representative report

Update to be provided at the meeting.

4d. Representations from residents

To be considered at the meeting. Please raise any issues in writing to the clerk, 3 days ahead of the meeting where possible: greatalne.parishcouncil@googlemail.com.

4e. County Councillors Report

An update will be provided at the meeting.

4f. District Councillors report

Update to be provided at the meeting.

4g. Climate Change

Update to be provided at the meeting.

5a. Huff Cap Update

The new owner has been invited to attend the meeting. An update will be requested if he cannot attend. The planning application has been submitted to Stratford-upon-Avon district council and can be seen here: <https://apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanning/AppDetail.aspx?appkey=QGCHX3PMMQL00>

The following email from the new owner was received by the Parish Council on 18th November 2020.

"My name is Greg white and my business partner Richard Moore and I are the owners of your village pub known as the Huff cap or Mother Huff cap.

You will have seen that we currently have a planning application running for the erection of three new properties and as part of our application we intend to re-open the public house.

We have a number of interested operators for the pub, which have been reduced now, to a choice of two.

Both operators are established and will be an asset to the village. It would be unfair to disclose this at present, as negotiations are continuing, albeit slowly due to the difficulties both parties are experiencing due to COVID-19.

Both operators are keen to reopen the pub as soon as it's financially viable to do so and both proposals involve quite some investment.

We feel that the viability and sustainability of this local pub will be bolstered by the development of part of the car park and we intend to maintain ownership of the freehold pub for years to come.

We hope that should our proposal be successful, we would have the backing of the villagers, so that we can provide this social hub, that I hear the village needs back so desperately.

I would love to speak at your meeting next month and bring more advanced and exciting news".

5b. U Route – Spernal-Coughton Fields Lane

An update will be provided at the meeting.

5c. General maintenance update

Gunn Court street light – The new light is now working and the old column has been removed.

Phone box repair – the broken pane of glass has now been repaired.

Further updates will be provided at the meeting.

5d. Creation of Unitary Authorities – update

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) held Devolution and Recovery workshops (open to Town and Parish Councils) in October in partnership with Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) and Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA).

The following items were discussed:

Cllrs Seccombe and Timms updated participants about Local Government Reform in Warwickshire. The Government has invited councils in three other counties to submit proposals for unitary government.

The Minister recognised the work undertaken and progress made in Warwickshire to date, and has indicated his willingness to work with WCC as they develop a vision for future local government in Warwickshire. Councils in a number of other counties are in a similar position and WCC will work closely with them in the coming months.

WCC are still in the early stages of exploring the potential options for Warwickshire.

The main focus of the workshops was on the concept of ‘double devolution’, which underpins Warwickshire County Council’s Strategic Case for Change. Their vision is to create a flexible framework that puts more power, assets and resources into the hands of local people and communities, via Town and Parish Councils, voluntary groups and social action where the willingness, capability, capacity and resources exist to do so.

Such a framework would need to take account of the very different places, Town and Parish councils and voluntary groups across the County, and support a variety of approaches. There would be no ‘one size fits all’ approach or effort to push responsibilities to places that don’t want them or where appropriate resources are not in place.

WCC explained this is about creating the conditions to build community capacity, invest in communities and create a culture of community innovation and collaboration to build on our existing strengths in the vibrant voluntary and community sector.

WCC confirm they want to continue the conversation with Town and Parish Councils and gather more valuable feedback.

Immediate actions following the initial workshops are:

1. **Workshops to showcase what has worked elsewhere:** WCC will work with WALC and WCAVA to set up some virtual workshops featuring areas that have successfully adopted a double devolution framework, with input from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).
2. **Working group of Town and Parish Councils:** They would like to pull together a small group of Town and Parish Councils to work with them to inform their thinking about the options and practicalities of a double devolution framework.
3. **Voluntary and community sector:** They will engage the voluntary and community sector (VCS) through discussions at the Third, Private and Public Sector Partnership Group, and may set up a similar working group of VCS organisations.

5e. Hedgehog signs

The Traffic & Safety team at Warwickshire County Council advise that residents can erect signage on their own property, as long as it does not obscure vision for drivers on the highway, or overhang the pavement, causing problems for pedestrians. No signage can be placed on any Warwickshire County Council owned land.

Residents who raised this query initially will explore this further. An anonymous donation towards the cost of these signs has been offered as well as help with installing signs should anyone require this.

A couple of residents are setting up a hedgehog interest group in the village to try and address these issues and install signs. If you would like to be involved, please email greatalne.parishcouncil@googlemail.com and the clerk will pass your details on to the relevant person.

A request has been made for the Parish Council to approach Great Alne Park to enquire if they would be willing to erect a sign on the wide verge they have in front of their advertising hoarding as you leave the village. Councillors will discuss this at the meeting.

5f. Speeding/Road Safety

Update to be provided at the meeting.

5g. Proposed changes to the planning system

The government consultation has now closed. The government's response to the feedback is expected in the very near future.

5h. Equality and diversity policy

With the importance and high profile of Black Lives Matter, WALC have provided all local councils with information on the Equalities act. WALC also suggested that councils should adopt an Equality and Diversity Policy which was agreed at the September meeting. Since then, the Chairman has amended the draft policy provided by WALC and circulated to the councillors for discussion/approval at the meeting.

5i. Newsletter

All residents should now have received the Autumn 2020 newsletter. Please email the clerk if this was not received. If you would rather receive your copy electronically rather than by post, please let the clerk know. Email: greatalne.parishcouncil@googlemail.com

6a. Progress against budget

Update to be provided at the meeting.

6b. Covid-19

The government have confirmed that playgrounds can remain open during this second lockdown. The Parish Council politely remind people to read the signs within the playground and ensure the rules and social distancing are adhered to at all times.

To keep up to date with the most current guidelines and advice, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

6c. Recreation ground – annual review

Please see separate report below.

6d. Dates for 2020/21 meeting

The following meeting dates for 2020 are proposed:

17th March, 19th May (Annual and ordinary meeting), 21st July, 15th September and 17th November.

Saturday 15th May – Parish Assembly – To be discussed. It may be sensible to move this meeting to slightly later in the year when COVID-19 will hopefully be under control. This event could then potentially be held in person rather than via Zoom.

6e. Internal Financial Checks and AGAR

Cllr Millard completed the internal financial review with the clerk (via Zoom) on Thursday 12th November. No issues were raised and the clerk was able to provide the supporting documentation for the items selected for audit.

For the financial year ending 31 March 2020, the Council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) has been audited by an external auditor appointed by the SLAAA- in our case PKF Littlejohn LLP. All documentation submitted to PKF Littlejohn LLP and the External Auditor Report and Certificate and can be viewed on the website. <https://www.greatalne-pc.gov.uk/audits.cfm?source=left>

Some small administrative errors were highlighted including the wrong form being completed and the Chair and clerk have spoken about how to ensure the same errors are not made next year.

The AGAR is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Great Alne Parish Council and details can be found on the website (same link as above) under 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit'.

6f. Information Commissioner's Office – Data Protection fee renewal

Organisations that process personal data are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Under the Data Protection (Charges and Information) Regulations 2018 (the Regulations) they must also pay an annual data protection fee, unless they are exempt. The Parish Council's registration as a data controller under the Regulations expires on 20/12/2020 and the renewal fee is £40.00.

6g. Clerk's resignation

The clerk has handed in her notice following a new job offer. She would like to thank the Parish Councillors for their fantastic support over the last two years. The role has been advertised and it is hoped that the vacancy will be filled before the end of the year.

Planning applications

Since the last meeting the following representations have been made:

20/02241/TREE – 3 Gunn Court – Great Alne Parish Council submitted the following: No objection.

20/02488/FUL – The Huff Cap - Great Alne Parish Council submitted the following: No objection - On balance, we have no objection to the proposal. We do, however, have the following additional comments:

- We feel that the new houses will impact upon the views from the houses opposite on School Road. In order to mitigate this impact, we would request a condition stipulating the provision of suitable planting.
- Despite WCC Highways lack of objection, we have some concerns over the safety of vehicular egress from the north east corner of the site onto Sernal lane.
- We welcome the applicant's intention to re-open the Huff Cap operationally and we note elements in the proposals which should enhance the pub's viability. We would wish to see this intention secured by condition or legal agreement to the effect that the pub should be kept operational for at least 3 years in order to assess its long-term sustainability, recognising that the current Covid 19 restrictions, which will obviously have an impact on viability, will be temporary.

20/025211/FUL – Glebe Farm – Great Alne Parish Council submitted the following: No representation.

20/02326/LBC – Keepers Cottage - Great Alne Parish Council submitted the following: No objection.

20/02492/LBC – Dinglewell Farm - Great Alne Parish Council submitted the following: No objection.

Reference	Received	Status	Address
20/02937/AMD	09/10/2020	Pending consideration	Newlands, Alne Hills, Great Alne
20/02521/FUL	10/09/2020	Pending consideration	Glebe Farm, Alne Hills, Great Alne
20/02492/LBC	09/09/2020	Pending consideration	Dinglewell Farm, Alne Hills, Great Alne
20/02488/FUL	08/09/2020	Pending consideration	The Mother Huff Cap, Sernal Lane, Great Alne
20/02326/LBC	25/08/2020	Pending consideration	Keepers Cottage, Alne Hills, Great Alne
20/02241/TREE	18/08/2020	Tree works approved	3 Gunn Court, Ashfield House, Park Lane, Great Alne
20/01860/VARY	13/07/2020	Variation permitted with conditions	Cutlers Farm, Henley Rd, Great Alne
20/01862/LBP	08/07/2020	Listed Building Prop – Lawful dev granted	The Old Post Office, Henley Rd, Great Alne
20/01744/LDP	29/06/2020	Proposed lawful development permitted	Newlands, Alne Hills, Great Alne
19/03615/FUL & 19/03616/LBC	18/05/2020	Appeal in progress	8 Mill Cottage, Henley Rd, Great Alne

20/01223/FUL	12/05/2020	Application withdrawn	Cutlers Farm, Henley Rd, Great Alne
20/01237/LDP	12/05/2020	Pending consideration	Manor Court, Trap House, Henley Rd, Great Alne
20/01138/FUL	29/04/2020	Permission with conditions	Dan Skelton Racing, Lodge Hill, Shelfield Green, Alcester
20/01034/FUL	16/04/2020	Permission with conditions	Newlands, Alne Hills, Great Alne
20/00461/FUL	17/02/2020	Pending Consideration	Dan Skelton Racing, Lodge Hill, Shelfield Green, Alcester
20/00146/FUL	16/01/2020	Permission with conditions	Little Orchard, Henley Rd, Great Alne

Playground Report – November 2020

A site visit was completed on 28th September 2020 by Cllr Paul Clark and Clerk, Jo Bullingham.

They reviewed the annual playground inspection report (completed by the Play Inspection Company on the 5th August 2020) and also considered the issues raised during weekly playground inspections that are completed by Cllr Bowring, Cllr Clark and clerk, Jo Bullingham.

Based on recommendations, the following work will be actioned.

- Entrances to toddler area. The surface is lifting at the edges and creating trip points. Repair perimeter of surfacing to remove trip points. Cllr Clark will look at this and fill the gaps with some clear silicone.
- Picnic tables. There is algae or moss on the surface of the item. Clean and treat appropriately. Clerk will ask Limebridge to quote for this and hope it could be completed at the same time as the outstanding work.
- Redundant cable ties to be removed as they have sharp edges. Most of these were removed by Cllr Clark but a further check will be made to ensure they have all been taken off.
- Swings – There is notable evidence of chain wear and the seats have minor damage or wear. Clerk to get a quote to replace swing seats. If not replaced, the shackles are now worn in excess of 40% and require replacing. There is surface corrosion present on the item and the report suggests considering treating the item. Clerk to explore various costs of doing this work vs replacing whole unit.
- Activity Trail – Replace worn shackles as now worn in excess of 40%.

The following items need monitoring:

- Kompan multiplay – Notable evidence of chain wear and connecting lugs are also showing signs of wear. Replace when 40% worn/repair as required.
- Activity Trail – Secure all loose fixings. Cllr Clark will sort these and ensure all fixings are secure.
- Activity Trail (all of the wooden play equipment) – The timber has a number of splits/shakes or air cracks and this may affect the stability or allow water ingress which will accelerate the rotting process. Monitor to ensure the splits do not cross through fixing points of the structure and/or cause any instability.
- Activity Trail – Some fixings have worked loose in the rope connectors and they are beginning to corrode. Cllr Clark and the clerk were unable to identify any problem areas but this will be monitored.
- Activity Trail – Monitor chain wear and replace when 40% worn. The connecting lugs are showing signs of wear. Monitor and repair as required.
- Multi play Junior – The item is slightly loose in its foundations. Monitor for any further deterioration and repair as required. Cllr Clark and the clerk could not see any areas of concern but this will continue to be monitored at each playground inspection.
- Multi play Junior – The paintwork on this item is damaged/worn exposing the metal underneath which is rusting. Consider treating any rusting components and repainting in 2021/22 financial year.
- Multi play Junior –Notable evidence of chain wear. Monitor for deterioration and replace when 40% worn.
- Multi play Junior – There is some damage to the platforms around the fixing points. Monitor and replace as required.

The inspectors suggested the toddler swing (isolated due to Covid restrictions) was either removed fully or reinstated. Cllr Clark and the clerk agreed it was safer to leave both swings in use and trust that people will adhere to the correct social distancing guidelines.

The following works were outstanding for some time but the clerk has recently been informed that they have now been completed. Clerk/Cllrs will check this work has been completed satisfactorily.

- Replace matting at the bottom of the silver slide, underneath the two swings and the exit from the toddler bit in to the main play area.
- Clear the algae/moss off the playdate frame and sand any rough edges
- Sand the rough edge on the plank of wood with the stepping stones running along it
- Lift tree canopy to ensure a minimum clearance of 2.0m from equipment (above the bird's nest swing)

The following work is outstanding but the contractor has confirmed that they will do this as soon as possible.

- Turf around the two benches

Other

The hedge along School Rd was cut at the beginning of November.

Throughout the year, the toddler area has been made near unusable by someone covering the play house, slide and tunnel in mud. The mess appears to have been deliberately caused as opposed to mess caused through playing. In the first instance, the Parish Council paid to have this jet washed

following complaints about the state of it but this is not practical if it is happening regularly. Please remind your children to take care of and respect the playground so everyone can enjoy it.