

SHERSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Sherston Footpaths Group held in Sherston Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 27 May 2009

Present:

Martin Rea
Jay Dunn
Steve Dunn
Nigel Freeth
Helen Freeth
Kath Sheard
Steve Sheard
Maggie McKenna
Phylip Harries
Andy Osborn
Stan Bunce
Pat Bunce
Richard Skeffington

By invitation: Irene Johnston – Tree Warden

1. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Roger Allan and Sue McKechnie

2. Approval of Minutes of 22 April 2009.

The Minutes were approved.

3. Walks Booklet.

Martin Rea and Phylip Harries had had an informal meeting to discuss financing of the booklet. Martin reported that he hoped to get £500 from Community First. Also Cotswold Conservation Board now seem more disposed to help us on the basis that any profits would go to Grove Wood – i.e. a community scheme and nothing that would rightly be the responsibility of a statutory body – and they would credit us for volunteer time. For example, if the booklet were to cost £3,000 they would pay 50% of the total, which could include time for volunteer contribution at an hourly rate. Please could members of the group keep a record of their individual time contribution – just to be noted for the moment?

It is envisaged that the booklet would be published next spring – so all copy etc would have to be sorted out by the end of this year. Pat Bunce proposed that we should have some sort of template for the walk descriptions so that they are more coherent. It was suggested that the report could be made in two sections – one for the **Walks Booklet** - rough number of words etc., what information needs to be provided, how many photographs etc. etc. – Together with one for the **Footpath Problems** – safety, stiles, signage etc.

Therefore, it was proposed that everything to do with **walks booklet** should go to Martin Rea and Phylip Harries. New emails:

martin.footpaths@sherston.org.uk

phylip.footpaths@sherston.org.uk

A sub-group would be formed to address **problem and issues** on the various paths – very kindly Steve, Jay, Martin and Andy said they would be responsible for liaising with Wiltshire County Council and the relevant landowners.

Richard produced some examples of other walks booklets produced by other parishes.

The Group members reported on their ‘designated’ walks – all had been carried out at least once – obviously we will become more familiar with the routes and adept at the reporting procedures as we progress the project.

4. Working Party.

Martin Rea reported that representatives from Community Payback scheme were to visit in him next two weeks to do work in the village and footpath maintenance will be discussed.

Apparently they can carry out work at fairly short notice, which could be useful, but they need to have been tried out first.

Martin said that on reflection he was reluctant for the members of the Group to become involved because he felt it might compromise future negotiations with County as it was properly their responsibility.

5. Tree Wardens.

The Group welcomed Irene Johnston who was attending the meeting in her capacity as the new Tree Warden. Irene explained that members of the Group could be very useful in identifying important specimen trees in the parish. Martin said that there should be a list of notable trees in the Conservation Area Statement. Irene reported that they would be going on several courses and obviously the Tree Warden task will evolve in due course.

6. Footpath 13, Ladyswood etc.

Nigel and Helen Freeth said that there were new stiles from the Fosse way – but no signs on gallops etc. There was a cropping issue with Mr Green’s beans. Mr Hillier’s hedge was impenetrable and there was a cropping issue on his field. Martin said that there had been various emails to and fro – representative from County (Richard Broadhead?) had undertaken to walk the path and the Group felt that he should be accompanied by a member of the Group. Nigel Freeth volunteered to carry out this duty. Martin Rea said he would speak to Mr Hillier

7. Footpath 20.

Martin Rea had circulated an email with the background on this and reporting on his meeting on site which had not been entirely satisfactory. The trench was filled in, the digger moved and there were new way marks but in his opinion the path was still not sufficiently and clearly marked.

Martin said he would email County to express displeasure that decisions appeared to have been taken without any reference to the relevant people 'on the ground' which was unacceptable and should not happen in the future.

It would seem that the Macmillan Way as in their printed booklet is wrong and this should be pointed out to them for any further re-prints. Martin said he would notify them of the problem and perhaps have a meeting on site so the matter is sorted out.

8. Liaising with Landowners.

There is an informative article appearing on the front page of the next Cliffhanger.

Martin will be writing to the relevant landowners. Andy Osborn suggested that the letter should contain more information as to what the Group was trying to achieve and the procedures that we were adopting to try and improve the access to these Rights of Way. Martin agreed with this and also said that the landowners should also know that they could contact us if they thought we could assist them in any way. The action taken in respect of Footpath 20 should have alerted landowners that they need to be aware of their responsibilities.

9. Grove Wood.

There will be an informal meeting at the wood on Sunday 14 June at 11.00 am.

10. Matters Arising.

Martin Rea suggested that we should get a large map printed, with all the Rights of Way duly marked, and that it should be placed in the bus shelter

11. Any Other Business.

The matter of spraying raised in Tina Pattie's email was raised but Nigel reassured the Group that the pesticides used now were not harmful to people or animals.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 24th June 2009 at 7.30 pm.

MM 08.06.2009