

MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee

Held at 7.00pm on Monday 16th December 2024 at The Chequers, Maresfield

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Jo Lawrance (JL)	Chair
Terence Brady (TB)	Treasurer
Richard Wane (RW)	Secretary
Bruce Milton (BM)	
Ian Shaw (IS)	
Stephany Reed-Perkins (SRP)	
Tom Merchant (TM)	
Caroline Shaw (CS)	
Tracie Coe (TC)	

PRESENT: Jo Lawrance, Tracie Coe, Tom Merchant, Stephany Reed-Perkins, Caro Shaw, Ian Shaw, Richard Wane

APOLOGIES: Terence Brady, Bruce Milton

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST – CS noted that she is involved with the organization which will be our chosen charity for the Quiz (East Sussex Young Carers).

1) MATTERS ARISING - JL

- Charity Commission. TM noted that we have not yet been able to gain full access to the Charity Commission site as Rob Penfold has been without broadband since his move and so been unable to change authorization status. So RW is not yet registered as a Trustee (or Secretary).

AP1 - TM to continue to check with Rob Penfold on progress.

- RW noted that the Constitution has been updated to reflect the change made at the most recent AGM. The updated version is on the website.

AP2 – RW to check any Charity Commission filing requirements once he has access to the Charity Commission site.

The minutes of the previous Committee meeting were APPROVED.

2) MARESFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY – BM/CS

- BM reported by email that he has booked three speakers for the February, March and April meeting. Otherwise no progress reported. Outstanding matters include:
 - o Obtaining access to the MHS archives/material stored in a cupboard in the Village Hall.
 - o How / Who is promoting the 2025 booked MHS meetings
 - o Whether permission has been given by MHS for member information (emails etc.) to be handed over to MCG for review.

MCG and MHS will continue to run in parallel until the final MHS AGM.

AP3 – JL to follow-up with BM on the above matters; including inviting MHS representative(s) to attend at the start of the next MCG Committee meeting (20th Jan).

3) GOVERNANCE - RW

- Responsibility Statements
JL and RW have completed a draft responsibility statement outlining the duties of their respective roles. TB is in progress with his statement. This is a useful way of ensuring the outline of what Committee members cover is written down and will be especially useful in any hand over of positions.

AP4 – RW to circulate the two sample statements. ALL to have a go at outlining their own roles.

- Chair. The search for a successor to the Chair continues.
- AGM. JL reported that the booking for the AGM (24 June) has now been made.

AP5 – JL to compose New Year message which can cover an appeal for Chair interest, the Quiz and likely MHS amalgamation. For distribution through various channels.

4) TREASURER'S REPORT – TB

- Balances of the Group's accounts are: £2189.42 (Current) and £11,315.77 (Deposit).
- The food bank receipt item is now closed.
- The bequest from the aunt of David Bailey for the new MCG noticeboard was discussed with JL noting an email received from Rob Penfold which she will circulate to the Committee. The situation of who/how payments are to be made and the bequest will reach the MCG is unclear.
- Maresfield Parish Council bench grant (£750) notification has been received. The site for any such bench is yet to be determined as is clarity on adoption. Our preferred site is on the ground near the new 'allotments' (known as Site A) We may even consider ordering a second bench, depending on cost, adoption clarity etc.

AP6 – RW to ask TB to circulate catch-up email covering November accounts (and December). This will be helpful to continue to track membership payments (amongst other things).

AP7 – JL will write to Rob Penfold to ask David Bailey to get in her directly and JL will engage with TB on this as it involves funds to be received/remitted.

AP8 – IS to follow up with the Parish Council on timing of bench grant monies being available, site, adoption and any related matters.

5) MEMBERSHIP – TC

- TC has a list of MCG members whose last payments were 31 March 2024 and prior but the system is not proving easy to work with and people are paying different amounts at different times.
- The previous welcome pack/approach has largely fallen into disuse.

AP9 – TC to report back in January on current membership status (how many, how they pay, what on average they pay), MHS status (pending receipt of the requested data) and, if possible, options for a refreshed approach to membership applications, annual fees.

6) EVENTS:

- Winter Newsletter is done and delivered.
- Christmas Tree is up and has been well received. Rob Penfold sent list of annual tasks to RW which was circulated to the Committee.
- 2025 Photo competition continues
- Quiz. JL reported a due diligence Teams call with ESYC who will provide a speaker for the event and explained the practical way in which any donations will be spent. The necessary bio and logo information has been received. IS noted that 14 tickets have been sold so far and advised Committee members to book their table sooner rather than later. There was some discussion about the possible use of a projector. Preparations continue.

AP10 – Per AP5, JL will cover the Quiz in her New Year message. SRP will work on poster with TC and the event will be highlighted via the MCG FB page and on the website, with IS emailing previous participants.

- 2024 Calendars. Around 50 sold (although exact number not confirmed). Final attempts being made to get more out for distribution / promoted via FB and website.

AP 11 – Confirm final sold numbers in January and consider how to distribute the remainder.

- AGM. Work will need to start of preparations for the AGM.

AP12 – JL to pick up AGM pack from Alex. RW happy to work on AGM preparations.

7) MERCHANDISING

- Aside from Calendar sales (above), nothing further to report.

8) FOOTPATHS GROUP UPDATE

- BM noted by email that the shed door has been adjusted. It just remains to be painted. All noted that footpath to school had been swept.

AP13 - ‘Branching Out Fund’ (possible grants available). Carried forward to January.

9) PLANNING UPDATE – All

AP14 – TC to follow-up on Maresfield Recreation Ground November meeting.

10) MARESFIELD ENGAGEMENT

- MCG FB page has started well – with 50 followers and cross-engagement with Maresfield Matters.
- Website had 130 site visits in November (Oct: 73).
- Note from TM considered and discussed, covering possible walking trails on Website, Property development overview, online shop, blog and digitization of membership. We should keep the conversation going in this space.

AP15 – CS to add TC as an admin the MCG FB page.

AP16 – All to continue to consider engagement ideas. Work on membership will look at digitization.

11) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- JL noted that it will be the MCG’s 35th Anniversary in 2026.
- Historic finger post sign (A22 Pickets Lane) is broken. Discussion around options for replacement and preference to ensure it is done so sympathetically – but noting that the Council will likely want to cheapest option – but maybe the Parish Council can assist?
- AGM speaker and cheese and wine discussed.
- **Dates for 2025 Committee Meetings (so far) – all at The Chequers at 7.00pm:**
 - o **20th January**
 - o **17th February**
 - o **17 March**
 - o **14 April**
 - o **19 May**
 - o **24 June {AGM only}**
 - o **21 July**
 - o **August – no meeting**

AP17 - AGM – JL to write to Ian Tysh to see whether he might make a speech.

AP18 – BM requested to investigate finger post options further under auspices of the Footpaths Group.

AP19 – IS to consider dates for cheese and wine evening.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 20th January 2024 at 7pm in The Chequers.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.04pm.