

Note – this is a corrected version of the issued minutes, containing amendments as agreed at meeting held 7th December 2011.

1. Present

- Ray Morris (RM), Neil Colman (NC), Glyn Charlton (GC), Bruce Sturdy (BS), Barbara Dagger (BD), Andy Dagger (AD), Morris Little (ML), Denis Fowle (DF), Lucy Dorton (LDo), Brian Dorton (BDo), Alan White (AW), Ian Bruce (IB)

2. Apologies

- Lynda White (LW)

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- Agreed

4. Previous Actions & Action Plan

Item	Action
<p><i>V1 – Create centre with Village Green</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey leaflet was distributed, collected and returns passed to NC. • Considerable discussion re “perception issues” and the “strong feelings” expressed. Generally agreed that it was a mistake to mention “Village Green / Centre” on front of leaflet as this prompted misconceptions about the purpose of the survey. • Agreed that Group needs to better advertise/highlight activities. Will make use of Grapevine and the village website. • Discussion about what result would potentially constitute a mandate to undertake further activities and level of confidence relating to data. • Agreed that comments received on forms are important and should be captured. These may influence the scope/emphasis of potential Study. • Discussion about influence of inaccurate/misleading claims published by Third Parties. • Results will be passed to Parish Council (PC) once analysis is complete. • Results (including comments) will be published on the website. • Agreed that any responses received after analysis is complete will be retained but not included in results. • RM will contact PC to update on progress. • Agreed that additional meeting required to consider results (see below). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC to finish analysis and distribute results by 30/10/11 • RM arranging to publish minutes etc on Village website • To be agreed at next meeting • RM action

<p><i>V2 – Retain and preserve Old School Hall</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM wrote to Parochial Church Council (PCC) on 5th October 2011 requesting further information re ownership etc. To date no response received. <i>[See post meeting note 1]</i> • AW mentioned Coombe Farm & Tovil Development Plan (May 2010) – there is an intention to take over / purchase the Tovil Village Hall for use as a community centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action
<p><i>T1 – Review road signage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action owner – to be retained on minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need owner
<p><i>T4 – Bridge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM/AD/ML met with John Wilson (JW) to discuss “Save Our Bridge” (SOB) issues, and had a positive discussion. • JW agreed that further progress is difficult without having a site meeting with a representative from Highways – JW is organising this. • BD to progress contact with Rochester Bridge Trust (JW will be copied in on correspondence). <i>[See post meeting note 2]</i> • ML has investigated listing / scheduled ancient monument status of the Bridge – outcome unclear. <i>[See post meeting note 3]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting progress from JW • BD to contact • NC to check
<p><i>T11 – Gateway entrances to village</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action owner – to be retained on minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need owner
<p><i>CO3 – Noticeboards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM progressing 	

5. AOB

- Question from David Hussein re printing costs of survey. Printing was arranged by NC using work facilities at no cost. NC confirmed that employer has no vested interest in any issues relating to Village.
- Minutes of meetings will not be published on website until agreed by Group.
- Need to give consideration to which other points from Plan should be addressed going forward.

6. Next Meeting

- Extra-ordinary meeting to discuss survey results to be held on Wednesday 2nd November 2011, 1930, The White House PH

Post Meeting Note 1 – Old School Hall Ownership

Email received from Amanda Howard on 10/11/2011:

Dear Neil

We are Gary Hindley and Amanda Howard, the new owners of the hall.

Barbara has passed on to us your letter to her of 5 October regarding future use of the hall. It is very good to hear from someone heavily involved in the village that residents wish to make more use of the hall. It is exactly what we want to hear.

I am already pursuing some potential bookings but it would be very good to meet with you to hear your ideas, especially as you will have far greater knowledge of what is likely to be useful and popular in relation to East Farleigh.

Please reply via this email address or by phone (numbers below)

Regards

Mandy and Gary

NC responded 12/11/2011:

Mandy & Gary

Many thanks for contacting me – it's great to finally find out who has purchased the Hall.

Meeting up sounds like an excellent idea. I'll ask the Action Group who would be best to do this.

I've copied this email to Ray Morris (Action Group Chair) and Glyn Charlton (Parish Council Chair & a member of the Action Group). I'm sure they'll also contact you.

Will be in contact soon.

Regards

Neil Colman

Post Meeting Note 2 – Rochester Bridge Trust

Email from BD to Rochester Bridge Trust

Dear Sirs,

I am contacting you as a representative of East Farleigh Village Action Plan Group (EFVAPG). Our plan was adopted by East Farleigh Parish Council, more information about our group can be found on the following link;

<http://www.eastfarleigh.net/village-plan/village-plan.php>

When putting together the Village Plan, it was clear from completed questionnaires, protection of our bridge from oversized vehicles was high on the villagers list of concerns.

Despite width restriction signs being displayed on both sides of the bridge. Many large vehicles still come across it. Either blindly following their Sat-nav or failing to see the warning signs and possibly in some cases simply ignoring them.

There is an action group formed called EFSOB (East Farleigh Save Our Bridge) involving Councillor John Wilson who has the support of Helen Grant MP for Maidstone and the Weald. Councillor Wilson is trying to get Highways involved but to the best of my knowledge there has been no meeting date set, as yet.

EFVAPG would like to know if you have any advice to offer as you are custodians of all the Medway Bridges and clearly have much expertise. We as a group, are all good hearted volunteers but do not even understand how the width restriction of 6ft 6" is measured! Is it from wing mirrors or widest part of the body? We go round and round in circles with our ideas of physical width restrictions and one way systems but have now come to the conclusion, we desperately need expert help and advice as to the best way forward. We are committed to protecting our bridge which is registered as an Ancient Monument and would like to know, in your expert opinion if you can offer advice as to how to do this.

Kindest regards

Barbara Dagger

East Farleigh resident and member of EFVAPG

The response from The Rochester Bridge Trust

Dear Mrs Dagger,

Thank you very much for your enquiry.

You are not the first person to suggest that the Rochester Bridge Trust might be the custodian of all the Medway Bridges but this is not the case. The Trust only owns its three bridges at Rochester. All the others are owned and cared for by the local highway or railway authorities.

In certain circumstances, the Trust has the power to contribute funding towards crossings of the Medway owned and operated by others. Under this charitable power, the Trust has contributed to the cost of most of the Medway crossings over the years (although not East Farleigh as far as our

records show), but the ownership of the crossings always remains or returns to the local highway authority and the Trust has no ongoing responsibility for them.

At this stage I think the right approach is being taken by seeking a meeting with Kent Highways. They own the bridge and have responsibility for the safety and integrity of the bridge and I anticipate that they will be very keen to do what is necessary to protect the structure if it is at risk. The planning authority (Maidstone?) will also have an interest as the structure is listed, as would English Heritage if damage is being done.

Regarding the definition of vehicle width, I am not surprised that you are not clear about the exact legal definition as it would best be described as arcane. The key points from the relevant regulations are that overall width is

“the distance between longitudinal planes passing through the extreme lateral projecting points of the vehicle inclusive of all parts of the vehicle, of any receptacle which is of permanent character and accordingly strong enough for repeated use, and any fitting on, or attached to, the vehicle except: any driving mirror; any snow plough fixed to the front of the vehicle; so much of the distortion of any tyre as is caused by the weight of the vehicle.....any lamp or reflector” and 11 other highly technical exceptions which would hardly ever apply. Of course if any load overhangs the permanent structure of the vehicle that is included too.

In practice it means the widest part of the loaded vehicle excluding mirrors and lights. I am sorry that I am unable to help you at the moment, but once the local authorities have considered the situation I would be happy to talk to officers from KCC or Maidstone BC if they think the Trust can help in any way within the limits of our charitable powers. However expertise in bridge protection certainly lies with KCC and I would be confident that they will have the best ideas on what needs to be done.

Best regards

Sue Threader

Mrs S.E.P. Threader CEng BEng MICE

Bridge Clerk (Chief Executive)

Rochester Bridge Trust

Post Meeting Note 3 – Status of East Farleigh Bridge

NC checked English Heritage website and confirmed that Bridge was Grade II Listed – however, accompanying text on website entry suggested a Grade I Listing. Checked with English Heritage and they confirmed that website entry was incorrect and Bridge is Grade I. English Heritage website has since been updated (see extract of entry below).

<http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1249674>

Name: EAST FARLEIGH BRIDGE

List entry Number: 1249674

EAST FARLEIGH BRIDGE, STATION ROAD

Grade: I

Date first listed: 26-Feb-1987

Details

STATION ROAD TQ 75 SW EAST FARLEIGH 2/1 East Farleigh Bridge GV I Partly in Barming Civil Parish. Road bridge. Probably C14. Roughly coursed ragstone with stone coping. Approached at an angle from the south- west, and slightly cambered towards centre. Water spanned by 4 pointed arches (2 to centre higher), each with doubly hollow-chamfered stone rib to each outer side and 2 plain- chamfered ribs to soffit. Arches alternate with full-height cutwaters on both sides of bridge. Blind, chamfered skew arch to angle between bridge and retaining wall of south approach road. South-west retaining wall about 43 metres long, increasing in height, to carry road across low ground before bridge. Low later arch with stone voussoirs spanning tow path on north bank. One of a series of medieval stone bridges across river Medway, and possibly one of the finest medieval bridges in the south of England. Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The ancient monument status is as follows:

<http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1005496>

This monument is scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as amended as it appears to the Secretary of State to be of national importance. This entry is a copy, the original is held by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Name: East Farleigh Bridge, over the Medway

List entry Number: 1005496