

# MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee

Held at 7.00pm on Monday 18th March 2024 at The Chequers, Maresfield

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Jo Lawrance (JL)	Chair
Terence Brady (TB)	Treasurer
Stan Sadowski (SS)	Membership
Bruce Milton (BM))	
Ian Shaw (IS)	
Rob Penfold (RP)	
Stephany Reed-Perkins (SRP)	
Tom Merchant (TM)	
Caroline Shaw (CS)	

**PRESENT:** Jo Lawrance, Terence Brady, Bruce Milton, Ian Shaw, Rob Penfold, Stephany Reed-Perkins (SRP), Tom Merchant, Caro Shaw (CS), Stephanie Bassett (Minutes Secretary).

**APOLOGIES:** Stan Sadowski (SS)

### 1) DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

### 2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 & MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the previous meeting were APPROVED.

#### Matters arising:

- **Pictorial Map and DT Memorial – RP**

Finished artwork has been collected by David Bailey and is now with the joiner. Work is expected to be completed in 6 – 8 weeks time.

We are waiting for final dimensions to be provided but the area by the Chequers has been cleared ready for installation.

- **MCG Notice Board – BM**

The board is at the painting stage but work is being held up by rain.

- **Quiz Review**

A meeting to hand over a cheque for £1,000 to the Foodbank has been arranged for Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> March at 10.00. Meet at the Chequers at 9.45am to share lifts.

Positive feedback was received on the presenters, question categories and table games.

Next year:

- Question topics to be displayed on the tables to make it easier to decide when to play the joker.
- Only 8 categories plus 2 games to make the evening shorter.
- Review amplification
- Increase ticket price to £8.00
- Date 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025

- **Website – TM**

The new website is nearly ready.

Biographies and JPEG photos are still outstanding.

**ACTION: CS, RP**

**c/f next meeting.**

- **Maresfield Historical Society – RP**

**Books:**

We are waiting for a final reconciliation of sales against printing costs before sending the proceeds to MHS.

**Grant:**

IT WAS AGREED that our grant to MHS of £100 towards the storage of documents at the Village Hall (agreed at the September meeting) would be put on hold until May when its future is known.

- **Land behind the Recreation Ground**

A meeting took place between MCG (JL and BM) and the landowner. The landowner reiterated his view that he was acting within his legal rights to fence off the land. He went on to say that it was his intention to develop the land below the fenced off area with around 150 houses, with access from a junction off the Maresfield bypass. He accepted that better communication was needed, emphasizing that he prefers face to face dialogue as opposed to social media etc. JL reiterated that her meeting with the landowner was not to be seen as any form of endorsement or support for his actions to date or in the future.

A local resident has approached MCG to offer his services as he has professional experience in this area. He and RP will be meeting to discuss later this week.

- **Park Farm Lane**

The Parish Council will be meeting tomorrow evening (19<sup>th</sup> March) to discuss reconfiguring the parking at the Recreation Ground. The scheme would involve moving the boundary posts closer to Park Farm Lane and creating a parallel road under and in front of the trees so that parking could be accessed via the small car park on the left hand side, and would prevent traffic travelling up Park Farm Lane beyond the entrance in order to park. In addition, the car park would be enlarged to 16 spaces and incorporate a turning circle and drop-off zone at the entrance to the Recreation Ground.

The Committee felt this scheme would have a huge detrimental effect on the village and Recreation Ground users as it would reduce the size of one of the playing fields. A statement was discussed which it is hoped could be read out at the Parish Council meeting calling for a public consultation and a feasibility study carried out in relation to the potential damage to the trees, which have a significant heritage value, being situated in the designated Conservation Area. The statement also requested details of how these modifications would be paid for and that alternative schemes be explored, such as relocating the parking towards the Outdoor Bowls Club to avoid creating a parallel road alongside Park Farm Lane. RP undertook to send the agreed statement to the Parish Council Clerk with a request that it be read into the minutes so that a record of our concerns was recorded.

**ACTION: RP**

CS referred to new Government legislation aiming to protect local green areas of particular importance to local communities and suggested photographing the mature trees.

**ACTION: CS**

**3) TREASURER'S REPORT – TB**

The February accounts were circulated by email to all Committee members on 6th March. A sum of £4,000 has been transferred from our current account to the deposit.

**Accounts Update**

Current account balance: £2,840.77

Deposit account balance: £11,152.90

**4) UNDERHILL BRIDGE/STREAM/OART- TM/RP**

- **OART**

RP has had no reply from the CEO of OART despite chasing. He will verify the email address.

**ACTION: RP**

- **Bridge**

The railings have been removed and some clearance work has been carried out but it is still too muddy for major repairs.

- **Shortbridge Stream**

JL has received a request from Ben Reed asking for evidence of otters, water voles, eels, sea trout, crayfish or lampreys in the Stream.

5) **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- **Photographic Competition – TM**

TM is waiting for AC to produce the final poster design.  
RP confirmed Uckfield Camera Club are aware.

- **Litter Pick – 6th April**

SS to send out a reminder to membership.

**ACTION: SS**

- **AGM – 14th May**

All written reports to be with SS in time for mailing to membership 3 weeks beforehand (on 23rd April). Pack to include Chair's Report, End of Year accounts, Voting slip and Minutes of the last meeting.

JL asked Committee members to prepare a short presentation, with slides if possible.

TB - Accounts

BM – Footpaths

IS - Future Events

TM - New website

SS - Membership statistics

SRP to chair meeting

CS to take charge of the Attendance List on the day

Refreshments: red and white wine.

Speaker: IT WAS AGREED to invite Ian Tysh, Martin Craddock and Roy Galley to form a panel to respond to members' questions instead of having a speaker this year. Questions received in advance of the meeting would be considered first, as the time allotted would be 30 minutes.

**ACTION: JL to approach Ian Tysh**

**TM to approach Roy Galley**

- **Summer Newsletter – JL**

Aim to distribute before Cheese and Wine event in July.

100 word contributions from IS (horticulture), RP (planning and development), TM (photo competition), BM (footpaths) plus JL (Chair's report).

6) **FOOTPATHS GROUP UPDATE - BM**

- **Schedule of activities**

The schedule of activities will be displayed on our new notice board.

- **Footpaths/Millennium Walk**

RP has sent a link for the Parish Council footpaths map to TM for inclusion on our website. .

**ACTION: TM**

7) **PLANNING UPDATE – RP**

Nothing further to report.

7). **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Local Transport plan**

TM to send a draft letter to Roy Galley commenting on the proposal for dualling the bypass and requesting contact details of Clare Dowling at ESCC and asking if he would join a panel at our AGM to answer questions from the membership.

**ACTION: TM**

- **Post Office Move**

The public consultation into moving the Post Office to the Village shop will close on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

**ACTION: SS to send a link for the consultation to members.**

**TM to put the link on the website.**

- **Wealden Draft Local Plan**

An exhibition of the plans will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> March from 2-8pm at the Village Hall. Several MCG Committee members confirmed they would be attending.

- **Committee matters**

TB checked that all Committee members were receiving his monthly emails containing the statement of accounts.

- **Fingerposts**

The fingerpost at the Duddleswell crossroads (Crowborough Road) has rotted and fallen down, and the nameplate on the fingerpost at New Road has disappeared. BM is taking steps to replace them and has informed Highways.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING : Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7pm in The Chequers.**

Future meetings will be:

20<sup>th</sup> May, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 15<sup>th</sup> July, (no meeting in August), 16<sup>th</sup> September, 21<sup>st</sup> October,  
18<sup>th</sup> November, 16<sup>th</sup> December

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.27pm