

**PARISH ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSETS & PATHS COMMITTEE**

Met remotely via video conferencing
on Tuesday 26th January 2021 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Jenny Roberts (Chair)
Councillor John Newton-Davies
District Councillor Frances Leonard
Mark Carter (Warden)
Public Members - Tony Farnfield, David Kealey, Mary
Ternouth (Marshalswick Horticultural Society), June
Reid
Mr. Julian Thornton (Hertfordshire County Council)

Apologies: Councillor John Foster
Public Member - Bernard Lusby

Absent: Councillor Jon Hegerty

Officers: Rebecca Pannese, Project and Amenities Officer
Emma Hostler, Deputy Clerk

802 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Mark Carter declared an interest as a self-employed contractor for Sandridge Parish Council.

803 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th November 2020, having previously been circulated and subject to an amendment (Minute 782), were taken as a correct record and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th November be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

804 MATTERS OF REPORT

- Mark Carter has undertaken felling and clearance of trees and shrubs on the boundary and within the copse of Harness Way. This is now suitable for planting.
- With the help of volunteers, the Woodland Trust whips were successfully planted in Harness Way.
- Committee Chair Cllr Roberts has proposed a bench design utilising wood from the Jersey Lane felled oak. This has been discussed with Julian Thornton (HCC) and the mobile sawmill contractor, and a meeting is planned on site in Feb/March to discuss how best to proceed. This bench is intended to be placed in the community garden outside Marshalswick Community Centre.
- With proceeds from the £3,000 bequest from Mr John Hillman, the Full Council has agreed to install a bench on Sandringham Crescent, between Villiers Crescent and Ripon Way. The remaining £2,000, and an additional £1,000 provided by the Herts County Council Locality Budget via Cllr John Hale, will be spent on trees for grass verges. This should provide 20 trees with three years' maintenance. Sites for these have now been identified and submitted to Herts County Council (HCC) for approval following which John O'Connor will scan the ground to check for underground cables.

- The Project and Amenities Officer has made an application for approximately 50 free trees with stakes and guards, made available from the Woodland Trust via Bim Afolami's office. These comprise oak, field maple, crab apple, wild cherry and hornbeam. They will be available from mid-February with a view to planting in Harness Way and Damson Way as soon as possible thereafter using a small group of volunteers strictly adhering to Covid-19 safety guidelines.
- The Parish Clerk has written to St Albans and District Council (SADC) requesting freehold transfer of the Jersey Farm Woodland Park (currently under 30-year leasehold granted in September 1999) and additionally the green space, and fenced playground within it, between Wheat Close and the Woodland Park.
- Although there is little growing activity currently, volunteers remain active on the community garden tidying up and making plans for the spring. A bird table has been erected and it is hoped to plant fruit shrubs shortly.
- Two field maples have been ordered for planting on Jersey Lane. The cost will be recharged to householders.

805 FOOTPATHS/RIGHTS OF WAY UPDATES

Julian Thornton, HCC, provided a verbal update on current projects and activities.

- Regarding Bridleway (BW) 48, David Kealey has now written to Cemex requesting clarification on future intentions, and an acknowledgement has been received.
- Julian has been in discussion with householders on Damson Way regarding the planting of two trees off the boundary.
- Work will be commencing shortly with HCC contractors on Jersey Lane undertaking intensive cutting back and clearance of overgrown vegetation, primarily focused on the stretch between Rose Walk and Belsize Close. It is hoped that work will be completed before the start of the nesting season. Julian will notify officers of the start date in order that the works can be publicised to residents via FB and the parish website. Additionally, Julian will be identifying other footpaths and byways in the area which may need cutting back, depending on funds available.
- Julian will be visiting Heartwood Forest following recent reports of subsidence at Well Wood.
- Works will shortly be undertaken to alleviate some of the drainage issues around BOAT 3 (Sandringham Crescent/Jersey Lane)

Cllr Jenny Roberts updated the committee on progress identifying trees appropriate for TPOs along Jersey Lane, as agreed at the last meeting, which has stalled due to lockdown and weather conditions. Cllr Frances Leonard commented how difficult the task was proving to be given the number of mature trees along the route.

806 Rights of Way Working Group

Mary Ternouth provided a verbal update following the recent meeting of the Rights of Way Working Group on 15th January.

- The House Lane modification application is still awaiting resolution and follow up actions have been agreed to try to expedite the matter at HCC level.
- Following investigations regarding ownership and responsibility the working group has concluded that there are no walkways within Jersey Farm at particular risk in terms of long-term public use within the context of the 'Don't Lose Your Way' initiative. In light of progress to date, Mary will draft a paper for consideration at the next PEAP meeting to determine the future of the working group.
- The Project and Amenities Officer updated the committee that she is now ready to proceed with the modification application concerning Twinfields having received sufficient user evidence forms.

The Committee briefly discussed the new footpath at Oaklands Grange reporting that it is being well used. Some concern was expressed at the 'banking' adjacent to the footpath, and the possibility of the parish offering to undertake some future planting in this area. Cllr Frances Leonard has reported a number of failed trees on the site with a view to getting them replaced.

807 EXPENDITURE AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

The Committee noted expenditure to date of £1276 against a budget of £4,500. In light of this, additional works were considered including:

- Clearance around the Harness Way pond
- Additional cutting back and clearance works to routes adjoining Jersey Lane. Mark Carter will meet with Julian Thornton to identify sites and consider costs.
- As discussed at the last meeting, the Project and Amenities Officer will purchase additional wildflower bulbs for planting in the meadow at Damson Way.
- As discussed at the last meeting, the Project and Amenities Officer will purchase plaques commemorating works undertaken at Harness Way and William Bell by parish volunteer groups.

808 TERMS OF REFERENCE

It is a statutory requirement for the Committee Terms of Reference to be reviewed annually. Members agreed an amendment under Functions/Activities, point 1, to replace 'The Committee has a volunteer group ...' with 'The Parish Council has a volunteer group ...'. It was unanimously;

RESOLVED

To approve the PEAP Committee Terms of Reference for 2020/21, subject to the amendment as detailed above.

809 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr John Hale gave a verbal update on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan to councillors at the recent meeting of the Full Council. It was noted that the Examiner's report required a number of amendments to be made which would then require the approval of the District Council. Mary Ternouth reported that these amendments have now been made. Following approval, the District Council should then call a referendum which may be in May of this year.

810 VOLUNTEER TASK FORCE ACTIVITY

The Project and Amenities officer reported that the volunteer programme was again largely suspended due to Covid-19 restrictions. Some volunteer activity would be undertaken with restricted numbers, under strict safety conditions, and on a need-to basis only.

811 FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Committee noted future meeting dates:

- 27th April 2021
- 6th July 2021
- 16th November 2021
- 25th January 2022
- 26th April 2022

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 27th April 7.30pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Chair

Date