

TFWG Meeting 31st January 2022

Audlem Public Hall

In attendance

James McGregor, Ralph Warburton, Chris Lewis, Judy Evans, Steve Elliott, Neil Goodyear, Michael Cookson, Adrian Leighton, Jean Stainthorpe, Margaret Duys and Nicola Swinnerton from Cheshire East

Apologies - Non Received

Minutes of the meeting 22nd September - were approved

Muddy Paths

Nicola Swinnerton introduced herself to the meeting. She is one of 4 officers who deal with Public Footpaths. Their aim is to liaise with landowners to keep them open and Nicola's area is from Crewe and Nantwich south wards to the boundary with Shropshire. The Team also replace stiles and gates.

There are 4 options open to the council regarding the muddy footpath:

1. Do Nothing
2. Lay bags and gravel - this is probably the most ecological option as plants and grass will grow in the bags and the gravel is easily laid on a plastic membrane - probable cost approx £4,000
3. Lay a plastic grid backfilled with gravel. This is not recommended by CE's Ecology officer due to the need to excavate to a depth of about 140mm and so potentially cause to the ecology - cost about £2700
4. Wooden Walkway over the path and bridge the Boggy Ground - £10,000

Discussions took place about funding and the Group were advised to approach Peak and Northern who have plenty of money to fund community projects, however the Council would have to fund it upfront and be reimbursed after inspection. The Group felt there was a need to establish once and for all if there is an underground spring in that area which is keeping it so wet.

Judy suggested that if we needed to bridge the boggy ground we could use Crowd-Funding where people fund a plank of wood and maybe could have their name placed on it. This to be considered after we establish exactly what needs to be done.

Action agreed:

James to contact Swains and another Drainage Contractor to do an on-site inspection and advise on any action to be taken or not as the case maybe.

Steve to make contact with Peak and Northern to establish the criteria for applying for funding and to invite them to a site inspection to ensure we would qualify.

Nicola then left the meeting advising the group that she was happy to return when the agreed actions provided some guidance as to what to do next.

Environmental Report

This was distributed prior to the meeting to enable group members to raise any questions or issues.

Adrian advised that the ponds only established two years ago were thriving. Raiders have been cut back so as not to encroach on the ponds. He asked that if anyone had newts in their garden ponds they would be well in the Turnpike Fields ponds. The planting undertaken last year seems to be established these include hawthorn and rowans.

Adrian felt we should do some planting for the Queens Jubilee. Michael said the Jubilee Committee were giving trees to local communities.

Action agreed:

Michael to investigate this offer and request a tree or trees for Audlem.

Update on Yearly Maintenance Contract

Discussion took place to identify the way to ensure the mistakes of last year did not happen this year.

James reiterated his willingness to do the mowing this year. He will also arrange for the roadside hedges to be trimmed just on the outside.

Agreed Action:

James to arrange for the hedges to be trimmed before the nesting season. This is the outside edge of the hedges that are adjacent to Whitford Roan and Green lane. No cutting on the hedges inside edge of the field or the tops. This to be carried out this week.

James will do the mowing for no charge and liaise with Adrian to ensure only the appropriate areas are cut at the right time of the year.

James to contact Hedge Laying Competition organisers to persuade them to use our field for their competition.

Update on Car Park Project

When the field was purchased the plan was to install an overflow Car Park for 40 cars to alleviate the parking in the village. This Project was stalled by half the Council

resigning and impacted further by Covid 19 when restrictions prohibited work to progress.

Despite James ringing numerous Contractors to come out and give us quotes finally only one company came and both James and Michael met with them on site.

Option 1 To Lay matting and roll it into the ground. No curbs, no lighting and no improvement to the entrance Approximate cost £76,000. To not include a survey, planning application, or disabled access **£76,000**

Option 2 As above but if we can't do that and we need to dig out and lay a level foundation before putting the matting back down and back filing with soil. To not include a survey, planning application, or disabled access **£132,000**

There was some discussion but prices have gone up so much since the original quote, not least shortage of labour and escalating costs of materials. Judy wanted further research and discussion on funding options before any decision was made

The Disabled Access was identified as paramount to ensure that all members of the community were able to use the field. The Co-op is giving money to community projects such as this one. All agree access would be best at the corner of Whitchurch Road and Green Lane.

It was felt by the majority that the Group could not recommend moving ahead with the project by itself but would recommend that the Council holds a Community meeting to explain the figures and for the Community to decide what would happen next.

Agreed Action:

Recommendation from the TFWG to the Parish Council to hold a Public meeting where the way forward would be agreed by the community.

Neil to make inquiries with the Co-op as Chairman of ADAS to apply for a grant for the Disabled Access.

Once the minutes have been approved to publish these minutes on AOL, APC and Turnpike Website. Steve to write an article to inform the community as to the decision to involve them.

Proposed T's and C's for letting of Turnpike Field for events or parking

Discussions took place and Margaret went through the main points as to why we needed Event Organisers to provide Indemnity Insurance to protect the Council and the Community. In addition discussions were had on two options to try and ensure the Field was left in a fit state. Two options were considered:

Option 1 - A refundable deposit of £100 to cover any clear up or damage.

Option 2 - A “two Strikes and you are not allowed to book the field”. This would mean should it be left in a mess the organisers get a warning and if they do it again no more bookings are taken from them’

Agreed Action:

Margaret to amend T’s and C’s as agreed and forward them to the Parish Council for approval. Once approved they will be posted on the website.

The meeting agreed the deposit idea to ensure that the field was left in good condition

ADAS request to plant fir trees for the Big Switch on

Each year this event costs around £2050 to put on. The proposal is to plant 5 trees in the first year and then monitor growth etc replacing any that die during the year. At the moment they have two potential trees for the next couple of years but are now trying to plan ahead.

Agreed Action:

Planting Area for the trees to be agreed with Adrian as per the planting plan and referred back to the group for final agreement

Greys Bridge - and bridge between the two fields

Problem with water

Agreed action:

To ask the Drainage Contractor to look at this problem and suggest a way to resolve it.

Date of Next Meeting 9th March Thursday