

Turnpike Field Recreation Public Meeting

Meeting Notes from Thursday 11th July 2019

30 people attended (including the Turnpike Field working group).

Audlem Parish Council's Chairman Cllr Steve Boyes introduced himself & welcomed everybody. He explained that the working group currently consists of 5 Parish Councillors and 4 community representatives but the latter will need to increase by 2. Given the ecological interest in the field the group agreed it would be beneficial to have an AWEG representative in the group. It was also felt that encouraging youth involvement with the field was very important and that a youth community leader should also form part of the working group. Both these parties will be approached.

Cllr Steve Boyes updated the attendees with what has happened in the field so far:

- A new dog/litter bin has been installed near the entrance on Shropshire Street and another one is planned by Greys Bridge.
- Two benches have been added and one picnic table has been donated by the Public Hall Annexe with another 4 on order. All 5 will be installed next week.
- Tree surgeon contractors have attended and are conducting works recommended in the tree surgeon's report.
- An ecological survey has recently been conducted by Cheshire Wildlife Trust. Soil samples had been taken which confirmed the field is suitable for wildlife habitat creation. Some of the recommendations and advice given by the wildlife expert were:
 - Cut down saplings by the stream to open up the area and encourage wildlife inhabitancy.
 - Plant more trees so they can grow in time to replace oak trees when these die. The Woodland Trust may help with planting new oak trees and other British tree specimens to encourage wildlife.
 - Himalayan Balsam removal – no issues with hand pulling it but it can also be strimmed. The best time to do it would be end of July/August.
 - Installation of bird & bat boxes recommended dotted around the field.
 - Wildflower meadow would work if placed by the stream which would fit in with the plans for the green car park and picnic locations at the top end of the field. They also suggested having a 20 ft x 20 ft pond by the stream.
 - Presence of voles – the expert found one-star shaped foot print which means there might be water voles and confirmed they thought there were definitely bank voles.
 - A local farmer will flail top field and clear some of the public footpath.

Donations

Cllr Boyes also informed attendees that donations now stand £16,800 and he thanked the village for their generosity.

Guidelines for using the field

One of the working group members has prepared the bare bones of this document. Cllr Boyes and the Parish Clerk are to work on these along with a standard letter with guidelines and conditions for using the field to be sent to event organisers.

Green Car Park

Cllr Boyes thanked Cllr David Higham for all his work in respect of the green car park. He has prepared a specification for the works and a planning application is expected in the next 3 - 6 months.

Charitable Trust

Cllr Boyes also mentioned the working group are investigating setting up a charitable trust for the community asset which will protect the field and will also allow gift aid on donations. This will need to be considered alongside the Playing Field where the Parish Council is working with Fields in Trust.

Questions & queries from attendees

Has anybody searched the field with a metal detector? Nantwich Club would be able to help. TFWG to investigate this further.

Concerns of the effect of the run off from the Heathfield Road development.

A floating bog has its own biodiversity so should not be destroyed nor replaced by a pond as there are few in the country. (Cllr Hopkins said the proposed pond is not going near it & will not drain it.)

Planting a vineyard on the field.

Wildlife survey should be repeated at different times of the year to gain a better understanding of the ecology on the field. (AWEG were happy to assist).

Next meeting

Next public meeting will take place before Christmas, dependant on the planning application submission for the green car park.