

MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee

Held at 7.00pm on Monday 26th September 2022 at The Chequers, Maresfield

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Jo Lawrance (JL) Chair
Liz Lewis (LL) Treasurer
Stan Sadowski (SS) Membership
Bruce Milton (BM)
Alex Clarke (AC)
Jacqui Royal (JR)
Ian Shaw (IS)
Rob Penfold (RP)
Stephany Reed-Perkins (SRP)

PRESENT: Stan Sadowski, Bruce Milton, Alex Clarke, Jacqui Royal, Ian Shaw, Rob Penfold, Stephany Reed-Perkins, Stephanie Bassett (SB - Minutes Secretary)

APOLOGIES: Jo Lawrance, Liz Lewis.

In the absence of JL, the meeting was co-chaired by RP and AC.

1. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

RP declared a conflict of interest in respect of the Maresfield Historical Society.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED 21st July & MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes were APPROVED.

Matters arising

Parapets:

It was AGREED that the matter has reached a dead end. No further action.

Insurance:

c/f next meeting

Assets Register

RP has now completed and our assets amount to £4,628.

ACTION: LL to check insurance cover.

Rabbity Lane tree: **c/f next meeting.**

Merchandise:

JR has checked sales at the Post Office and there has been no movement of tea towels or cards.

Therefore no immediate need to reprint cards.

Cards

Each picture needs an individual scan of the artwork. JR recommended seeking quotes from another printer.

Tea Towels

Newsletter is to be added to the tea towel packet. **ACTION: JR**

Book

A complaint was received that book price is too expensive. It was AGREED to keep the current price.

Treasurer

See Agenda Item 3.

Website

SS confirmed links to future planning applications for large developments are on our website.

Winter Newsletter

It was AGREED to have a Christmas tree on the front cover, a bi-fold design to allow for larger font, logos to remain, application form to be removed and used as insert for membership drives/renewals.

Copy is to be received by mid October and finalised at next Committee meeting on October 17th. The newsletter is to be ready for mid November (before the Christmas tree lighting on 3rd December).

ACTION:

Tree project update and advert for Treasurer (AC)

New message from Chair (JL)

Update on Footpaths Group (BM)

Update on Planning (RP)

Footpaths Group

A recruitment poster is now being displayed at the Village Shop.

ACTION: JL to advertise on Maresfield Matters Facebook group.

Queen's Green Canopy

See Agenda item 9.

Allotments and Planning

Allotments are being dealt with by the Parish Council. No further action.

Planning was covered under Agenda item 10.

AOB

JL submitted a grant application on 9th September.

Meeting days will alternate between Mondays and Wednesdays as LL is unavailable on Mondays.

Appointment of Vice Chair **c/f next meeting**

Paper copies of MCG documents **c/f next meeting**

3. TREASURER'S REPORT – AC on behalf of LL

AC summarised the Treasurer's report circulated by email before the meeting.

As at 12th September the current account balance is £6,636.55, and the savings account £7,003.79.

Expenditure

There are a few items outstanding totalling £1083.45

The cheque to the Ashdown Forest Foundation in memory of DT has not yet been cashed.

Fete funds amounting to £481.18 have been distributed between Maresfield Church, Maresfield Village Hall and Maresfield Recreation Ground.

BM has AGREED to be third signatory.

LL is still experiencing difficulties with the current bank. It was AGREED to wait until a new Treasurer is in place before moving to another.

LL wishes to hand over responsibilities at the end of the calendar year. So far no-one has come forward in response to Parish Magazine advert and RP asked if any Committee member felt able to take on the role.

ACTION: RP to contact a resident he knows.

AC to approach a member of the Footpaths Group.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND WEBSITE - SS

Website

It was AGREED monthly updates are unnecessary and this item is to be removed from the Agenda.

ACTION: JL

Membership

To date there are paid 123 members. SS expects the total to reach 140.

SS proposed sending out a letter to non-members in the village.

ACTION: SS to put forward a costing for a mailshot in the new year.

A "Member Get Member" scheme was floated, as most memberships are obtained through word of mouth.

5. UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Village Clean-Up** – 29th October.

AC has produced poster for Village Shop notice board.

ACTION: AC to email copy to SS for website.

SS to email members.

JL to advertise on Maresfield Matters Facebook group.

- **Christmas Tree Lighting** – 3rd December

RP summarised a recent email he circulated to the Committee as follows:

The Church will arrange road closures (from 4.45 to 5.45) and bus diversions. They have booked Santa and arranged for carol singers. They will provide a PA system and serve mulled wine and minced pies in the church afterwards. They will produce a poster for display in the usual outlets. The Chequers will be running a Christmas Craft Fayre from 4pm and will have tables available for a meal afterwards. Greene King will be promoting the event on their social media platforms.

The MCG's input is as follows:

ACTION: MCG to speak to Mr and Mrs Cox to secure a tree.

IS to speak to John Smith re chainsaw.

SS to seek permission from Lodge owners re siting the tree.

RP to ensure advance notice road closure signs put up one week beforehand.

RP to check the state of the barriers and send out email for volunteers to man on the night.

SS to advertise on MCG website.

SRP and JR volunteered to provide bacon sandwiches for the workers.

6. FOOTPATHS GROUP UPDATE – BM

There is still a shortage of volunteers despite appeals and BM is often on his own. Fortunately nothing much has grown due to recent weather conditions so the workload has been light.

The Tylers Lane/Cackle Street wooden footpath sign needs replacing. E. Sussex Highways has repairs scheduled but despite being contacted 3 times for clarification BM has received no reply. In the likelihood of a metal replacement being proposed, BM has obtained a quote for a replacement wooden sign of approx. £1500 and hopes to discuss this with Highways.

ACTION: BM

8. PICTORIAL FOOTPATHS MAP - RP

RP updated the Committee by email on 20th August following his meeting with David Bailey, Maresfield Historical Society and the artist. Nine sites around the village have been identified and the map will include the donor's name plus our logo and a QR code to our website. The next meeting is scheduled for 19th November with a target date for installation of 31st January 2023.

RP has contacted ESCC to request permission to site the map at Chequers Hill and this is now with Highways. In reality it is likely to be the Recreation Ground car park.

9. QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY

As a result of this initiative 201 individual plants ranging from shrubs to fruit trees to Scots Pine have been ordered. The project is now closed other than a few latecomers and there are a few saplings that need sourcing elsewhere.

AC requested help from the Footpaths Group to help with sorting and delivery.

ACTION: SS to remove from the website.

AC to write a report for the Winter Newsletter.

10. PLANNING UPDATE – RP

RP consults the District Planning website regularly. We are currently involved in targeting a number of developments:

Downlands:

RP thanked Committee Members for their input and support. There is a Planning Sub-Committee consisting of RP, BM, IS, JL and the ecologist. Wealden has received many letters of objection and the Downlands Action Group has submitted a 53 page report. The District Planning Committee is meeting this evening (26th September) to discuss the application. RP is pessimistic in view of the new Government policy on planning and industry development but should the application be rejected, he believes the developer will fight. He will be meeting with Ben Reed again shortly.

IS thanked RP for the enormous amount of time he has spent on this.

Flintners:

The planner has reduced the application from 49 to 25 but will appeal.

Piggeries/Budletts Road:

The campaign group has requested a copy of the flyer which was produced for Downlands.

Straight Half Mile:

RP can find no information.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SS will be meeting a founder member of the Committee who has documents from the early days.
c/f next meeting.

The Recreation Ground Committee has raised the issue of ownership of the shed. SS will check with the founder member but it was felt that the shed belonged to the MCG as we have always maintained it, and keep the Fete assets there.

ACTION: SS to check with founder member
RP to reply to Recreation Ground Committee.

AC read out a letter from Maresfield Historical Society requesting a grant of £80. IS proposed a donation of £100 and this was carried unanimously (RP declared a conflict of interest and abstained). We will also offer to promote MHS on our website.

RP confirmed that all filings with the Charities Commission are up to date.

SB commented that some households receive their Parish Magazine quite late and suggested copy for event advertising be submitted in the preceding a month.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING : Wednesday 26th October at 7pm in The Chequers.

- **ACTION:** JL to request use of the back room

Dates of Future Meetings For 2022: November 21st, December 14th.

The meeting closed at 8.38pm.