

**Wootton Park Association – Annual General Meeting  
Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016, South Wootton Parish Office**

**MINUTES**

**1. Present:** Will Border, John Marshall-Grint, David Price, Tracey Cornwell, Roy Williamson, Elizabeth Nockolds, Diana Gotts, Wendy Border, Matt Sturgeon  
In attendance: Mrs R Curtis (Clerk)

**2. Apologies** – Bridget Nurse, Audrey Stevenson – The Clerk received an email from Audrey explaining that due to ill health she didn't feel able to continue her role on the committee.

**3. Chairperson's Report**

Will Border read out the following report;

This year has proved to be an interesting year for the Wootton Park Association, with a few changes in the dynamics of the committee. Unfortunately Mike Narborough, decided that he had done enough good work on the park and so handed in his resignation at the end of the 2015. I would like to publicly thank him for his commitment to the WPA and the effort he put into running it while at the helm. As you are aware I have only taken over as chairman from January 2016. There is now a more balanced feel on the committee with both South & North Wootton Parishes being equally well represented. We are still looking for the last member of the team of trustees, but we are hopeful that this is going to come from a representative of the football club in the near future.

There have only been a few projects that have been carried out in the last year, and these have been carried out successfully and without incident. The last of these was the clearing of the dyke at the North Wootton end of the park, this was completed in Jan 2016 by Norse and since then we have had a team of Volunteers from the NCS (National Citizen Service) that spent a weekend clearing out the rest of the dyke. We have now cleared the whole length of the dyke as it runs across the land that we are responsible for, and we have seen a vast improvement in the flow of water coming from Ling Common, and going of down onto the Gongs. This is now something that we will be able to monitor and keep on top of in the future.

Last year's Picnic in the Park was another success and everyone enjoyed themselves. I would like to thank the subcommittee for organising this and all their hard work that goes into pulling off an event like this.

The Football Club goes from strength to strength and I have been told that it now has over 200 members. Last year saw the purchase of another set of rolling goals, this was a combined effort of a grant and contributions from both Parish Councils. The Football Club have also come up with some improvement ideas for the pavilion. This is to move the kitchen to the front and have a serving hatch type of arrangement. So that it becomes more of an asset on big match days. This is going to be funded by calling on all the skills of the parents from the football club.

Looking at the finances of the Park we are in a better position than at the beginning of the year, we started the year with £2446.96 and have ended the year with £2906.97, this is an increase of £460.01. This has been helped by the fact that we have received back the 75% of the utility usage for the pavilion from the Football Club. We have also received another £30.00 from the Ashley Fountain Soccer School, who have used our park on a couple of occasions to run a training school for toddlers.

So as the new chairman I am now looking forward to the next year with the challenges that will be presented to me. My priorities are going to be to try and raise awareness of this beautiful asset that the villages have and to encourage more parishioners to have an input into its upkeep. To raise much needed funds so that the WPA will be able to fund its own projects, and rely less on the generosity of the two Parish Councils. However there is much work to do initially with some general clearing of growth that has taken hold in the last few years, and some tidying of the trees to bring it back to a managed park. So I would say

that initially we will still be coming to the parish councils with a proposal of work & costings to be considered, these are out to quote as I speak, but I will hope that these calls for funding will become less as the year goes on.

If all goes to plan I will hope to come back in a year's time to report on a healthier, wealthier and more vibrant Wootton Park Association.

David Price gave a vote of thanks to Will for his hard work on the latest park project, in liaising with the College of West Anglia and getting volunteers organised to clear the dykes and to Wendy for providing the much needed refreshments!

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Tracey Cornwell reported on the following;

An adjustment was made to 2014/15 WPA accounts to allow for a cheque to be included as the accounting period was changed to end in March instead of December, this brings the closing balance to £2,320.38. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 the closing balance was £2,906.97. Tracey will now organise for the accounts to be audited and the return to be completed for the charity commission.

The 2016/17 budget for the WPA running costs is lower this year at £13,490. This is largely due to a reduction in the estimated costs for tree surgery and pest control.

#### **5. To approve the minutes of the last meeting – 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

These were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

#### **6. Matters Arising**

The Clerk reported she was still trying to investigate if it is possible for the emergency services to have on record the code to the combination lock on the bollard at Bede Close.

#### **7. Questions from the Public**

There were none. At this point David Price suggested that as this is the AGM that the officers are formally voted onto the committee.

Chair – David Price proposed Will Border to continue as Chair, seconded by Diana Gotts and the committee agreed.

Vice Chair – David Price proposed that Diana Gotts be vice-chair, seconded by Roy Williamson and the committee agreed.

Treasurer – Will Border proposed that Tracey Cornwell continue as treasurer, seconded by David Price and the committee agreed.

Secretary – Will Border proposed that Rachel Curtis continue as secretary, seconded by John Marshall-Grint and the committee agreed.

Due to the resignation of Audrey Stevens, South Wootton will now need to find a new village representative.

#### **8. Correspondence**

Resident from 25 Blackthorn Road asked to the WPA to look at the oak tree overhanging his garden. Will sought the advice of an arborist who reported there is nothing needing to be done with it. The resident said he would go 50/50 on the cost of trimming it back, Will to follow up and explain that if he would like the work done he will need to meet the cost himself.

The WPA discussed the more frequent nature of this type of enquiry where WPA trees overhang private gardens or block light. It was decided that Will would follow these up and discuss with residents what they would like to be done and then organise work with the understanding that the resident will pay for it themselves. This would only be paid for by the WPA if the tree has been specified to have work done on it within routine maintenance or if it was diseased or unsafe.

Will has also spoken to the Borough Council tree expert regarding trees on the park with TPO's on them,

there is only one to the west side of the Park. It was discussed that it is possible to request the have a TPO applied to a tree.

## **9. Finance**

This was covered above in the treasurer's report.

## **10. Football Club Report**

Matt Sturgeon reported on the following;

- There is to be a tournament on the Park on 30<sup>th</sup> April 10am - 1.30pm. Parking to be monitored.
- Picnic in the Park is due to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> May, again parking to be monitored, paying particular attention to avoid any congestion issues in Bede Close, Cranmer Ave and Tintern Grove. The event will be run along the same format as previous years and the money raised will be split 50/50 with the football club and picnic in the park committee. Some funds will be allocated to buy a defibrillator for the Park.
- Plans are ongoing for the Pavilion improvements. The planning department at the Borough Council have responded to say that the proposed changes are fully acceptable and would raise no issue and internal works to do not require permission.

## **11. Volunteering / National Citizens Service (NCS) / WPA Green Gym**

Will Border reported on the following schemes to try and tap into volunteer teams available to carry out work on the park;

NCS – keen to keep channels open after the success of their recent work clearing the dyke. During the summer the College of West Anglia have over 400 students within the scheme which is a good source of man power. Diana Gotts said that the pond area doesn't need any work doing to it, however volunteers for litter picking are always welcomed.

Probation Service – teams of up to 8 people can be sought, but would need direction and would need tools provided for them.

CITB – potential assistance for hardcore work – footpaths etc.

Green Gym – a scheme where a plea goes out for volunteers, made up of nearby residents and interested people to come together to work on a community green area.

## **12. Management of Trees on the Park**

Will has got quotes for work to be carried out on the Park, split into 5 different areas.

Area 1 – South Wootton Strip

- Look at Oak Tree near 25 Blackthorn Road
- Large tree going across gable end of a house
- Quotes for this range from £320 to £550.

Area 2 – Car Park and behind Pavilion

- Change the access and exit arrangements for the car park, creating a one way system where cars enter via Cranmer Avenue and exit via Bede Close, this would involve taking out some trees in the central area but retaining those around the edge.
- Quotes for this range from £2,200 - £3,420

Area 3 – North end near small children's play area

- Take out lower limbs of trees to make are safer for children playing
- Quotes for this range from £320 to £550

Area 4 – Cycle Path along North Wootton School

- Take out self seeding elders
- Clear chestnut tree cuttings
- Take out tree against school gate and diseased with fungus
- Work to clear base of hollow tree near cycle restrictor at Tintern Grove
- Remove 2 trees
- Quotes for this work range from £825 to £990

Area 5 – North end cycle path leading to Priory Lane

- Thin out cops near dyke, taking out overlapping trees and remove 2 oak trees.
- Quotes for this range from £1,650 to £1,920

The committee agreed to go ahead with the work to be done in Area 4, Will to organise this.

### **13. Potential Car Park Project**

This was discussed above in Area 2.

### **14. Fund Raising Ideas**

The following ideas were discussed;

- Quiz Night – this has been arranged for Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30 at South Wootton Village Hall.
- Horse Racing Night
- Car Boot Sale on the Park
- Beetle Drive
- 200 Club – Will explained that to start the club each Councillor and a friend join with a fee of £2 per month, monies to be collected by an annual DD. Tracey to look into opening a separate bank account for monies. There would be a monthly prize and winners would be picked at each WPA meeting and the prize fund would be 40% of the income and the remaining 60% go towards Park funds. David Price proposed that Will sets this up and go ahead, seconded by John Marshall-Grint and the committee agreed.

### **15. Any Other Business**

- Facebook page has been set up to promote events and fundraising for the Park, search Wootton Park Association.
- Pavilion toilets have been taken care of.
- The picnic table which was funded by a grant will have a Perspex interpretation board, but needs to be set into hard standing. - It was proposed by Will Border and seconded by John Marshall-Grint that a second picnic table be purchased from the funds given to the WPA from the first Picnic in the Park event, the committee agreed.
- A safety assessment has flagged up that a hand rail is needed on the bridge near the pavilion at cost of £180. Tracey asked if someone could approach Bridget Nurse and ask if she can get the above work done free of charge.
- Green waste is still being disposed of on the edges of the Park.

### **16. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.55pm

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