

Kingston Village Action Group

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 January 2021

1 Present, virtually: Vicki Scott, Tim Ambrose, John Bewick, Steve Berry, Barrie Lambert, Dinah Morgan, Rob Watson, Tony Wheeler.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December were agreed, subject to the correction of the date.

3 Matters arising

3.1 KPC Environment Policy

The Action Plan associated with the Environment Policy (a draft of which was Appendix 9 of the January KPC meeting) would be circulated for comment within the next few weeks. The Action Group thought it essential that the final plan included provision for the KPC to report back annually to the village on what had been achieved and what was planned for the future.

3.2 Speed sensors

The long awaited speed sensors for Wellgreen Lane/Ashcombe Lane had been on order for many weeks but had not yet been received. One would be installed near the garden centre and the other near The Avenue.

4 Finance

4.1 The balance in the Group's account according to the last bank statement dated 9 December was £556.95. Of this, £28.99 was owed to Steve for the purchase of a large grass rake. If monthly donations and income from the Lewes Lottery continued at the current level, the Group's annual income would be £398. Anticipated annual expenditure on fixed costs – rent for the former allotment site and insurance – would be around £170, suggesting a regular surplus of more than £200.

4.2 Given that – and that the expected cost of the trees and whips (see para 5 below) would not exceed £330 - it was agreed that up to £100 could be spent on the purchase of snowdrop bulbs, of which Steve would donate half. These would be planted on the three remaining verges in The Avenue so far without snowdrops but where they had been requested by the owners in previous years.

4.3 No details were yet available for any of the South Downs National Park Authority grant schemes. The most relevant appeared to be the Sustainable Communities

Fund. It seemed that no applications could be made until April. Steve had subscribed to the SDNP Newsletters, available on-line.

5 Community Garden

- 5.1 Neither the greenhouse nor the shed, both of which had been donated, had yet been erected because of the Covid restrictions, neither had any weeding been done. A number of paving stones had been donated to the project. For the moment, these were being stored by the newly erected post and rail fence which had been put up by Lewes District Council contractors just before Christmas. A space had been left for a gate which LDC had indicated would be in place in January.
- 5.1 Vicki (with Nigel) would re-visit the issue of adequate foundation for the greenhouse. Some form of hard-core was necessary to avoid the structure becoming unstable but it was hoped that much of the floor of the greenhouse could remain available for planting. Dinah offered to help with sourcing hard-core.
- 5.2 Steve had written to Andy Frost again about the absence of any indication of the northern boundary of the site. He would try once more but in the meantime it was difficult to know exactly where to plant the tree whips which were to be ordered for the hedge. The planting season extended until the end of February at least so there was no immediate urgency. Steve estimated that the cost of the whips would not exceed £250.
- 5.3 The cost of the three fruit trees to be planted would be in the region of £120, of which the Kingston WI would pay up to £40. Steve would now order these, together with enough whips to plant along the boundary with the fence.
- 5.4 When the garden had begun to develop, it was envisaged that the area would benefit from a shelter, to serve as a meeting point and a place to rest. The construction of such a building might form part of a later application for grant but in the meantime Dinah would approach a builder in the village who might be willing to undertake the project – or contribute to it - at cost or even no cost.

6 Saxondown Windfall

- 6.1 A circular inviting the village to contribute ideas for the use of the fund had been prepared for issue directly to all village groups. It was to be included also in the March issue of the Kingston News as a flyer; and posted on the village website with a link to it on the Kingston Massive WhatsApp group.

6.2 Vicki would consolidate all the suggestions made by Group members. It was agreed that each proposal should have at least an approximate cost attached and – where appropriate – some indication of possible match funding.

7 KPC Update

7.1 Planning

The Iford Estate had submitted a planning application which incorporated the earlier for the re-development of its operation at Iford as well as other changes. The KPC intended to comment.

An application for a two storey extension to a house in Church Lane had been made, as had another for an office in the garden of a house in Wellgreen Lane.

7.2 C.A.R.E.S

The South Downs National Park Authority was to receive £150,000 from the National Lottery to develop “Ouse Valley CARES” – an acronym for Climate Action Resilient Ecosystems and Sustainability. The KPC was keen to be involved but as yet had no contact for the project. When they did, they would pass this to the Action Group who also wanted to participate in any way they could.

7.3 Community Infrastructure Levy

The Council was investigating the possibility of applying for funding for a consultant to examine the possibility of implementing a second phase of traffic calming for the village. It was pointed out that a programme had been drawn up in the past but subsequently rejected. Barrie would ask John Crabbe – who had been KPC Chair at the time – whether he still had details of these proposals.

It was agreed that any calming measures should include provision for improving the junction of Wellgreen Lane with the C7. Pedestrian access to the garden centre was a particular difficulty here.

7.4 Saxondown development

There was continuing concern about contractors’ vehicles using The Avenue and Church Lane to reach the development site. Signs erected with the aim of ensuring that construction traffic avoided this route had been repeatedly removed. John would ask for their restoration and also whether anything could be done to ensure that this did not happen again but the root problem was evidently a resident or residents who objected to construction traffic using the recommended route. Unless those responsible were identified, the problem might recur.

8.1 KPC website

Tony had been impressed by the new KPC website and in particular the news section, with up to date information on, for example, the problems with the Saxondown development. The Action Group welcomed the improvements made and urged the KPC to continue to promote the website as widely as possible.

8.2 Energy

Last October, an OVESCO representative had given a presentation to the Action Group about renewable energy projects. This was then reported to the KPC. At its meeting on 11 November, the Council had “agreed that there was nothing proactive to be done and that it would await any approach or response from the AG”. This information had not, however, reached the Action Group and no such response had therefore been made. However, it was pointed out that before the 11th November meeting, Tony had submitted four distinct suggestions to the KPC. It was agreed that these proposals should be definitively regarded as the AG’s response to the 11th November request.

8.3 Ashcombe Lane Footway

It had now been established once and for all that this footway is considered to be a pavement and the responsibility of the Communities, Economy and Transport Section of ESCC. See Annex below.

9 Next Meeting

This would be at 5-00 pm on Tuesday 2 March

Annex – Ashcombe Lane Footway

-----Original Message-----

From: Highway Searches <Highway.Searches@eastsussex.gov.uk>

To: 'Steve Berry' <stefalik@aol.com>

Sent: Thu, 14 Jan 2021 17:40

Subject: RE: Footway in Kingston

Dear Steve

We have looked at our records and I can confirm that a strip of land on the east side of Ashcombe Lane was acquired in 1971. I have attached a copy of the conveyance.

The land was subsequently formed as highway and I have attached an extract from the Highway Terrier which shows by pink hatching the extent of the adopted highway. The considered extent of the highway*, where known, is shown by way of red edging. The public

has a right to pass and repass over the areas hatched pink and they are maintainable at public expense.

** The determination made is in good faith on the evidence currently available to the County Council, but the Council reserves the right to review its determination if other evidence is submitted to it.*

The County Council uses data provided by Ordnance Survey as a base for our records. The plan shows the general position, not the exact line of the boundary. It may be subject to distortions in scale. Measurements scaled from this plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground.

I hope this clarifies the situation but please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Kind Regards