

# MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee

Held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 23rd February 2022 at The Chequers, Maresfield  
(postponed from 16<sup>th</sup> February)

### Present:

Jo Lawrance (JL)  
John Smith (JS)  
Stan Sadowski  
Bruce Milton (BM)  
Ian Shaw (IS)  
Alex Clarke (AC)  
Rob Penfold (RP)  
Stephanie Bassett - Minutes Secretary

**APOLOGIES:** Jacqui Royal (JR) and Dick Thompson.

### 1. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY & MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes were approved. All matters arising were addressed during this meeting.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP AND WEBSITE – SS

#### Website

Notice of the additional information available on the website resulted in a spike in viewings. Information and Development is now on the website.

#### Membership

Our aim of attracting 140 members has been surpassed. It is now 146, 5 of which were a result of Jo's letter. There are 33 who have not renewed and IT WAS AGREED that they should be removed from the membership list.

**ACTION:** SS to remove non paid-up members.

#### Attracting New Members

SS has received no comments on the draft letter discussed at last month's meeting. There have been 89 new arrivals in the village and our welcome pack resulted in 21 new members (a hit rate of 24%). Of the total number of households in the village, 420 are non members.

It was felt that we should raise awareness of the Group within the village rather than drive for membership i.e:

- invite non-members for help with the Footpaths Group or other projects.
- share the newsletter with the village.
- write an article in the March parish magazine

IT WAS AGREED to revisit the question of membership in September with the aim of increasing the membership to 200.

**ACTION:** A drive for volunteers to be held at the Quiz and the Fete.

**ACTION:** Revisit the question of membership in September

### 4. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#### • Quiz - March 12th 2022

RP confirmed arrangements are in hand. 55 people have confirmed so far and all questions have been set with the exception of Current Affairs. Prizes are still to be bought. Raffle tickets will be on sale.

A hand sanitizer station is available at the Village Hall so there is no need to provide it for the tables.

RP will ask Pat Bowler if the Village Hall possesses a real coffee-maker.

**ACTION:** RP to speak to Pat.

#### • Village Clean Up – 9th April 2022

AC has produced a poster and an article for the Parish Magazine.

**ACTION:** AC to send poster to SS for inclusion on the website.

- **Summer Supper – 2<sup>nd</sup> July**

No firm decision was taken on the type of event. JL has received a quote from the Chequers for a buffet and social at £9.00 but the Village Hall is booked for that evening should we wish to host a Cheese and Wine evening.

**5. AGM 2022 – 3rd May 2022**

AC clarified the notice of AGM needs to be sent out to members 21 days before the meeting and should include an Agenda, financial accounts, Treasurer's statement and Minutes of the previous AGM.

**ACTION: All information for inclusion to be ready by first week of April.**

The overhead projector is to be used to illustrate reports on the Footpaths Group, Village Clean-Up and achievements of the year plus photos, as well as the Treasurer's Report.

**ACTION: SS to source the overhead projector.**

**ACTION: RP to arrange audio equipment.**

JS expressed his reservations about serving alcohol given our charitable status.

IT WAS AGREED that tea and biscuits will be served.

AC clarified the constitution of the Committee: 2 executive officers plus 7 committee members and up to 2 co-opted members, whose appointment is ratified at the next AGM.

IT WAS AGREED that Liz Lewis be co-opted as Treasurer (proposer JL, RP).

IT WAS AGREED that Stephany Reed-Perkins be co-opted as a Committee Member (proposer JL, seconder IS).

**6. VILLAGE FETE – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 1.15 to 5pm**

JL confirmed that she has agreed to be site manager on the day.

RP emphasised that the marquees need to be erected the night before.

IS advised that the hay bales need to be delivered to the position required.

**ACTION: RP to discuss the marquees with Laura Stevens-Smith.**

**ACTION: SS to check Pat Palmer's files to see if there is a model number for the marquee.**

**ACTION: JL to draw up a rota of volunteers to man our stall.**

**ACTION: RP/JS to obtain trestle tables for the plant stall from Ann.**

**ACTION: RP and BM to list the items held on behalf of the fete.**

**ACTION: c/f to next meeting.**

JS has received a letter from Clare Goossens asking for the shed key and raising concerns about the rat infestation. He elaborated the work done to eliminate the rats and despite checking every fortnight since, no rats have reappeared.

IT WAS AGREED that JL should send a reply confirming the rat situation and refusing the request for a key. She will also advise that BM and RP are keyholders and that in view of JS stepping down from the Committee, any future correspondence should be with RP.

**ACTION: JL to reply to Clare as above.**

**ACTION: BM to arrange for a copy of the key for RP.**

**7. TREASURER'S REPORT - JS**

John tabled the latest Income and Expenditure report and highlighted the following:

Total Income £4428.18      Total Expenditure £3033.73      Surplus £1394.45

Gift Aid is down from the previous year.

Admin Costs includes the new bank charges of £5.00 per month and last year's AGM printing.

Footpaths expenditure includes the purchase of a new hedge-trimmer.

**ACTION: JS is to ensure the change of Treasurer is registered with the bank w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> March.**

**8. FOOTPATHS GROUP UPDATE – JS**

Attendance continues to be poor.

The following work has been undertaken:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> February – work on drainage at the Underpass.
- 9<sup>th</sup> February - work on the drainage ditch along the Park Farm/Rabitty Lane footpath has begun.
- 16<sup>th</sup> February – village gates and signposts washed ready for painting in March.

David Guckenheim has declined to become Footpath Group leader and BM will be temporary leader. Under new guidelines issued by Highways, no work on bridges or stiles may be carried out by the Footpaths Group as upkeep is the responsibility of the landowner.

All forms are up to date.

The First Aid certificate held by BM will expire at the end of the year. Once training has been completed, Rachel at the Council needs to be informed. Two qualified First Aiders are required.

**ACTION:** BM to undertake First Aid training at appropriate time.

**ACTION:** BM to contact the company in Hellingly for the cost of new signposts and find out if the lettering is painted on.

#### 9. MERCHANDISING - JR

No update available as JR was not present.

**ACTION:** c/f next meeting.

#### 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

AC tabled information re the Queen's Canopy initiative which will fund saplings to give to appropriate landowners.

**ACTION:** c/f next meeting to discuss launch at Fete.

For information: A picnic on the Recreation Ground has been planned for the Sunday before the Fete.

- **Planning**

JL was unable to attend the Planning Committee meeting.

- **Bonnets**

A walk to visit Victorian houses in the village at the end of March has been planned and JL was approached for someone who has knowledge of the history of Maresfield to accompany the children.

**ACTION:** JL to reply to the School expressing interest and ask if DRB clearance is necessary.

**ACTION:** JL to contact Carol Jeffree at the Historical Society asking for their assistance.

**ACTION:** RP to contact Tony Cottingham re.the book published on the history of Maresfield.

- **Christmas Tree**

The Millenium Players are performing A Christmas Carol and would like to sing carols by the tree.

IT WAS AGREED to erect the tree on 3<sup>rd</sup> December to coincide with the last night of the performance.

**ACTION:** c/f next meeting to discuss road closure and licences, serving mulled wine etc.

- **Parapets**

SS has spoken to a resident of Underhill and it appears the issue is dormant.

**ACTION:** SS to contact Clare Goossens to ask whether any action was taken further to the SLR.

- **Spring/Summer Newsletter**

AC confirmed the Newsletter is in production and will be circulated to all village residents.

**ACTION:** JL is to ask for volunteers from the membership to leaflet their area.

**ACTION:** c/f next meeting

- **MCG shed**

There was discussion on enlarging the MCG shed and whether a local developer could be asked to sponsor the laying of a concrete base.

**ACTION:** To be discussed with Laura Stevens-Smith

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 16<sup>th</sup> March at The Chequers**

- **Dates Of Future Meetings For 2022:**

April 20<sup>th</sup>, May 11<sup>th</sup>, June 15<sup>th</sup>, July 13<sup>th</sup>, September 14<sup>th</sup>, October 19<sup>th</sup>, November 16<sup>th</sup>, December 14<sup>th</sup>.