

These are draft minutes and are subject to approval at the next meeting.



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting at
8.00 p.m. on Thursday 15 August 2013
in the Village Hall Committee Room

Present: *Councillors* – Anthony Sheppard (*Chairman*), Geoff Herbert, Mark Sugden, Kate Hallett
Co-opted Members- Vanessa Relleen, Bill Chilcott, Rukshana Master
Parish Clerk - Freda Collins
2 members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence

Carol Manley.
These were accepted.

2. Declarations of Interests

Cllr Herbert declared that he is also a Borough Councillor.

Cllr Sugden declared that he is a Trustee of the CRGT.

Cllr Hallett declared that she is Secretary to the CVA.

Vanessa Relleen declared that she is a Trustee of the CRGT, is on the Committee of Claygate in Bloom and the CVA.

Rukshana Master declared that she is on the Committee of Claygate in Bloom and the CVA.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the 6 June 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Actioning of items from previous minutes

All action points are agenda items.

5. Litter, Graffiti & Fly-tipping

AP 1-done

5.1 Woodstock Lane South continues to be a litter and fly-tipping problem. It is known to be one of the worst areas for fly-tipping in the Borough, so EBC are now targeting this area and progress is being made. CCTV cameras were set up there recently- but were stolen! There is a CCTV camera by the entrance to the Golf Club. EBC automatically clear any rubbish every alternate Friday, but respond to calls about dumping. It was noted that the three worst areas for dumping are the entrance to the footpath and the 2 entrances to Elm Farm, where there are breaks in the hedges. It was suggested that a barrier could be erected at the side of the road at the entrance to the footpath to prevent vehicles backing up to dump. It was also suggested that a fence and gates could be erected at the entrance to the farm. The gates could be closed at night to prevent vehicles backing up to dump. It was also suggested that if use of the tip was free, then illegal fly-tipping would stop. We would like to look at the cost of clearing up fly-tipping compared to the amount of income made by charging for use of the tip.

It was agreed to:-

- i. write to SCC to ask about installation of a barrier.
- ii. write to the farm
- iii. write to EBC

AP13 The Clerk to action

Post meeting note- gates have been erected at the entrances to Elm Farm.

5.2 There has been some fly-tipping in Telegraph Lane.

5.3 It is not known if the litter on the new sports facility in Oaken Lane (former Wyevale site) has been cleared. Cllr Sheppard will make a site visit to assess the situation. If there is litter, the Clerk will contact the owners.

AP14 Cllr Sheppard & the Clerk to action

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6. Highway Garden Sites

Action Points:-

AP 2- Cllrs Round and Sheppard met with the contractor to discuss the recent unsatisfactory work, indicating that the next Environment Committee would review the standard of work. .

AP 7- the fence on The Green has been repaired by Green Gardens who did a good job.

AP 8- the rubble on The Green from where the Hare & Hounds sign fell down has been cleared by Vanessa. She also tried to erect a climbing support for the clematis, but the ground is too hard to insert the frame. She will try to replace it later in the year.

All other actions points have been carried out.

a. Inspection Arrangements

Applegarth

(CM, VR)

Looking OK, but needs strimming (apparently the contractor had mechanical problems).

Fee Farm Road/ The Causeway

(CM, KHa)

Looks OK.

Torrington Lodge car park

(AS, RM)

An email has been received from a resident whose garden borders the entrance to the car park. She asks for the two very large holly trees on the verge outside her border to be brought down to a height of two metres as they block out the light under the two trees that are protected by a TPO.

It was agreed to carry out this work. It will be added to the quote for the work to Meadow Road Island trees.

Coverts/Foley Roads triangle

(CM, VR)

The beds are very dry, so the vibernum and geraniums are dying. Bill is willing to water, but needs to know what to water. Vanessa will meet with him on site to instruct him.

AP15 Vanessa & Bill to action

Some of the trees (hornbeam & cherry) need their lower branches taking off. This will be added to the other tree works.

Glebelands

(GH, MS)

A resident has complained about the poor quality of maintenance of the bed.

Some work has taken place, however, and the bed is looking better than in the past. There is still a small quantity of bindweed and a few shrubs appeared to have died where the chippings were dumped. It is thought that they may regenerate, but this will be monitored.

The Green

(VR, CM, GH)

Neale Parry has been watering.

Vanessa has done some dead-heading and pruning.

The horsetrough suffered during the hot weather. The Clerk has replaced the dead plants.

Vanessa and Margie have been watering the trees.

There is a lot of litter and weeds at the pointy end.

There is a hole where the Hare & Hounds sign used to be. Vanessa will erect a support for the clematis over the hole later in the year. Some of the plants were trampled when the fence was mended.

There are a lot of weeds in the grass which looks as though it was strimmed, not mown.

The lavender needs cutting back.

St Leonards Road

(AS, KHa)

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Looking OK.

It was noted that Rob Garner has put the wires onto the wall for the climbing plants. He has put them vertically. Vanessa will speak to him and ask if he can also put some horizontal wires to help support the plants.

AP16 Vanessa to action

Glenavon Close

(MS, GH)

Work is in progress at this bed.

Red Lane

(KHa, RM)

The renovations have improved this bed.

Church Road

(GH)

The bed looks fine, but is rather dull. It is a difficult bed as it is in constant shade from the trees.

Hare Lane car park

(AS, RM)

Looks OK

The Firs verge

(VR, KHa, GH)

Vanessa marked all the small shrubs prior to the bi-annual mowing so that the contractor would not damage them. Despite this, many have been mowed or strimmed. It was agreed that this is poor workmanship. Vanessa may take out the smallest shrubs and grow them on at her home to replace in the Firs when they are bigger.

The big laurel needs cutting back and the trees need pruning. There is a group of 3 field maples, one needs taking out and the others need their lower branches taking off.

There is a large patch of nettles between the path and the fence.

At the Dalmore end the dogwood looks as though it has been chopped with hedge cutters-this is not the correct way to prune a dogwood. There is grass growing through the dogwoods.

Brick bed at The Parade

(VR & CM)

One plant has died as the bed has not been watered sufficiently. Cllr Herbert will speak to the traders again about watering.

Woodstock Triangle

(KHa)

The bed is generally tidy, but grass is growing out of the shrubs.

It was agreed to change the order of the agenda to take item 8

8. HGS Contractor

The current HGS contractor was chosen, not because the firm gave the cheapest quote, but because it was believed that the firm would do a good job. There were other firms that submitted cheaper quotes. It appears, however, that the contractors are using unskilled labour and so the work has been adequate or poor, but certainly not to the standard we expect from the money paid for the work.

During June some of the beds did not have any work carried out on them.

Also, we have had complaints from residents about the quality of the work and this has never happened before.

It was AGREED not to continue with the contract after the initial 12 moth period, ending 31 October 2013. The Clerk will write a letter informing Green Gardens of this fact quoting the unsatisfactory work and damage to the shrubs on the Firs.

AP17 The Clerk to action

We still have information about other contractors from when the contract was re-tendered last year. The Clerk will approach three other firms and ask them to re-quote.

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AP18 The Clerk to action

The meeting agreed that, as the contract needs to be in place at the beginning of November and the next Environment meeting is not until 31 Oct, once the quotes are received, the Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair will review the quotes and decide on the contractor. The decision will be ratified at the next meeting.

The order of the agenda resumed

c. Suggested Improvements/Projects

i. Gerald Abrahams has still not completed Glenavon Close. The work to Red Lane has been carried out and the site is looking very good. The new plants will require water, so Cllr Sheppard will contact local residents to see if they can help.

AP19 Cllr Sheppard to action

ii. If the shrubs in Glebelands do not revive, more shrubs will need to be planted.

7. Meadow Road Island

Action Points:-

AP 10- the forsythia has been pruned- but it is not a good job as it has not been thinned.

AP 11- the new tree. Cllr Sheppard will confirm at the next H&T meeting.

AP 12- the fence for the end of the island. Barry Daborn has repaired it, but it needs painting. It was agreed to ask Michael O'Brien if he would do this. Cllr Hallett will speak to him.

7.1 A few weeks ago a large branch fell off the willow on the island, landing in the road.

Residents moved the branch from the road and EBC took it away.

Cllr Sheppard arranged for Doug Bamforth to look at the tree to ascertain if it was dangerous. We have not yet received a written report of the work that needs doing to the tree, but Doug Bamforth orally assured Cllr Sheppard that the rest of the tree was not immediately dangerous. It does not need to be felled, but does require a significant amount of work to make it safe.

The Tree Wardens visited Meadow Road to specifically look at the willow and agreed that several trees on the island need work doing.

They suggest:

- The weeping willow needs crown lifting and removal of dead wood and epicormic growth
- The ash at northern end needs cutting back from the road and from the gingko
- The 2 oaks towards the southern end need crown lifting
- The catalpa needs dead wood removing
- A nearly-dead tree (cherry?) by the catalpa needs removing
- The tangle of trees and shrubs on the eastern side needs some thinning/removal

Once the report from Doug Bamforth is received we will get three quotes for the work. Cllr Sheppard will write to the residents of Meadow Road to let them know what works will be carried out. He will then sort out any concerns.

AP20 Cllr Sheppard to action

7.2 The forsythia has been pruned, but not thinned. It was not a good job.

8. HGS Contractor

Already dealt with.

9. Claygate Volunteer Groups

a. Green Team

A resident has volunteered to join the Green Team. Her details have been given to Vanessa.

b. Claygate in Bloom

The tubs are being looked after and look good.

The platforms at the station are being extended so materials are being brought in over the bed on the DOWN platform. Consequently the CIB team are not doing any work on this bed; they will wait for the work to finish.

10. Status of the Green

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EBC own The Green. CPC wrote to EBC to ask if they would consider designating the land as a village green. EBC replied that they consider to level of protection on the land to be sufficient. CPC decided to refer the matter back to this Committee.

We are able to go through the process of registration but it is more complex than where the owner just applies for village green status. It was AGREED that we should start the process. The Clerk was asked to check the legislation.

AP21 The Clerk to action

If we are able to proceed with registration we will need evidence of usage ‘for lawful sports and pastimes as of right for not less than 20 years’. It was agreed to approach the local History Society and the Conservation Area Committee. Evidence from local residents can be sought via an article in the Courier. It was agreed that Cllr Sheppard would speak to the Chair of the History Society.

AP22 Cllr Sheppard to action

11. Courier/Website

11.1 If we go ahead with registering The Green as a village green, an article on this may be needed.

11.2 A follow-up article on fly-tipping in Woodstock Lane South (there was one last year).

12. Matters for information only

12.1 Residents of Foxwarren would like to make a garden in an area near 5/6 Foxwarren. SCC felled some trees there and the ground is still full of tree roots. Cllr Bennison will push SCC to clear the roots. The residents will make and maintain the garden. It was agreed that this was a good initiative by the residents.

12.2 A resident has offered 3 dozen terracotta pots to CPC. Cllr Hallett will take a look at them. All those that may be of use will be stored at her house (and some at Vanessa if necessary).

12.3 Susan Harding contacted the Clerk about the plants at the war memorial which were suffering from lack of water. Susan watered them but some did die. It is clear that the maintenance of the restored War Memorial Garden is not the Parish Council's responsibility. It is thought that the watering and weeding of the garden needs to be sorted out between Claygate in Bloom and the Church. Cllr Sheppard will contact the relevant parties.

13. Date of next meeting

Next Meeting: **Thursday 8.00pm on the 31 Oct 2013 in the Committee Room**

.....Chairman.....Date