



HENFIELD PARISH
**Meeting of Recreation & Open Spaces Committee held on
Wednesday 8th November 2023 at 9.30am in the Henfield Hall**

Present: Cllr G Perry (Chairman), D Jemmett and A May.

In Attendance: One member of the public from Henfield Football Club (HFC) Mr J Willis (Tree Officer), Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager (OM) and Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator (PA)).

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

There were none.

2. APOLOGIES

Were received from Cllrs M Eastwood, D Grossmith and R Kendall.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 20TH SEPTEMBER 2023

These were approved and signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

The representative from HFC said that there was not very much to report, he said that they are still waiting for quotes for the Rothery and that the new mobile goals have been ordered but are unlikely to arrive for a further 2 – 3 weeks. At that stage HFC will assess what space they require for storage.

Cllr Simmonds arrived at 9.34am.

Mr Willis said that he had noticed that on the footpath between Lower Station Road and Broomfield Road a tree was losing a branch and he would be happy to take the branch down. It was agreed by all that it would be helpful if Mr Willis removed the branch.

The Clerk confirmed that WSCC had been contacted about this same area and an Arboriculturist was due to visit to assess all the trees there.

The Chairman confirmed that WSCC have appointed a Tree officer for the Public Rights of Way (PROW) team.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1 WSCC Nature Verge Network zoom meeting 19.10.23 – The Chairman confirmed that she had attended this meeting and it had been very useful in relation to planting wildflowers on verges. She also said that WSCC were keen for more verges to be planted up in the future. She said that when details were sent, she would share them with the committee. Cllr May said that a member of the Community Road Verges Team would be happy to come and talk to this committee and it was agreed that this should wait until after the Chairman had spoken further with the Chairman of Village Amenities Committee about the best way to involve all committees concerned with verge management.
- 2 Frequency of Committee Meetings in 2023. The Chairman explained that there had been a long discussion at recent FRC and Parish Council meetings about the frequency of committee meetings for next year, likely to be once a month on 3rd Wednesday except for August and December. The Clerk also said that these meetings could be cancelled if there was not very much on the agenda.

6. HENFIELD FOOTBALL CLUB

- 1 Trees near the floodlights on Kings Field – monitoring to see if there is a problem. The HFC Representative said that this was not causing any problems. He also said that the other floodlight which appeared to be leaning would be looked at by a contractor in the near future.
- 2 Fencing to secure mobile goals near Pavilion along with Licence Review - to receive an update – it was agreed that this would be carried forward until the new goals had arrived. The Clerk said that he would speak with Cllr Morgan about the Licence with a view to renewing next year.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk would liaise with Cllr Morgan about the Licence.

7. PLAYING FIELDS

- 1 Playing Fields Strategy Working Group – update on tour of sports fields and potential sites with Leisure Strategy and Client Manager at HDC on 20.7.23 – It was confirmed that this would need to be carried forward, but the Clerk agreed to contact the Leisure Strategy and Client Manager at HDC.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk would liaise with HDC about the report.

- 2 Rothery Field – large holes created by animals appearing on surface – This had already been covered in the Open Forum. It was confirmed that the Memorial Field and Blackstone training ground were now being used for some football matches.
The Chairman said that CYP committee have been looking at all playing fields and play areas and considering the Green Flag initiative in relation to them.

8. TRAILS AND SAFE ROUTES

- 1 Walk from Woods Mill to Downs Link – there was no further update.
- 2 Riverbank – The Clerk said that WSCC had made Council aware that part of the riverbank near Eatons has been washed away and that it was very unlikely any remedial work would be carried out.

9. TREE WORK.

- 1 12-month work at the Sandpit – To consider the quotation for tree surgery – The Chairman said that it had already been suggested that for the next Tree Survey other quotes would be sought and that the brief would be changed for the area of the Sandpit and advise that there are no footpaths and therefore less visitors there. The next Tree Survey would be carried out in March/April 2025 and that quotes would be sought in Autumn 2024 but that Qualified Arboriculturist would be required.

It was **PROPOSED BY Cllr Simmonds, SECONDED BY Cllr Jemmett and agreed by three with one abstention to appoint Southern Beeches to carry out the Tree Surgery at the Sandpit at a cost of £1,975 plus VAT.**

ACTION POINT: PA to inform Southern Beeches.

- 2 Henfield Tree Canopy – to receive an update – Cllr May confirmed that the previous Sunday the verges at Wantley were planted up with bulbs funded by Rampion; she thanked SH2030 for their help. She also said that they were looking at varieties of heritage apple for 8-10 trees to be planted there either side of the bus shelter and she confirmed that it was Saxon Weald land and they had given £1,000 towards the project. The planting was likely to take place in the next few weeks and she would circulate details so that volunteers could assist.
Cllr May also said that HDC had agreed to supply 2,000 bulbs, equipment for planting and some staffing for a project at Deer Park which had originally been flagged as a possible site for fruit tree planting but had received a mixed reception from HDC although WSCC were keen to look at the area. HDC had also suggested this small, grassed area for No Mow May in future years with limited grass cutting through the rest of the year. The Chairman said that she wanted this shared with VA committee and it was confirmed that the likely planting day would be in early or mid December. Cllr May agreed to prepare a poster which could be copied in the Parish Office for display in the noticeboards to get volunteers, it was agreed to publicise the date on social media once known. It was agreed by all that this project should be supported; the Clerk also suggested that Cllr May might wish to contact other organisations within the Village for assistance. Cllr Simmonds said that the BP Guild may have some volunteers who could help. The Chairman said that the Scouts were likely to want to help as well. Cllr May agreed to ensure with HDC that their insurance would cover all volunteers assisting on the day.

- 3 TPOs – to receive an update – Cllr May said that adding a TPO to a tree should be seen as last resort for protecting a tree, and that there needs to be a compelling reason from granting it. Other ways to protect trees would through planning conditions and especially through local plan and in NHP. She had received a map from WSCC with an Ancient Tree Inventory there appeared to be just one in Henfield, an Oak on Common. Cllr May said that she had submitted another tree. The Chairman said that Tree Wardens can also use TreeZilla to look at the old or special trees. Cllr May wanted all to be aware of the old trees that are on the Parsonage Farm site.
- 4 Dress to Impress (Woodland Trust) – Cllr May said she had tried many times to make contact but had received nothing in response and would leave this.
- 5 To consider surgery to sycamore, maple and hazel tree on Kingsfield (bordering 9 Kingsfield). Mr Willis said that he had visited this house and seen the trees in question, some were very big and overhanging the residents back garden. He also said that the Ash tree amongst the others was healthy and should not have any surgery. It was agreed that the resident could go ahead with surgery but that it would have to be at his cost.

ACTION POINT: PA to liaise with resident and re-iterate that the ash must not be cut.

10. COMMUNITY ORCHARD

- 1 Request from Resident for a bench to be placed there at his expense – It was agreed that the resident could purchase a bench for this area and be responsible for its maintenance. It was suggested that a metal bench would require less maintenance. The Chairman agreed to speak with the resident and see what sort of bench he had been hoping for.
- 2 To consider purchasing birdboxes for the Orchard from Shedders @ £12.00 each.

It was **PROPOSED BY the Chairman, SECONDED BY Cllr May and agreed by all to purchase four bird boxes at a total cost of £48.00.**

ACTION POINT: The Chairman would liaise with the Shedders for the bird boxes and with the Scouts group about putting them up when the weather is suitable.

- 3 Request from a Resident for a Memorial Tree for the Community Orchard – Mr Willis confirmed that he had purchased a beautiful damson tree on behalf of the resident and that he was waiting for suitable weather to plant it, likely to be Sunday 19th November. The Chairman said that she was aware that there had been an issue with access to the Orchard and wanted the home owner contacted as soon as possible to ask for permission.

ACTION POINT: PA to liaise with the home owner and ask for access on 19th November.

- 4 Community Orchard Added to the Weald to Waves website – The Chairman confirmed that the Community Orchard had been added to the map.
Mr Willis added that the Redwood tree planted at the Orchard is doing very well.
The Chairman said that the work planned for October with Henfield Scouts hadn't been able to go ahead because of the storms but that she was hoping it could be scheduled soon.

11. VERGES

- 1 Wildflower Planting – to receive an update – The Chairman explained that the grass on the Borrer Bank would be cut by the Works Officers one more time so that it is shorter for the bulbs planted there to show through. She said that the same would apply to the Crocus ribbon on Manor Way. She said that the cuttings would need to be collected.
- 2 Collection of cuttings from fourth cut – The Chairman confirmed that the Community Payback Team had carried this out in September.
- 3 CRV agreement – The Chairman said that it was hoped we can add an extra verge to the Community Road Verge Agreement for the verge on the right-hand side of the main road heading north out of Henfield. Cllr May said that it was hoped to extend the hedgerow there and explained this was land that would normally be cut by WSCC. The Chairman said that it was hoped that more Parish Councils would engage with having more verges within the CRV agreement.

12. BIODIVERSITY OVERSIGHT GROUP

The Chairman said that this group hasn't met for some time but it was hoped that it would be able to meet soon.

- 1 Hedgehogs R Us Highway Project – The Chairman asked whether this was a project that the Committee wanted to support and it was confirmed that there were other projects along these lines which were more environmentally friendly. It was agreed to hold this over for the next Biodiversity Oversight Group Meeting.

13. WORKS TEAM

- 1 Work undertaken - The Chairman confirmed that the Works Team had assisted in preparing the ground at the Community Orchard, although the planting of bulbs had not yet taken place. She said that they had widened the Causeway and carried out clearing of rubbish and vegetation at Kidders Lane.

Cllr Simmonds asked whether the two broken tables at Kidders Lane had been replaced yet and it was confirmed that nothing had been done here. It was agreed that the Works Team would be asked to remove the two broken tables and that at the next meeting this committee could look at replacing one or both of them depending on cost.

ACTION POINT: PA would look at similar all-in-one tables with benches for the next meeting.

14. CLERKS REPORT

Clerk reported that expenditure was 52.4 % of budget and that 58.3% of the financial year had elapsed. He added that as previously stated £3,200 of the 'General Expenditure' was for the cricket club nets and that will come out of reserves. In addition, we have spent more than expected via paint and equipment for the Community Payback team. Cllr Jemmett suggested that overall this committee is underspending and wondered whether that money possibly from Trails and Footpaths budget could be used to purchase the tables and benches. It was agreed to spend up to £1,000 on the tables and benches for Kidders Lane as this picnic area supports walking on some of our local trails e.g., Three Villages Trail.

15. BUDGETS FOR 2024 - 2025

The Clerk distributed the budgets and all were agreed. It was agreed that Wildlife Planting would be renamed Nature Recovery and Support. Cllr May wondered whether there might be room in budget for a part time grounds person to look after the sports pitches. The Clerk agreed to take the figures from the budget to the FRC meeting next week. He also confirmed that it would be expected that the full budget would likely be spent by the end of the financial year.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

- 1 Youth Justice Service community reparation and immediate justice ideas – The Chairman explained the sorts of work that could be carried out and asked everyone to think of any specific projects. PA agreed to investigate working times and days with the writer of the email. PA to write to them and ask about what they can do and timings.

ACTION POINT: PA would enquire about the expected working hours and days and the amount of lead in time they need for work to be planned.

17. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

There were none.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 9.30am in Henfield Hall

The Meeting closed at 11.25am.