

Burwash Parish Council Car Park Working Party

Site Visit for Toilets and Car Park on Thursday 2nd December at 1.30pm and subsequent Informal Discussion in Parish Room.

Attending: Cllr Bob Franklin, Cllr. Fiona Hosein, Cllr. Antonia Stapylton--Smith, Cllr. Julian Kenny, Graham Bird, Greg Meares, Peter Pope, Sylvie Franklin, Helga Castle.

Apologies: Steve Dixon, Cllr Keith Lloyd & David Cowell

The keys for the Public Toilets in the Car Park had been obtained from Rother District Council and the members inspected them. The members then toured the Car Park, noting various points and then moved to the Parish Room for a discussion.

Public Toilets. The Toilets seemed in good condition, particularly bearing in mind they had been closed since March 2020 due to the pandemic. However, the survey commissioned by Rother in 2019 had flagged several areas where repairs were necessary or preferable.

The toilets consist of a square building divided into 2 (men's and ladies') with a separate maintenance area accessed from outside, and an added-on wooden building as an accessible toilet. As the Portaloo stood in front of the door to this wooden building, this could not be inspected. The Men's toilets included 3 urinals and a closet, with washing facilities (in stainless steel) in a spacious area, and the Ladies included 2 closets and washing facilities, also in a spacious area. All in all, the toilet block over-provided the toilet facilities, as the single accessible Portaloo seemed adequate so far, although it is accepted that a permanent solution needs to provide a larger area for a wheelchair etc.

The options discussed:

1. Keep the existing Public Toilets.
2. Purchase a fully fitted modular building
3. Convert part of the Parish Room as an accessible toilet, with external access.

Greg suggested that a reason for keeping the existing building could be as a toilet and store for contractors, if and when the proposed Community Hub is built. At present, the lease offered by Rother includes the demolition of the existing Toilet building, but the Council would need Rother's confirmation that the 'making-good' would include not only the reinstatement of the car park surface but also the disconnection of the services. If the building is not demolished by Rother, the Parish Council would need to budget for this in the future as part of its plans for a Hub and this could be considerably more than £10,000 at present offered by Rother.

The Parish Council would need estimates for each of the three options in order to reach an informed decision.

Car Park.

1. Two cars have not been moved in the car park for some time – they are both MOT'd and taxed when checked on Gov.UK and insured when checked against the Motor Insurance Database.

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2. In the north-west corner, a space adjacent to a garden is being coned off by the resident in order to provide personal charging facilities.
3. On the boundary with Dorothy Waterhouse's garden, large trees are growing across the top of the fence and over the car park.
4. On the western boundary, the bank by the hedge has fallen and covered part of the spaces there. Rother must dig the bank back and secure the edge.
5. In the south-western corner, access has been made through the hedge and an unofficial footpath made across land owned by Ashlands.
6. The trees on the perimeter of the car park need to be regularly cut back in order to try and reduce the amount of debris collecting on the car park.
7. Rother needs to be contacted regarding the recycling bins. Could the number of bins be reduced and the emptying schedule needs to be determined.
8. It is understood that the clothing recycling bins are regularly emptied by the Salvation Army.
9. Along the border by The Bear, a public footpath runs between the wall and a hedge. At present, there is insufficient space for people to walk down this footpath because of the hedge. The hedge is believed to be the boundary of the car park, so it is not clear whether the footpath is on Rother's land or land owned by The Bear.

It was noted that a great amount of discussion has been given to the issues of both the Public Toilets and taking over the Car Park, without a decision to date.