

**Parish Council Meeting - Mill Lane and the Mill Pool 26th
September 2019**

Minutes of Meeting

Present from Figheldean Parish Council

Cllr John Menzies
Cllr Jackie Dryden
Cllr Darrell Amison
Cllr Nick Tissot
Sandra Burch – Parish Clerk

Invited Guests

Lt Col Kev Cammack – Commandant SPTA, DIO/MOD
Lt Col Nick Turner TD – Garrison Engagement Officer
Stg Alan Swanwick – MOD Police
PSCO Pippa Brewer – Wiltshire Police

1. John Menzies thanked everyone for attending and handed over to Cllr Darrell Amison.
2. Introductions were made from the invited guest, Lt Col Kev Cammack who called himself a friend of the village and his children attended the local school. He introduced us to Sgt Alan Swanwick from the MOD police. He is based at West Down Camp and has full powers to arrest.
3. Lt Col Nick Turner, Garrison Engagement Officer whose role is to interlock the community and army. He welcomes this chance for residents to interact with the Army.
4. Cllr Darrell Amison opened the discussion by explaining the background to the Mill Lane/Mill Pool issues, the current situation and the way ahead. He thanked Lt Col Kev Cammack for his engagement on this matter and Wiltshire Police for their support over the past few years along with resilience of the residents in Mill Lane who have tolerated the blunt issues of antisocial behaviour, abuse from irresponsible visitors, suffered disruptive noise (loud music and swearing), litter (including human faeces) and speeding cars. Last year's long hot summer proved a tipping point in terms of frequency and extent of the disruption, abuse and anti-social behaviour suffered.

5. A special thank you to Derek and Chris of Mill Lane for repairing the temporary fence on numerous occasions.

6. In the early part of 2018 it was agreed the way forward was a collaborative approach with Figcheldean Parish Council, Wiltshire County Council, Police and Army.

7. Following a period of negotiation, the Parish Council settled on a two-pronged approach:

a. The DIO to remain responsible for the Mill Pool and the river banks (including the picnic site and former parking area by the bridge). Following an incident at the Mill Pool last year whereby a child got into trouble whilst swimming, the DIO installed the temporary fence that remains in place.

b. The identification and implementation of measures to reduce the impact of speeding and parked cars in Mill Lane and the wider village. The method of achieving this is called a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). The TRO proposal includes the following measures:

(1) A low-barrier gate in Mill Lane sited approximately between numbers 296 and 296A. The Parish Council, in conjunction with the residents, will be responsible for the protocols surrounding the opening and closing of the gate. This will allow access rights for those residents to reach land/property beyond the gate. Importantly, pedestrian access to the river and footbridge is vital and will remain and not be affected by the TRO.

(2) Double yellow lines along the length of Figcheldean House's walled boundary with Mill Lane (approximately 45mtrs).

(3) New signage (wording and location to be confirmed).

8. The TRO proposal was subject to a period of Public consultation in July/August of this year. Villagers were able to lodge support or objections to these proposed measures but this was not clearly relayed to the village. As Wiltshire Council (WC) received a number of objections to the proposal, a report is being prepared for Cllr Bridget Wayman, Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport who is expected to decide on the TRO proposal in the near future.

9. The decision on the TRO will follow a five-day 'window' during which members of the public are strongly encouraged to comment on the report. Figcheldean Parish Council (FPC) will keep parishioners informed of timings and contact details via leaflets and social media. To ensure a quick response, parishioners are encouraged to prepare their thoughts now – the more support there is for the TRO proposal the more likely it is to be supported.

10. Lt Col Kev Cammack talked about the size of Salisbury Plain which is the size of the Isle of Wight and in the near future will have five MOD police officers to cover the area. There are other areas that they are tackling antisocial behaviour. The budget allows for stock fencing and motion sensor cameras which could provide photographic evidence of criminal damage. Funding is available for signage and a life buoy. After note: Lt Col Cammack has informed the PC that two cameras, a lifebuoy and new fence signage should be in place by the end of October.

The DIO installed temporary fencing due to a near drowning last year and sealed off the area for Public safety. There was no alternative but to seal off the site and hope the temporary fencing also deters some of the anti-social behaviour.

11. PCSO Pippa Brewer spoke about her involvement with the residents over this matter. The Police did a social media statement that the Mill Pool is closed to the General Public and advised them of their own safety. This year alone there has been 45 police patrols not including call outs for the Mill Pool and Mill Lane. The Police can issue a section 59 for not driving in an appropriate manner and if the culprit is caught twice their vehicle is confiscated. The main offenders are young youths and PCSO Brewer believes the barrier will deter many of them due to their wish to drive their cars right up to the site and remain in or close to their vehicles.

12. **Questions from the Residents of Figcheldean and Ablington**

- **Q. Will the barrier restrict motorcycles?**
 - The Parish Council will look into the matter and consider a barrier adjacent to the proposed gate that allows pedestrians to pass but not motorcycles. We need to think about prams and wheelchairs.

- **Q. Could the fence line at the Mill Pool site have a lockable gate? could it be child proof?**
 - The Army did not want to seal off the area to everyone but due to antisocial behaviour and near drowning they had no alternative but to

do this. In the future we can look into this but the concern is to deter visitors who make living in Mill Lane unbearable.

- **Q. With the TRO surely you are moving the problem to High Street and parking in front of driveways?**
 - PCSO Pippa Brewer - The main offenders are young youths and the barrier is likely to deter them from parking in Mill Lane and the High Street as many will not want to be far from their cars.

- **Q. The temporary fencing is an eyesore and signage does not say the area belongs to DIO?**
 - The temporary fence can be replaced by stock fencing if the residents wish and Lt Col Kev Cammack will look at signage. Refer to After note above.

- **Q. Can the river frontage be fenced off to deter families from swimming and fishing?**
 - Again we don't want to restrict the area for the enjoyment of the villagers we need to deter the people who abuse this beauty spot.

- **Q. Has anyone from Wiltshire Council visited the site?**
 - Yes, Kate Davey from Wiltshire Council has visited the site and worked with us on the TRO and other options.

- **Q. Have parking permits been looked in to?**
 - Yes, this would be too complex to administer.

- **Q. Have the PC looked into Traffic Calming Measures?**
 - Yes, this has been reviewed a few times within the parish and could be reviewed again, let's see if the TRO works first.

- **Q. Will the barrier affect access for the emergency services?**
 - We will develop protocols for the opening and closing of the gate with authorised permit holders (that includes the DIO) and the emergency services.

13. **A proposal** was made that the area around the fencing and Mill Pool be returned to nature and become wild again. This proposal was put to the residents and the majority were in favour. This will now be actively considered.

14. A comment was made about the Mill Pool being on Wild Water Websites or other websites, this matter will be investigated by the Parish Council.

15. Timeline for the TRO implementation, if approved, is likely to be early Spring 2020.

16. Cllr Darrell stressed to the residents we want to regain this beauty spot for the village and if the TRO is approved and proves to be successful, the temporary fencing could be removed at some point in the future.

17. **Conclusion of meeting**

The TRO proposal received strong support following a show of hands.

We have a five-day window with Wiltshire Council to log our support for the TRO – parishioners to be informed of timings and contact details in due course. The Parish Council will communicate this by leaflet drop and social media.

We seek Wiltshire Police and DIO support for the TRO.

Lt Col Kev Cammack will install sensor cameras with the possibility of two cameras and review signage with immediate effect. The broken seat and will be removed for Health and Safety reasons.