

Wootton Park Association Meeting
7.00pm - Tuesday 28th March 2017, South Wootton Parish Council Office

MINUTES

1. Present: Will Border, Diana Gotts, David Price, Roy Williamson, Wendy Border, John Marshall-Grint, Mike Gill, Matt Sturgeon
In attendance: Mrs R Curtis (Clerk)
One member of the public was present

2. Apologies –Bridget Nurse, Dorothy Pulsford-Harris, Tracey Cornwell, Sarah Crome

3. Election of Chair, Vice-Chair and confirm Treasurer and secretary positions

Chair – Diana Gotts proposed that Will Border continue as Chair, this was seconded by Roy Williamson and unanimously agreed by the Committee

Vice-Chair – Will proposed that Diana Gotts continue as Vice-Chair, this was seconded by David Price and unanimously agreed by the Committee.

Treasurer – Tracey Cornwell had indicated before the meeting that she is happy to continue in the role of Treasurer, Committee agreed.

Secretary – Rachel Curtis said she was happy to continue in the role of Secretary, Committee agreed.

4. Chairpersons Report

Will read out his report as follows,

This year has proved to be an interesting and busy year for the Wootton Park Association. There have been a few ideas that have been put in place that will hopefully really start to take shape this year. As I stated in last year's report these ideas are to try to raise awareness of this beautiful asset that the villages have and to encourage more parishioners to participate in its upkeep.

There have been a few projects this year that we have completed and some that are part of the ongoing philosophy for the upkeep of the park. South Wootton in Bloom (SWIB) were given a grant by Norfolk Coast Partnership to develop the pond. First of all the pond was cleaned out and made deeper. With help from members of Norfolk Wildlife Trust the volunteers worked with approximately 90 pupils from North Wootton Junior School who came in groups and planted the area and also learned about pond wildlife. Members of Wootton Park association and SWIB helped to erect bird boxes, bat boxes, build a bug "hotel" and erect a picnic table with an information board. As a result the project won the town/parish council category in the Norfolk Community Biodiversity Awards This was a great achievement and a testimony to Diane's hard work on the project.

Funds from the events lead by Picnic in the Park have seen the instillation of a picnic table near the skate board park. It was very rewarding to see this in use from day one. Also there is now a defibrillator located on the outside wall of the pavilion. These are both great assets for the park, and really show the commitment of the Picnic on the Park Committee.

Other smaller projects have included, a coppice clearance and planting of spring bulbs on the North Wootton Strip. A general tidy up of the infants play area and a flailing of the hedge that runs along the cycle path that is on the north side of the park. At this point I would just like to add that we have planted over twice as many trees as we have had to take out, through disease or windfall. The new saplings have included two copper beech and an oak, which I hope will be allowed to mature in their own time.

Some of the initiatives that have been put into place this year are starting to show signs of growth and will hopefully become useful to the park. We started the green gym to encourage people to come along and lend a hand with small jobs that need to be tackled. The jobs have included dike/ditch maintenance and general clearing of shrubs etc. This will continue this year to see if we can really get this off the ground. This time with the added incentive of issuing Time Credits for the volunteer's time.

We have set up the WPA 200 Club as a way of raising much needed funds for the park, this currently has 81 members with a top monthly prize of £32.40. So at this level of membership it is producing an income of £81.90 per month for the park.

The services of the community payback team have been enlisted, on the first Sunday of each month, they are on the park doing jobs as requested, we are starting with the reclaiming of the edges of the cycle path! Lastly we have access to students that are part of the NCS (National Citizen Service). They have proved very useful to tackle specific projects that just require a lot of people for a short time to complete a task.

This year has seen improvements in the pavilion, with the moving of the kitchen from the back to the front and the inclusion of some roller shutter hatches, this will enable a more professional approach to the selling of hot food & drinks. This will hopefully bring in more revenue for the WPA & Football Club at specific events. The pavilion has had a report that gives it a clean bill of health stating that there is no asbestos in the fabric of the building. There has also been a fixed wire test on all the electrical circuits in the building.

I am pleased to report that the club finances are as solid as they were last year. We started the year with £2906.97 in the account and we end it with just over £2000. The breakdown of this will be covered at greater length in the treasures report.

My vision for the next year is to try to continue to raise funds for the park and then start to tackle some of the bigger projects that would vastly improve some of the aspects of the park. I would lastly just wish to extend my thanks to everyone this year who has helped in the park. These range from the parishioners that have rolled their sleeves in the park, to the locals and friends that have come along and supported the fund raising events. To all those at the football club that have helped out at the joint events held on the park. Not forgetting this committee for keeping me on the right path, with many a word of wisdom, without everyone's commitment it would be an impossible task to complete. Let us hope we can continue to keep this going with the same level of enthusiasm for the next year.

David Price gave a vote of thanks to Will for the work he has done in the position of Chair, in particular his drive to get things moving and bringing new ideas to the association. The Committee echoed this by way of a round of applause.

5. Treasurers Report

In Tracey's absence, Will read out the report she had prepared as follows,

I am pleased to report that the Wootton Park finances are as solid as they were last year. We started the year with £2906.97 in the account and we end it with just over £2,040.00

This is even after spending £1094 of funds that had previously been donated from the Picnic on the Park account. Going forward there is more work to do, to address the issue of the misspent funds from Picnic on the Park.

The WPA have also created £470 of income from the 3 social events that have been held over the course of the year.

The WPA 200 Club has started to create a monthly income for the park that at the current membership of 81 brings in £81.90 for the park per month, so on the anniversary of its inception I will hope to see an injection of cash of over £1,000 into the WPA Account.

The budget spend on behalf of the two parish councils was £13,490 and of this, we spent £8603.71, less a resident contribution for tree surgery of £380, leaving the overall spend of £8,223.71. Even though we have come in well below budget this is due to the fact that the Parish Councils have not had to pay any wages for a park worker. I would hope the Parish Councils will support us on a similar level of budget again next year, as there are some ideas that will require the support of the two councils throughout 2017. We will continue to use their money wisely and will always consult prior to any unexpected expenditure.

I am confident in being able to report an even stronger set of figures for next year.

6. To approve the minutes of the last meeting – 24thJanuary 2017

These were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters Arising

David asked for clarity on the mechanism and criteria of reward for the time credits scheme. Will explained that the time credits are to be used for rewarding people who volunteer to do work on Wootton Park. There was some discussion around seed and bulb planting that has already been done on the North Wootton Strip by WPA volunteers and South Wootton Strip by South Wootton In Bloom. But the Committee agreed that moving forward the Park area should be worked on as a whole with both groups working together.

8. Questions from the Public

One member of the public was present; she did not have any questions, but came to find out more about how the WPA works. Will explained that the Committee is made up of representative from both North and South Wootton Parish Council's and representatives from each village. Work is funded by both Parish Council's and from income which the WPA receives independently from the Football Club use and fundraising activities.

9. Correspondence

None

10. Finance

Will presented the reports from Tracey in her absence. For the year April 2016 – March 2017, the Wootton Park Running Costs account had a budget of £13,490 against an actual spend of £8,603.71. This large variance is due to nil spend against the wages line. There was no handyman in position for most of the year, therefore no recharge for costs passed on to the Parish Councils. For the year April 2016 – 31st March 2017 the Wootton Park Association Current Account had an opening balance of £2,906.97 with income of £1,345 and expenditure of £2,211.62, leaving a closing balance of £2,040.35. the WPA 200 Club account which was opened this financial year, has a closing balance of £1,866.80, there is a transfer of £85 to be taken out in April as the quiz night income was incorrectly paid to this account.

11. Football Club Report

Matt Sturgeon reported on the following;

- Work is ongoing at the Pavilion.
- Two pitches had not been used to allow the ground to recover. However they will now start to be used again as the nights are lighter and hopefully the weather better.
- There is to be an internal restructure of the way the finances are run within the Club.
- Parking continues to be monitored, especially at Cranmer Ave. Will said that a bigger project is hoped to go ahead later on in the year to create a larger car park area which should alleviate these problems. David noted that the development of the 9 acre field includes 2/3rds being gifted to SWPC, this will be used to create an overflow car park, however this could be 4-5 years in the future.

12. Pavilion

- Will asked Matt to find out when the hatches will be finished.
- Will is meeting with a representative from the West Norfolk Disability Service to look at the toilet at the pavilion to give an opinion on its suitability in terms of facilities and access for disabled use to then have a lock for a radar key fitted. This would also help with the community payback group which need easy access to a toilet when working on the Park.

13. NCS/Community Pay Back

NCS –volunteers available 8th/9th April to clear the dyke.

Community Payback – volunteers coming 1st/2nd April to complete the edging of the cycle path.

14. Green Gym

The Green Gym will begin in April and take place regularly on the 1st and 3rd Thursday evening of each month. Time Credits have been purchased to reward volunteers and recognise people's good work and willingness. The type of work to be done at the Green Gym will be cutting back, pruning and general tidying. The WPA is now part of the time credits network, so it is hoped to not only get the community interested in the Park, but people keen to volunteer who enjoy earning time credits.

15. Specific Requests for Tree Pruning on the Park

- 73Pingles Road, two tall oak trees overhanging the resident's garden. Resident is happy to pay half for the work, Will to organise. Cost could be high as the tree surgeon will need a cherry picker.
- Resident at Little Walsingham Close who cut down the silver birch overhanging his property has now removed the debris that was left.

16. Events

- Picnic in the Park will be on 17th June, big push on selling raffle tickets and Will to liaise with Roy Williamson regarding collecting raffle prizes.
- Bingo Night at South Wootton Village Hall on 19th May.

17. 200 Club

The club now has 85 members and the current monthly draws took place and the winners were as follows;
For March;

- 1st Prize, £34.00 – Janet Manning
- 2nd Prize, £25.50 – Marcia Goddard
- 3rd Prize, £17.00 – Anita Brennan

For April;

- 1st Prize, £34.00 – Danny Cracknell
- 2nd Prize, £25.50 – Jo Willey
- 3rd Prize, £17.00 – J Long

18. Any other business

- Following the play equipment inspection the single bar structure is not safe, the wood is rotten. The Committee agreed for Will to organise for it to be removed.
- The posts of the larger climbing frame are split and splintered. The Committee discussed ways to repair these, Will had a sample of rubber tape which can be wound around to cover the wood, but it was thought that this may encourage the wood to rot underneath. Will to investigate resin filler which is used on window frames and hard wearing.
- Robin and Lynn Houchen have contacted Roy to say how happy they are to see the grass area behind the bus shelter has been cut. The Secretary said that it will be done regularly this season as NWPC have added it to their contractor schedule for cutting.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 23rd May 2017

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.20pm

..... Chairman Date – 23rd May 2017