

HOPE WITH ASTON PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES 1895-1995

asked if he would agree to the Parish Council fixing "Kissing Gates" at both ends of the path. In an attempt to get some action regarding the handrail to the steps, the Clerk was requested to ask the Secretary of the Borough Council querying the legal position if the Parish Council were to erect a handrail without permission of the landowner. In reply he stated that under the Highway Act of 1959 "A Highway Authority may provide such rails as they think necessary for safe guarding persons", and as DCC are the Highway Authority suggested that the Parish Council request the DCC to exercise these powers under the Act. Almost with relief the Minutes of the Council Meeting of January 1977 states that "the steps on Footpath No 1 are satisfactory"

Reference is made in a Minute of May 1980 to a complaint regarding an attempt being made to prevent the use of footpath and bridle way No 33 by horse and pony riders. It was resolved that the matter be referred to the County Council for clarification as to the correct designation of this route.

At the meeting in November 1981 the Clerk advised the meeting that the total mileage of Public Footpaths within the Parishes of Hope and Aston amounted to 22.32 miles. It was accordingly agreed that the maintenance of public footpaths within the Parishes remain the responsibility of the Borough Council. At the same meeting the Clerk read a letter from the County Surveyor enquiring whether the Police had been notified of the removal of the footpath signpost at the western end of Footpath No 17 to which enquiry the Clerk was to inform the Surveyor that as the sign was the property of the County Council it was the DCC's responsibility to notify the Police of its removal and to repeat the request that a new and more permanent sign be installed. The reply was that a more substantial sign was too expensive! It is therefore no little surprise to see a Minute of the May 1991 meeting again saying the sign to Hope Mill (Footpath No 17) is missing and there are many other signs missing in the "Village network of paths". These have been reported to DCC and the Peak Planning Board. This path No 17 crops up again in November 1991 when it is reported that the DCC have been informed as to the condition of the stile only to be informed by their Inspector that is in good order. The Minute reports that the stile is in a very poor state, and on one side is missing completely. In the same meeting it was pointed out that 'mountain bike' routes set out in some recent publications were in fact illegal. There followed a number of complaints to the Parish Council regarding the number of mountain bikes using country paths – legally only to be used by pedestrians.

17 – VILLAGE LIGHTING

We do know that oil lamps existed in the village but the matter of village lighting is not mentioned in any minutes until the Annual Parish Meeting of March 24th 1928 when considerable discussion took place over the question of transferring the lighting of the village from voluntary effort "as hitherto" to the Parish Council. The motion was "That the lighting of the Village be, in the future in the hands of the Parish Council to whom the present lamps be transferred – the Lighting Act thus being adopted" The vote recorded is: For – 16, Against – 5. It was also proposed "that no more than a product of a two penny rate be expended on the lighting of the Village in any year". This was carried unanimously, and in 'conclusion' the Vicar gave a "very hearty vote of thanks to Mr B Waterhouse and Mr Joseph Robinson for their efforts on behalf of the Volunteer Lighting of the Village in the past."

Having now taken over village lighting the Council were very soon considering a more modern form. It would seem that gas lighting had been in the village for a number of years as there is a reference to the possibility of using gas lights at the station and at the bottom of Station Road, a request to that effect being made of the Midland Railway Company. By October 1928 the Chairman was asked to write to the manager of the Hathersage Gas Company asking for "the approximate cost of fixing to lamps, apparatus for automatic lighting to shutting off, and the keeping in order of the lamps as at Bamford."

October 8th 1928 the cost of automatic apparatus at three shillings per lamp was considered prohibitive, and it was suggested that Mr Lewis to be asked at £12 per annum if he will undertake lighting and shutting off all lamps in the village. Quotations for the post of lamp lighter were called for and in October 1929 an appointment was made at £15 for six months.

By 1932 a Precept for lighting was set at £28 and the Hathersage Gas Company were to be asked to fit

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controllers to lamps, the cost to be spread over 5 years. Also they are to fit and maintain lamps – lamps to “shut off” at 10.30 pm. Also it was confirmed “That the village lamps be lit each night throughout winter months irrespective of a full Moon”

In March 1933 at the Annual Parish Meeting it was unanimously carried “that the present rate of 2d for lighting be increased to 3d to enable the Council to extend the time of lighting and general efficiency of the street lamps. The first mention of any payment is for £13.2s.2d.

Whilst we do not know how many lamps existed, it was agreed that a further 4 lamps should be purchased for the village on condition the price be not more than £12.

By 1935 village lamp positions were checked to conform with the restricted speed regulations, and a new lamp was purchased! In September it was stated that “the lamps are to be lit on October 2nd and set half an hour after sunset until 11.00 pm”.

By 1944 the cost of gas lighting had increased to £76.4s.6d and a Precept set for 1944/5 at £60 for lighting. In 1950 the cost of lighting by gas was £93.7s.9d.

From time to time complaints were put to the Council about the quality of lighting and on some occasions the failure of some lamps. The gas company complained to the Parish Council about the continuous damage to lamps and in March 1955 it was suggested that the Chairman speak to the schoolmaster asking him to speak to the children. Also the police were asked to “keep observation”. Within one month the schoolmaster, Mr P J S Walker, informed the Parish Council that he had given to P.C. Attwood the names of three boys who had confessed! Within one month the Parish Council received a letter from the father of one of the boys saying that he is willing to pay for the damage.

The increase in the cost of gas lighting had concerned the Council over many years, and several attempts had been made to get a favourable quotation for the cost of converting to electric street lighting- note - no longer referred to as “village lamps”.

Finally in July 1955 the Parish Council received a quotation from Yorkshire Electricity Board and Mr Fisher of YEB attended the meeting to explain all details of the scheme for conversion to electricity. The full scheme put forward was to cost £280 and each lamp would cost £2.4s.11d per year plus 16s for three time switches. This was considered important enough for it to be necessary to hold a public meeting. The Chairman explained the scheme to the public and stated that two gas lamps were at the road to Hope Station and two on Castleton Road. The scheme was accepted and “the cost borne by a one penny rate. The Clerk was asked to give 12 months notice to the East Midlands Gas Board terminating their agreement. The Derbyshire County Council were advised of the change to electric street lighting in October of 1955. Third party insurance on street lamps had existed for many years and the London and Lancashire Insurance Company increased the value of insurance to £10,000 with a nominal increase of 6 shillings per annum due to the change to electric lamps. In March of 1956 two old gas lamps were broken beyond repair and removed by the EMGB – almost at the end of an era, and at the Annual Parish Meeting the Chairman reported that the “lighting rate would be 6 pence”. A request was made for the Council to look into the possibility of a lamp near the railway bridge in Aston Lane.

It seemed that with electric street lighting installed parishioners wanted more and better lights. The first mention of a new type of lamp came in March 1960 when the YEB were asked to install a sodium lamp at the Marshes at a cost of £18 and some members of the Parish Council agreed “to tour the village” to consider extra lights and within two months six extra lights had been ordered.

There is a minute in the January meeting of 1961 of more requests for further additional lamps, but the failure of lights was causing Councillors considerable inconvenience in reporting them. It was decided that a supply of printed cards be obtained and distributed to the members of the Council for their use in reporting failures.

In July 1961 a letter is referred to in the minutes from the Borough Council suggesting it might be a better system if the lighting powers now given to Parish Councils should be taken over by the RDC. The members expressed strong objections to this and the Clerk was asked to inform the RDC of this.

In September of 1966 a letter was received from DCC saying that if the New Local Government Bill

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becomes law, the liability for lighting would be on the Highway Authorities. (This is in reference to Trunk Roads). The questionnaire from DCC to record the existing street lighting appears to have been ignored as a reply was sent that "lighting would become more costly than at present, as Parish Councils (as the Lighting Authorities) have personal knowledge of lighting necessities and endeavour to give efficient and economical service". A reply was received from DCC in February 1967 stating that "Hope Parish Council would continue to be the lighting authority under the new Local Government Act".

The Council resisted a request from YEB to terminate the maintenance agreement but soon a private contractor was to be instructed to carry out the maintenance work.

Contrary to what the DCC told the Parish Council Meeting in February 1967 a representative from DCC attended a Council Meeting on May 1st 1973 and informed the Council that the DCC *had* transferred 21 lamps to their authority, these being classed as roadway lighting. Also, in accordance with the Act of 1966 prior approval *must* be obtained from DCC for any additions or improvements made to the lighting system by the Parish Council and in consequence could not accept the claim for alterations carried out without approval. In view of the letter received from DCC in 1967, Hope had considered themselves to be the sole lighting authority, and had therefore not considered it necessary to obtain prior permission. It was pointed out by the Chairman that there were 63 lamps and if DCC were to take over 21 (presumably those on the main road) the County should pay something for lighting, maintenance and insurance since April 1967. The DCC agreed to pay 1/3 of all costs up to December 31st 1972 and to pay for energy and maintenance on 21 lamps, the insurance on these to be cancelled.

Despite reports that Bamford and Castleton had agreed to DCC taking over all street lights the Hope Parish Council considered it best to have local maintenance and service agreements.

Complaints and reports of inspections of lamps are a common feature in minutes during the period 1970 to 1980 and in March 1980 the Council were informed of the names of several contractors by DCC asking them to submit quotations for improvements to street lighting. In June 1980 the Council decided to accept the tender by BICC Translight Ltd for work shown on a plan. The Council made suggestions as to the location of certain lamps and the cable runs, asking if these could be made in grass verges. Under the same heading of "Street Lighting Improvements" there is a minute of the meeting dated July 1980 - only one month after - saying "write to YEB accepting their quotation". Later in the year the Clerk was instructed to obtain a numbered plan of street lights in the Parish (it unfortunately does not say to whom the request was to be made - we assume it to be the DCC).

Earlier minutes had made specific reference to payments for power to lights and maintenance but there is no indication as to why this information did not continue when DCC were involved!

18 - VILLAGE STREET COLLECTIONS

All monetary collections made in the village have received permission from the Parish Council. A formal request is made, the request is put to the members at the next meeting and formal approval is given.

The first reference to such collections is in the Minute of November 1899. This is the only occasion when the Parish Council decided that the matter should be deferred. The reply by the Clerk is written in full as follows:-

At a meeting of the Parish Council held last night, your letter re "Fund for Soldiers' and Sailors' Wives and Children" was read. I am instructed to say that the Members are entirely in favour of a fund being raised in the Township, but, as money is pouring in from all parts of the County, they prefer to make an effort later on. They are of the opinion that by waiving the matter for some little time a greater amount will be collected, as no doubt there will be greater distress, and therefore greater need of funds than at the present time.

This letter was sent to the Rural District Council, who, we presume were organising the appeal.