

Girton Parish Council

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The Pavillion
Girton Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road, Girton
Cambridge CB3 0FH

Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 15th November, 2011 at 7.30 p.m. at Cotton Hall, Girton

Members of the parish were welcome to attend this meeting and to speak at Item 11/23

Present: Cllrs: Gordon (Chair), Clift, Cockley, de Lacey, Martin, Westley

In attendance: S Cumming (Clerk), G Thorpe (Town End Close Warden)

- 11/22** **Welcome and Apologies** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllr Bromwich and Mrs P de Lacey, and the Chairman accepted their reasons for absence.
- 11/23** **Open Session for members of the public** There were no members of the public present at the meeting.
- 11/24** **To approve the Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting of 26 July, 2011** The Minutes were approved by the Committee.
- 11/25** **Matters arising from the Minutes**
11/14 The Chairman has looked into the work raising the bank on Smithy Green, but the prices of doing so are prohibitive.
11/17 Regarding planting shrubs at Weavers Field, the Council have heard nothing from the house-builders regarding their offer to partially pay costs. It would not be too late to plant this year. Cllr de Lacey agreed to contact the house-builders again.
- 11/26** **To select from the tenders submitted a contractor to maintain the open spaces around the village for a three year period beginning April 2012 (Appendix A)** The Chairman has shown the contractors what needs doing: three quotations have been received, with a fourth contractor who didn't submit a tender. It was noted by members that in the past contractors have been willing to cut any piece of ground which needs cutting, whether on the list or not, whilst some shrubs have been cut whilst grass cutting. It was noted that Wellbrook Way will need a good planting, and this should be considered for the future. Cllr Martin proposed that the contract be awarded to Paul Laston Garden Services, seconded by Cllr Cockley – agreed with one abstention.
- 11/27** **To approve of a quotation from Agri Plant to cut the hedge between St Johns Field and the Ten Acre Field (Appendix B)** The Chairman had contacted other contractors for quotations but none of them had the correct equipment for the job. The bramble growth belongs to the Woodland Trust. It

was noted that the wildlife value of a hedge goes up with each year it is not cut. There is a three year period where growth is still soft enough to be cut with an ordinary flail but this means there can have been two years of blossom and berries. It was suggested that there could be a three-year rotation for hedge-cutting. The Chairman proposed that Agri Plant cut the 10-Acre Field and the inside of St John's Field, the Council contacts the Woodland Trust, nothing is done to the western edge this year – seconded by Cllr de Lacey, and passed unanimously.

- 11/28 To report on the planting of the roundabout at Duck End (Appendix C)**
There was an exceptional turnout from the public to help with the planting. A parishioner has written up a report and there is a film on the Girton website. Several parishioners have kindly made monetary contributions towards the cost of planting, and the Chairman of the Council has written to thank them – the Parish Council's RFO is to be asked the total amount donated. The Chairman has contacted Bill Parnwell's widow regarding dedicating the oak tree to Bill's memory, and she would like a plaque to commemorate Bill's work as a Parish Councillor – the Chairman agreed to look into this.
- 11/29 To report on progress of the work on the Hibbert Ware memorial garden (Appendix D)** George Thorpe presented his report. The Parish Council groundsman for the recreation ground has agreed that in early summer 2012 he will spray part of the grassed area with a selective weed killer. Volunteers are organised by Penny de Lacey, with expenses being covered by the Town Charity. Wildflower seeds have been sown amongst the grass. There has been lots of positive feedback.
- 11/30 To report on Town End Close by the Warden (Appendix E)** The Warden presented his report. Cllr de Lacey has contacted Natural England regarding replacing the defaced map of the reserve, which they will do. The ten year agreement with Natural England, in which we received set payments, runs out this year, and we are now able to apply for funds at any time, and can claim back any significant expenses. The Warden needs to work out a Management Plan with Natural England. Regarding bird-boxes, Bob Benson's widow knows someone willing to build the boxes which Bob kindly started before he died. Regarding flaying the brambles round the edge, we would need a quotation before going ahead, and the Chairman agreed to look into this.
- 11/31 Report from the Tree Warden** No report had been received.
- 11/32 To approve the planting of a tree to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee** A parishioner has suggested this, and a reconnaissance of the village would be needed to find a suitable spot, perhaps near the proposed footpath by the church, or at Wellbrook Way.
- 11/33 To commission Nick Twichett, the architect, to draw up plans for creating a footpath beside the Church Yard to give safer access for children**

attending the Glebe School and also to make the car park a one way system. A 1.5m-wide footpath could be made without encroaching on the church grounds. Cllrs de Lacey and Gordon have a meeting with the Rector on 25th November 2011 to discuss the proposal. Mr Twichett's plans include trees and a one-way system. Shrubs could be cut back on the church side, with a fence along the car park side, and repainting the lines in the car park. The Chairman agreed to talk to Nick Twichett, to get costings.

11/34 To agree to purchase up to the value of £75 hedging to grow on for infilling gaps in the St John's Field and Recreation Ground hedge. This could be spindle, hawthorn or other hedging – the Chairman offered to 'grow on' this on his allotment, to be planted out next year. It was queried if Cambridgeshire County Council might be able to give the Council some – Cllr Clift agreed to look into this, with no objections.

11/35 To approve of the budget for the Environment Committee for the year 2012-13 (Appendix F) The Chairman outlined the proposed budget for the coming year. It was noted that there are likely to be increased fuel costs during 2012-13. There is also a suggestion to widen the pond at Town End Close. Regarding tree-works, the chestnut trees on the recreation ground could require work during the year, so this needs budgeting for. Approval of the budget was proposed by Cllr Gordon, seconded by Cllr Cockley, and approved by the committee.

The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.

APPENDIX C

The replanting of the Duck End/Woody Green Roundabout

Since the public meeting that was called to discuss the replanting of the Duck End/Woody Green roundabout after the large willow tree had to be felled, I have had several discussions with local residents and we have decided to plant several trees, together with spring bulbs.

In the mid-1990s the children from the Cottontails play group planted acorns gathered from trees within the village, some of these germinated and were grown on by Andrew Meek and, after he moved from Girton, by myself.

These trees are now seven to eight feet tall and it was agreed to plant one of these oaks in memory of Bill Parnwell who was for many years a Parish Councillor and lived in Woody Green.

The oak will take many years to reach maturity and it was agreed to also plant three Birch *Betula jaquemantii* 'Doorenbos', one crab apple *Malus* 'Improved Profusion', one Rowan *Sorbus* 'Joseph Rock' and one Lime *Tilia cordata* 'Winter Orange'. There will also be 300 crocus 'Barrs Purple', 300 Daffodil 'Tete a Tete' among the reseeded grass.

All of the planting and preparation will be carried out by volunteer labour and the total cost of the trees, bulbs and other sundry items will be £233.

Several Girton residents have offered to help cover these costs and if you also wish to make a donation please send it to the Girton Parish Council office making it clear that this is for the Roundabout. Any extra funds will form a float to maintain the site.

Ray Gordon

APPENDIX D

Hibbert-Ware Memorial Garden, Progress Report Nov 2011

Work done so far

By contractors: Tree Works, Ground Works, Shrub Pruning, Shrub Planting,

By Volunteers: Spraying off weeds, Cultivating area for sowing, Planting bulbs, shrubs and trees,

Work in Progress

By contractor: Mowing

Work to do this year

By Volunteers: Plant Bergenias and Cornus, autumn tidy-up of leaves etc., complete compost bins

Work to do next year

By Contractor: Mowing of open grass area

By Chris the Groundsman(?): Control of broadleaved weeds in grass

By Volunteers:

General(as required)- Weed control, Pruning, Mow grass paths,

June-“Hay” cut of wildflower areas

September- cultivate and sow next wildflower section(central)

Plus Sometime- revamp entrance to rec.

APPENDIX E

Town End Close, Progress Report Nov 2011

At the end of 2008 and early in 2009 there was a flurry of activity at Town End close, relating to the inspection by Natural England, who wanted some tasks done before agreeing to pay the Stewardship Grant. A list of 20 Action Points was drawn up by a working group of James Ford-Smith, Stephen Tompkins and George Thorpe. The majority of these are now incorporated in the management plan but some one-off tasks were:

1. Remove and replace the hedge and fence along the East side. Done
2. Put in a water trough. Done.
3. Put up some bird boxes. 5 Tree-sparrow boxes up, more to come.

In 2010 a 5 year management plan was drawn up by Martin Harnor and George Thorpe, borrowing heavily on the format of the original 1992 document. This is in three sections, and I will use the same format here.

1) Management

- a) Graze grassland: Mr Jones (University Farm) put in 4 calves for about 10 weeks
- b) Control scrub: Volunteers have done some, but a flail next Jan/Feb is needed
- c) Cut and remove grass: Mr Jones took off a hay crop
- d) Keep boundaries stock proof: New posts inserted on part of west fence-line
- e) Plant trees and shrubs along boundaries. Possible addition of Oaks along E. side.
- f) Manage boundary hedges: E. side: formative prune young hedge plants. N. & W. sides, flail parts in new year
- g) Manage pond. Many volunteer hours were spent clearing vegetation in and around the pond, at the suggestion of the SCDC Ecology Officer Rob Mungovan. Sadly it has held very little water this (unusually dry) year. The Anglia Water hydrologist suggested that we investigate the soil profile by auguring, which we hope to arrange.
- h) Maintain Access and Interpretation board: Generally OK, but need a new sign by the gate (DDL to contact Natural England).

2) Surveys

- a) Collect data for species in pond. Frogs recorded for the first time this June.
- b) Collect data for species distribution of trees and shrubs: No action.

- c) Collect data for grassland species: No action.
- d) Collect data for fauna: No action.

3) Administration

- a) Keep records of management work and costs: Warden keeps notes on work done and Parish Office records payments made.
- b) Apply for funding: re Natural England, re-apply in 2013 (chairman of EC).
- c) Record Survey Data: Old Species lists (1998 & 2005) added to County biodiversity records.
- d) Review Annual work plan: this is it!
- e) Conduct Safety audit: visual site inspection in May this year.
- f) Fulfil obligations from funding bodies: Grassland management has been much improved by the CU Farm support, specifically cutting hay and grazing calves.
- g) Keep community informed: A pleasant Open Day was held in June, which was led by ecologist Stephen Tompkins, and attended by over 15 villagers.

Tasks for the coming year include:

- E side: improve verge and develop hedge
- Continue pond project, and recut if necessary
- Arrange a grassland species survey and another Open day.
- Arrange application for further funding

I would like to acknowledge the enormous amount of support that the TEC has received over the last couple of years, and hope that with sustained support it will continue to improve.

George Thorpe, TEC Warden, Girton, Nov 2011

Appendix F

Budget Proposal for Environment Committee 2012-13

Grass Verges		
Contract with Brookfields £750 per cut	8 cuts	£6,000
Open Spaces		£3,500
Hedge Cutting		£2,000
Tree works		£2,000
Benches		£500
Notice boards		
* Wellbrook Way		£500
Bus Shelters		
Cambridge Road/Mayfield Road replacement		£2,500
Litter Picking		
*Weavers Field and Wellbrook Way		£500
Signs		
Car Park etc *Wellbrook Way		£500
Footpaths		£250
Town End Close		
Possibly clearing/enlarging pond and fencing		£500
	TOTAL	£18,750

Income

Town End Close	Countryside	£470
Footpaths	Cambs CC	£230
	TOTAL	£700

The cost of creating a footpath beside the church yard and making the Car Park a one-way system can be added to this after the architect's plans are put out to tender

*Wellbrook

Income from Section 106 and expenditure not known.