

Kingston Nature Recovery Group

Minutes of meeting 29 August 2023 in Kingston Pavilion

Members present: Helen Sida (Chair), Louise Holloway, Crispin Holloway, David Hoare (KPC), Grahame Mayo, Alison Mayo, Alex Worsley (SWT), Tim Ambrose.

Apologies: Louisa Adams (KPC), Steve Berry, Ellie Rotheray, Chris Moulder (Sec), Tom Simpson (SDNPA)

1. **Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting on 1st August 2023 were accepted.

2. **Matters arising:**

LH raised the issue of loss of mature trees in the village, currently at Castelmer and concerns for other trees in the future. She proposed KNRG map notable trees in the Parish. DH told the group about the Parish Priority Statement (PPS) which is being drafted and can include areas of Nature Conservation. KPC have until mid-November to submit a PPS to the SDNPA, and are due to discuss it at the KPC meeting on the 13th September.

AW looked up the area on the Ancient Tree Inventory, there are few trees in the parish currently listed.

It was agreed to raise the issue with SB who may or may not be the Parish's Tree Warden and contact Dinah Morag who has previously had an interest and involvement in trees, with a view to finding someone willing to take a lead in mapping notable trees for inclusion on the PPS.

It was agreed there are likely other items of nature conservation importance that it would be helpful to include in the PPS. The group agreed to all think of what else might usefully be included.

Actions:

HS to contact SB and Dinah Morag

All to think of other items of nature conservation importance that it would be helpful to include in the PPS

3. **Proposal to KPC re: St Pancras Green**

The details in SB's proposal for changes to St Pancras Green were approved. TA and HS had a few amendments which will be incorporated to make the proposal ready for presentation to the KPC meeting on 13th September.

Actions:

HS to liaise with SB on amendments

SB and AW to prepare a map to accompany the paper

HS and SB to present the finalised paper at the KPC meeting 13th September with a view to work commencing in October.

4. **Biodiversity Monitoring Plan.**

Pond Survey update

ER was unable to attend so there was no update on the pond survey.

Action: HS to ask ER and suggest survey re-posted on WhatsApp to remind people.

Site inventories

AW gave us an overview of what a site inventory looks like and how it can be used. There was a good exchange of ideas of how inventories might work in Kingston. It was agreed that involving experts from local recording groups as much as possible would be very positive. It was also agreed we should always ensure records are shared with the SxBRC. It was felt that this was a good opportunity for community engagement, to focus on specific areas in the parish for data collection, perhaps in the form of a bioblitz. The possibility of a day event, focused at the Pavilion, involving a few local recording groups and members of community would be great on many levels – data collection, community engagement, education. It was agreed to consider further how we could make this event happen next summer, perhaps even a 24hr bioblitz.

Actions: HS to incorporate these ideas into the draft monitoring plan for further discussion.

5. Garden pledge Scheme.

The paper proposing an action plan for the scheme was approved. GM suggested QR codes could be used to access information. LH explained how connectivity makes the potential of the scheme in Kingston very interesting. She also expressed that it should be explicit the scheme is for humans not only wildlife. It was agreed to set up a sub-group to meet and agree how to take the plan forward.

Action: HS, LH and AM to meet and discuss next steps

6. Information dissemination

Kingston News has now agreed that the KNRG can have a regular monthly article in the newsletter. The September edition had an article about the nesting birds survey and house martins. LH has received no feedback from anyone interested in becoming involved in the survey. It was agreed that next year we need to give people tips on how to identify nesting birds.

The next deadline is 10th Sept for the October edition. It was agreed we should submit an article on how to be wildlife friendly in your garden in Autumn and introduce plans for a garden pledge scheme. Nobody felt able to write that in time.

Action: HS to put together a rough draft (before going on holiday) and ask SB if he might be able to complete.

Press release. HS explained the press release about the mapping report has now been approved by Wild Business and the SDNPA press office. It was approved by the group pending removal of “arable fields”. SDNPA have agreed to share it in their newsletter and social media.

Actions: HS to share the revised press release with KPC Chair Ian for re-approval, and then to seek to get it circulated.

7. Working parties

GM introduced the issue of creating working parties to undertake important conservation work. Specifically, he highlighted the issue of scrub encroaching on the habitat of the Wart biter on Kingston Hill SSSI. The Wart biter is only found at half a dozen sites, 2 in Sussex, one of which is here. Buglife is very concerned that this nationally rare invertebrate is threatened here due to

scrub encroachment. It was recognized this is a challenging issue for the farmer who has other priorities and responsibilities. Scrub clearance here is also very challenging for amateurs as it is very steep, and the work is very heavy.

AW told us that Natural England have funds for this type of work. SDNPA may have equipment. Longer term there may be a role for KAG or others in the parish to become involved in scrub clearance.

Actions.

AW to contact Natural England

GM to contact Buglife to see what support can be offered to the landowner in applying for funds.

HS to highlight the issue to Tom Simpson SDNPA

8. Case study for the SDNPA

Following a further request from Jan Knowlson, SDNPA, for the case study HS has written one, using the timeline as the starting point. It has already been approved by Jan. The group approved the text. TA suggested using a photograph with people in it.

Actions. HS to ask SB for photos. HS to finalise the case study, clarify how it will be used by the SDNPA and submit it.

9. Landowners letter progress.

HS reported that these have not been sent out yet due to other priorities and some uncertainty about their content. It was agreed they should be kept as a simple introduction.

Actions: HS to send out as and when time allows.

10: AOB

AW explained that as part of his role as Ecologist for the SWT he needs to write blogs. He asked permission to write about the KNRG and permission was given enthusiastically.

11. Date of next meeting: 7.30 Tuesday 26th September at the Pavilion.

HS 30/8/23