

MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee

Held at 7.00pm on Monday 18th December 2023 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, Bruce Milton, Ian Shaw, Rob Penfold, Stephany Reed-Perkins (SRP), Tom Merchant, Stephanie Bassett (Minutes Secretary).

APOLOGIES: Terence Brady , Stan Sadowski, Caro Shaw

1) DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED 20th November 2023 & MATTERS ARISING

RP gave an overview of the Minutes from the November meeting, highlighting the action points. The Minutes were then APPROVED.

Matters arising:

Pictorial Map

NTR

Classic Vehicle Show

An email from TB suggested contacting the owner of Babylon Nursery, who is interested in hosting the event.

ACTION: SRP/Martin

Quiz

JL will ask Alex Clarke if she could design a poster.

ACTION: JL

Cheese & Wine

IS has spoken to Ann who has confirmed the use of her house/garden on 27th July.

Planning

SB gave an update following the consultation meeting with the developers re. plans to build 300 houses at Goldbridge Farm, Newick. The meeting was organized to canvas views prior to a planning permission submission. There was a good deal of opposition and a petition was started. SB will monitor Newick Talk to see if an action group is formed.

3) TREASURER'S REPORT – TB

November accounts were circulated on 5th December. An update was emailed as follows:

Accounts Update

Current account balance: £7,117.84

Deposit account balance: £5,816.37 (incl. £34.26 interest)

Banking update

Access to telephone banking is now available. IT WAS AGREED that BM would be registered with HSBC as the nominated secondary user.

IT WAS AGREED that all expenses claims be authorized by the Chair.

JL advised that she still has a few outstanding annual subscriptions to collect.

4) UNDERHILL BRIDGE & STREAM - TM

Balfour Beatty (ESCC's sub contractor) has contacted both landowners re. access to the stream. The work remains scheduled for late Spring. Therefore Underhill remains closed to traffic.

IT WAS AGREED that an expert is needed to verify whether sea trout are currently in the stream, which may incur a cost. JL is to ask Ben for a recommendation. If this is unsuccessful, there are other options: Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust, E. Sussex Wildlife Rescue (Trevor Weeks), or a contact known to TM. **ACTION: JL**

(NB: Addendum RP attended a meeting on Wednesday, 20th December with the District Councillor and a fisheries expert.)

5) UPCOMING EVENTS:

Quiz – 24th February - TM

Arrangements are in hand. TM has set the questions, SRP will act as MC and SS will keep score. Details of the Photographic Competition will be announced.

Following discussions re pricing and the provision of a meal/food IT WAS AGREED that the cost would remain at £7.00 per person and that no food would be provided. JL will write to local tradespeople in the hope of obtaining a few high-end prizes. **ACTION: JL**

Optional games at £1.00 per person were proposed: guess the wine and heads or tails.

ACTION: IS to arrange a cash float for raffle etc.

RP to take out ½ page ad. in the February magazine

Cheese and Wine - IS

(see Agenda item 2)

Photographic Competition – TM

TM circulated a draft poster. JL is to ask Alex Clarke to design a poster using the information provided. **ACTION: JL**

Locations for the poster: Post Office, Chequers, Blue Auto, Tyre Pros, Tesco, Waitrose, Bishops.

IT WAS AGREED that Uckfield Foodbank would be adopted as our nominated charity for 2024.

ACTION: SB to write to request use of logo.

Easter litter pick – 6th April

Classic Vehicle Show and BBQ – SRP

(see Agenda item 2)

5) FOOTPATHS GROUP UPDATE - BM

There is NTR on the Old Barn.

MCG Noticeboard

BM is still awaiting a quote from John Lazenby. He confirmed that the doors will open outwards and will be locked.

An additional chainsaw is needed with 3 people to receive training. BM has researched companies and IT WAS AGREED to use the 1 day training offered by Plumpton College at £189 per person. Each participant will need to have their own safety equipment. BM suggested that we use the grant from the Parish Council for this.

BM is to check if regular refresher courses need to be undertaken.

BM is to check with TB whether our insurance covers the use of a chainsaw.

ACTION: BM

JL expressed concern that the Footpaths Group has all the necessary permissions from landowners/the Council to carry out tree cutting and suggested a protocol be drawn up.

6) PLANNING UPDATE – RP

- **Revised plans for the development on Straight Half Mile.**

Plans have been approved subject to various stipulations and conditions.

- **Straight Half Mile Cottage allotments**

The allotments land is not owned by the cottages. SRP understands the landowners may be looking to sell for development. It was suggested that it could become a Community Orchard, as there are already established fruit trees.

- **Downland Farm**

NTR.

- **Recreation Ground Gates, Park Farm Lane**

RP reported that there were a number of objections to the plans and that he has made representations as an individual. He sought permission to write to the Planning Officer on behalf of the Committee requesting a full Planning Council decision rather than an individual WDC officer. IT WAS AGREED in principle subject to agreement by those Committee members not present at this meeting.

ACTION: RP

7). ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Website

The website is missing biographies of the new Committee members.

ACTION: TM, CS, TB to send to SS for updating.

JL would like the website redesigned to be more user friendly on a mobile device and TM offered to re-build. He suggested keeping the current website until the new one is ready to launch. TM is to liaise with SS on the handover for website in the new year. **ACTION: TM**

Executive Committee

We currently have too many Committee members, although SS will be retiring at the AGM.

IT WAS AGREED to present a resolution at the AGM to adjust the number of Committee members allowed

Committee meetings calendar

IT WAS AGREED that meetings should continue to be held on the 3rd Monday of the month.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING : Monday 15th January 2024 at 7pm in The Chequers.

Future meetings will be:

19th February, 18th March, 15th April, 20th May, 17th June, 15th July, (no meeting in August), 16th September, 21st October, 18th November, 16th December

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.23pm