



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF AMENITIES COMMITTEE**  
**15 May 2023**  
**10:00, Woolton Hill Church Hall**

**Chairman:** Cllr Rand (Chair)  
**Present:** Cllr Cooper, Cllr Hurst, Cllr Roots  
**Clerk:** Amy White

**1. Welcome and apologies**

Cllr Rand welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**3. To Agree Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2023 were agreed and accepted by the Chairman, Cllr Rand.

**4. Actions from previous Meeting**

Date	Action
23/01/23	Committee to send thoughts on roller blind wording to Cllr Rand. <b>In action.</b>
17/04/23	Clerk to ask Scofell to add Meadowbrook grass cutting to schedule. <b>Actioned.</b>
17/04/23	Clerk to check with Corinne David-Cooke re bench location at Tile Barn Row. <b>Actioned not confirmed.</b> The Clerk had sent the committee suggested bench options which all agreed looked suitable. Cllr Rand will suggest to full council that two are purchased. Likely cost per bench £535.50: <a href="https://wealdenbenches.co.uk/3-seat-commercial-bench">https://wealdenbenches.co.uk/3-seat-commercial-bench</a> . This excludes fitting.
17/04/23	Clerk and Cllr Roots to investigate solution to the noisy gate at Trade St entrance to Parish Field. <b>In action-</b> Scofell will meet on site to discuss solutions (Clerk organising).
17/04/23	Cllr Roots to devise a plan of suggested tree locations for the field for Amenities to discuss at the next meeting. <b>Actioned-</b> see item 5.
17/04/23	Clerk to claim S106 from Catherine re picnic benches. <b>In action (Cllr Rand).</b>
17/04/23	Clerk to ask Scofell to fit the lectern in WH recreation ground. <b>In action.</b>
17/04/23	Clerk to report back with French drain quotes for next meeting. <b>In action.</b>

**5. Parish field update**

Scofell will meet the Clerk onsite to discuss solutions to the gates and fence (at Drs surgery end), gate at Brownies corner end, as well as the lectern in the WH recreation ground and drainage at tennis court.

**Action:** Clerk to agree date to meet with Scofell.

## **6. Biodiversity project**

Cllr Roots has suggested some locations for both native cherry trees and three oak trees in the parish field. EWPC could source the trees but the Clerk will ask Scofell for the full quote to supply and plant. Another option remains to contact Greenham Trust for funding.

**Action:** Clerk to ask Scofell to quote for a) improving the gates at both ends of the field and b) sourcing and planting trees for the parish field.

## **7. Meadowbrook**

Whilst EWPC does not yet officially own the land at Meadowbrook, Cllr Hurst has visited some orchards to get an idea of viability for the Meadowbrook area. See his report at the end of the Minutes. Monies for the project is reserved in S106 funds (£10000).

The gardening club has expressed interested in assisting in projects in green spaces. The clerk has invited Lorna Rains and the club to the Annual Parish Meeting to discuss ideas for both Meadowbrook and Brownies Corner.

## **8. CCTV**

Cybertronix has cautioned that the software of the three cameras owned by EWPC at WH recreation ground will be out of date by December 2024. He has recommended replacing the cameras. This also affects the cameras for the Church Hall. Cllr Rand will liaise with Stuart Box of Cybertronix to ensure all cameras are upgraded as necessary (currently EWPC pays for the maintenance contract for all nine cameras).

**Action:** Cllr Rand will update the committee on CCTV at the next meeting.

## **9. General Maintenance**

Nothing to add.

## **10. Items to take to next meeting**

Normal meeting agenda items. CCTV.

### **Actions from 15 May 2023**

- Clerk to agree date to meet with Scofell.
- Clerk to ask Scofell to quote for a) improving the gates at both ends of the field and b) sourcing and planting trees for the parish field.
- Cllr Rand will update the committee on CCTV at the next meeting.

## **Next Full Amenities Meeting:**

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 10am, Woolton Hill Church Hall**

### **Cllr Hurst report on Hartley Wintney Orchard**

Hi all, from my visit to Thatcham community orchard early last week, they kindly introduced me to the team at Hartley Wintney community orchard. It is named as the Patrick Vaughan orchard (after a late parish clerk). On Friday a couple of their team gave me a tour. And wow were they enthusiastic. So a summary of my visit.....

The Hartley Wintney community orchard is regarded as one of the best examples of a community orchard in the South of England. Established in 2000. The project was sponsored, funded and land donated to the orchard team by the PC.

It is a large area, much larger than Meadowbrook, but has some good principles to follow. It is a mixture of local apple varieties (Hampshire and South of England). The outer areas have been developed to include nuts and berried fruit native to the country. Key principle has been to focus on Hampshire varieties. The planting is low density and well spaced giving a feeling of openness.

Another key principle was to have the orchard as an integral part of village life. All sorts of events are held there including Wassail Night, Apple Day and a village picnic day. It is normally used as a quiet area for the village with benches in key places.

There are excellent boards giving an overview of the tree types and background to the orchard. It also has a good website.

The maintenance of the orchard is funded by the PC, but run by very enthusiastic volunteers.

#### *Their lessons learned:*

- Have principles of planting and what you wish to use the orchard for.
- They used some traditional varieties. Some of these were not disease tolerant and died. Advice if using traditional varieties, use those that are disease resistant.
- Used specialist suppliers.
- Need enthusiastic volunteers for establishing the orchard and maintaining it every year. Get schools involved. Cannot be driven by the PC - can only sponsor it.
- Was really wanted by the community and driven by them.
- Significant yearly maintenance (pest management, pruning etc). Have to have long term volunteer commitment to keep it going.
- There is an annual running cost, funded by the PC - you need to be prepared to fund this.
- Initial set up funded by the PC and through grants.
- Used orchard expert groups to help design the planting.
- Define planting and maintenance costs before going ahead with the project and approve by the PC.

- It is a significant project and needs a dynamic project team.
- Planting done by volunteers and schools.
- Hold events in the area.
- PC paid for info boards and web site - but site run by the volunteers.
- They have deer issues, but manageable. They have not needed to put in fencing.
- Do have occasional vandalism issues, but they keep the orchard open to all.
- Dogs are a real problem and people just ignore the no dogs board.
- The orchard is used to attract people to the village and is now seen as a significant asset.

*My view...*

- This orchard is really worth visiting and feels a key part of the village.
- Loved to open feel of the orchard.
- The key principles they followed are really instructive to us, especially of having an enthusiastic community team to run it. Key message - it cannot be developed and run by the PC alone. Needs to be owned and driven by members of the community.
- Understand the ongoing funding required from the PC.