



**Open Spaces Committee
Minutes
Monday 27th September 2021**

Meeting held at via zoom video conferencing - started at 6.30pm.

Parish Councillors in attendance: Chairman Max Harwood (MH), Adrian Collins (AC), Laura Craven (LC), Zoe MacLehose (ZM) and Mairi Rennie (MR).

Clerk: Debbie Harknett

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Chairman: Max Harwood
Harknett

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- 1) **It was noted the meeting would be recorded to help with the minutes because there were problems with the zoom access; recording would be deleted when the minutes written.**
- 2) **There were no apologies for absence as all the committee were present.**
- 3) **There were no declarations of interest.**
- 4) **There were no representations from the public.**
- 5) **The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 26th July 2021 were approved for signing by the Chairman.**
- 6) **Actions from last meeting were noted (unless elsewhere on agenda):**
 - a) Land registration – Clerk has been in contact with WSCC records office who are now open. We need to clarify which pages need copying (cost of £30 per sheet) – MR offered to help look at the information before MH/Clerk visit the records office.
 - b) AC noted most of the overgrown hedges at Rake that were obstructing the footpath have been cut back though one remains; he will send details and photo to Clerk.
 - c) AC noted no help is needed with trying to establish a wildflower area at Oliver's Piece.
 - d) Black Bridge hadn't been walked for a while so no update.
 - e) Parking problems near the National Trust car park/Drovers have been helped a little by the taller SID post which has freed up four spaces that had logs in them to prevent cars obstructing the view of the SID.
 - f) WSCC Volunteers have been delayed installing the Rake bus shelter because they are helping prepare accommodation for Afghanistan refugees. LC noted that she thought the seat at the Dell has been repaired. *Post meeting note – it hasn't been repaired.*
 - g) MH to talk to one of the bus shelter cleaning volunteers to see if they would like to take on the responsibility of another shelter.
- 7) **Woodland management**
 - a) MH reported Roger Fitter has arranged for most of the rhododendron at Terwick Wood to be cut back/sprayed. He has looked at removal of some more holly at the western side of Terwick Wood with a contractor – it is hoped they will start work before the end of October (cost £350 per day for two days). He is also discussing trees at Terwick Wood (marked with pink dots) that are due for removal as part of thinning process with a contractor. We are waiting for further information but hope they may be done at no cost to the council and possibly even with a small income.
 - b) There was some discussion about continuing the provision of water to Fyning Recreation Ground (approx. £50pa); it was agreed to maintain the supply which could help in the event of a fire as there was a cost to disconnect and would be another it ever needed to be reinstated.
 - c) MH noted a cat food tin containing rat poison had apparently been found at Fyning Rec.
- 8) **Footpaths:**
 - a) MH was sad to report that Kevin Dewitt, WSCC Footpath Warden is moving onto a new job and for now, his current role is vacant. He has been very helpful to the Parish Council and while we wish him luck we are sorry to see him leave.
 - b) MH wondered which paths are included in WSCC annual cut-back list and if they had been done – MR/ZM offered to help; MH circulate report.
 - c) LC noted path from Home Farm to North of the village is almost impassable; this has been reported.

9) Play areas/outdoor gym:

- a) Repairs following annual safety inspections - R.J. Playgrounds quote had been circulated prior to the meeting; alternative quote (though chased and promised) hasn't been received. AC felt it would be worthwhile having protective sleeves on any new posts to help prevent them rotting at ground level and also that treating the wood with preservative should help extend its life. After discussion, LC's proposal of **resolution 'to accept R.J. Playgrounds quote of £1,900+vat for the repairs, with provision of an additional cost after AC discussing protective sleeves & wood preservation treatment'** was seconded by MR and unanimously approved.
- b) Fresh Air Fitness response to the outdoor gym annual inspection concerns was noted. Agreed to pass to Rachel who does our weekly inspections along with the touch-up paint.
- c) MH noted the draft gym lease has been received from the solicitor but he has some concerns as the document didn't appear to have been checked properly; LC offered to read.

10) Protection of village trees

- a) Clerk reminded meeting TPO's can only be placed on trees that are considered to be under threat. However, the planning tree expert said that in addition to those trees with TPO's they have a list of large trees they are aware of having special value. Details of the oak trees (type, location, photo, size) to be passed to Clerk to send to him – LC/MR.
- b) MH noted concern has been expressed about a large Beech tree visible from East Lodge that maybe outside the conservation area – detail of this to be sent at the same time.

11) Parsonage planter

- a) The main council meeting agreed to try to replace the broken planter while locating it on the opposite side of the road by the old phone box/grit bin. MH to check if gardening club would be willing to look after in this position before applying for the section 115 licence from WSCC.
- b) The missing stag sign has not been located. It cost approx. £350 3 years ago so it was agreed not worthwhile claiming against insurance when the policy excess is taken into consideration.

12) Fyning information board – 6 x A4

LC had obtained three quotes (£1,365/£1,905/£645 plus delivery) which had been circulated prior to the meeting with the lowest quote from the same supplier as the board at Garbett's Wood. AC noted it would need managing to ensure information was kept updated which LC offered to do; collaborating with the school. After discussion, LC's **resolution 'to purchase a notice board from High Weald Furniture Ltd'** was seconded by AC and unanimously approved to be passed to the full council – if possible to be purchased from the current year's budget but if not to be included in next year's. AC noted volunteers would be able to install. MR added a stag beetle is an ideal emblem for Fyning Recreation Ground.

13) Oliver's Piece

- a) AC reported gorse encroachment is a big problem and is blocking the view and needs grubbing out. Agreed to ask Roger Fitter if he knows a contractor to help.
- b) AC has looked at possibility of providing improved access for the less able bodied following a request from a member of the public. There are rustic steps down to the seat but no handrail. A wooden rail would seem in-keeping with the environment but would be problematic to install and quite expensive so AC suggested the installation of a simple galvanised rail/key clamp system which would be inexpensive, reasonably easy to install and would oxidise and become less industrial over time. He will share a photo with the committee, explore cost and talk to Steve Williamson who has offered to help.

14) The next Open Spaces Committee Meeting is scheduled to be held at 6.00pm on Monday 22nd November 2021 via Zoom video conferencing.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.45pm.

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Chairman

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Date