



**OTFORD
PARISH
COUNCIL**

Clerk: S Holt
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF OPC RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
at The School House on Tuesday 7 September 2021 from 7:30pm

Present: Cllr M Evans (in the Chair), Cllr P Clucas, Cllr J Kelly and Cllr J Lawrey
Also Present Parish Clerk

Public Forum: No members of the public were present.

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr R Rogers, Mrs K Drake (OSA) and Mr M Richards (OAA).
2. Declaration of Interest - None.
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 June 2021 were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters arising from the previous meeting.
 - 4.1 Front Garden Competition.

The Committee would like to thank everyone who took the time to nominate gardens for the competition. Many more gardens were nominated than in previous years and the successful winners are:
First – Bridge Cottage East
Joint Second – 38 High Street and 23 Broughton Road
Highly Commended – 56 Well Road, 49 Greenhill Road and 7 Leonard Avenue
Commended – 37 Saxon Close and 21/22 Twitton Meadow.
5. Allotments
 - a A written report was received from the Allotments Association.
 - b Plot Lettings. All the plots are now let and there are 15 people on the waiting list.
 - c Inspection of Plots. The next inspection will be undertaken in September 2021 prior to the renewal of tenancies in October.
 - d Work Parties. These will be scheduled for September and October.
 - e Allotments Rents. Members considered the income/expense report. It was Agreed that the rents will not be increased. 20/19 Completed
 - f Brian Thomas will be carrying out mowing of the main paths periodically between March and October.
 - g An attempt was made to break into the Storage Container. The attempt was unsuccessful.
 - h Association Events. The Association ran a stall at the Village Fete on 30 August 2021 and organised the Autumn Show. The Allotments Open Morning was well attended and the winning scarecrow was the Minions with a close runner up being Mr Carrot Top.
 - i Leak in the water system in the allotments. Repairs have been made. 1/21 Completed
 - j A couple of trees have been removed from the path to Mill Meadow. 2/21 Completed
6. OSA
 - a A written report was received from Mrs Drake.
 - b Extra storage adjoining Hale Lane Pavilion. The Football Club is preparing a planning application to be submitted to Sevenoaks District Council for the placement of a storage container close to the Pavilion. 3/21 OFC
 - c Defibrillator training course for the public. The new defibrillators have been installed in the sports pavilions and it is hoped a training course can be run as soon as pandemic restrictions are lifted. 24/19 Clerk Continuing
 - d Petanque. The Petanque Club is still unable to hold regular meetings and decisions on future maintenance is awaited.
 - e Parking at Hale Lane. The lorry has been removed. 4/21 Completed
 - f Hale Lane Pavilion Replacement Windows. A quotation has been accepted and a start date is awaited. 5/21 Clerk

- g Security at the Pavilions. OSA has been asked to advise the Football Club that they will need to apply to the Parish Council for a grant regarding installing a security system at each Pavilion. 6/21 Clerk Completed
- h Complaints have been received at the Parish Office about the amount of rubbish that is being left on the Recreation Ground around the football pitches following the games. Residents have asked that the Football Club cleans up the area after the games. The Clerk will report this to OSA. 7/21 Clerk
- i A complaint has been received from a resident about the cricket players changing their clothes in public on the Recreation Ground and would they please use the changing room to do this or come already dressed appropriately for the game. The Clerk will report this to OSA. 8/21 Clerk
- j Victory Cup. Whilst clearing the Heritage Centre, a Victory Cup has been found. This is a cup that was presented by the Oxford Home Guard in 1945 for a 100 yards handicap race that was competed for by Oxford boys under 16 years of age. It was Agreed that Cllr Clucas will speak to the Organiser of the Oxford Fete to see if this competition could be resurrected in an updated format. 21/21 PC
7. High Street Recreation Ground
- a A report was received from Brian Thomas.
- b Members noted that the Annual Play Area Inspection has been carried out in all areas of the Parish. Only minor repairs have been identified in all areas. Mr Thomas will be carrying out the repairs over the next few months.
- c Waste bin to be placed on the OVMH patio. The Clerk has been advised that the small bin on the patio has been replaced by a larger bin and this has been moved from the patio to around the corner beside the double doors leading directly onto the Recreation Ground. 9/21 Completed
- d Repairs have been made to the safety surfaces in the play areas.
- e A number of minor repairs have been carried out to the play equipment and trim trail units following the annual inspection.
- f Anti-climb paint has been applied to the roof of the youth shelter to stop children climbing onto the roof.
- g The two padlocks on the steel bollards behind the gate are being replaced.
- h One bench has been removed from the playground as it has become unsafe. This has been replaced. The condition of four remaining benches is being monitored.
8. Chalk Pit
- a The chalk grassland area has several Bee Orchids and numerous wild flowers. Cllr Evans will speak to SDC and advise them where the orchids are located prior to the handing back of this area of land to SDC on 1 October 2021. 10/21 ME Continuing
- b Sevenoaks District Council has been informed that another sinkhole has emerged as it has become apparent that the infill material is subsiding. Fencing has been put around the hazard.
9. Hale Lane Recreation Ground/Pavilion/Telston Park
- a Fence security work has been carried out and a hedge planting and fencing scheme will be prepared this autumn. 11/21 BT
- b The post at the entrance to Telston Park to prevent cars driving into the area will be replaced shortly. 6/20 Clerk
- c Youth Shelter and Hale Lane Pavilion. Anti-climb paint has been applied to these areas to prevent children from climbing onto the roofs. Security spikes have also been installed. 12/21 Completed
- d Post and Rail Fence. Mr Thomas has installed a short section of post and rail fence to prevent anyone falling off the path into the stream where it runs into the culvert pipe. 13/21 Completed
- e A repair to the roundabout at the Hale Lane play area has been completed.
- f Two of the circular benches have been removed due to the legs rotting and parts of the other two have had to be dismantled.
- g Due to grass cutting problems at Telston Park only the paths have been kept cut. All the grass will be cut by a tractor mounted flail mower shortly.
- h Cllr Kelly suggested more could be done with the Park. She will ask residents in the area to make suggestions for how it can be improved. 22/21 JK
10. Oxenhill Wood
- a A Management Meeting is expected to be held in the near future. Maintenance of the area continues.

11. Village Green, Pond and Palace Approach
- a Copper Beech tree on the Village Green. A quote has been accepted. Work is expected to start early in October. 14/21 Continuing
- b Palace Approach. The potential transfer of the land to OPC has been put on hold by SDC. We await developments.
- c Request to place a Memorial Bench on the Village Green. Council agreed that a bench on the Village Green would be moved to the Recreation Ground to free up a space. 15/21 Completed
- d Placement of Memorial Benches. Council has agreed a Memorial Bench Policy that limits the areas where benches can be placed in the village. 16/21 Completed
- e Car Parking on Palace Approach. It has been reported that cars are parking on the triangle of grass near the Tower. It was Agreed that a wood bollard will be inserted to prevent cars parking illegally in this area. 23/21 Clerk/BT
- f Oxford Pond. The water level has been dropping recently with the problem being traced to a partial blockage of a pipe.
12. Cemetery
- a Car Park Litter. Another bin has been installed that was gifted to the Parish from Sevenoaks District Council. McDonalds has been asked to empty the bins and clear the area more often and to advise the Parish Council of fly tipping when it occurs. 16/19 Completed
- b Cemetery Path. Quotes are being sought. 24/21 Clerk/BT
13. Palace Park Wood
- a Apple trees in the Community Orchard. A copy of the drawing showing the placement of each variety is awaited. 4/19 Clerk/BT
- b DVLP. An application for funding has been submitted. Following the recent lockdown, the Parish Council has been advised that a decision may be forthcoming soon.
- c Ash Die-back Removal and Hardstanding. A quote has been accepted to carry out the removal of trees with Ash Die-back. It is anticipated that the work will begin mid-September. 17/21 Continuing
- d Drainage at Palace Park Wood/Cemetery Following approval by Council, OPC is still waiting for contact from Mr Montgomerie regarding the drainage of the land and to receive a copy of the draft formal agreement. 18/21 Continuing
15. Correspondence
- a An email has been received requesting dogs are kept on a lead in the Recreation Ground. Members agreed that it is not possible to apply this restriction when there is no-one to monitor and enforce the rule.
16. Other Matters
- a Oxford Litter Picker. Council agreed to increase the increase the hours worked from 8 to 10 hours per week from the beginning of April until the end of September. 19/21 Completed
- b Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference have been prepared and agreed and forwarded to F&GP. 20/21 Completed
- c Vegetation Clearance. Following requests to clear vegetation from footpaths and other problem areas, it was Agreed that £1000 will be added to the Budget for next year. 25/21 Clerk
- d Planters. Members Agreed that Mr Thomas will be asked to empty and check the condition of the planter at the Post Office. Council will consider whether to replace the planter on the traffic refuge. 26/21 Clerk
- e Tennis Club. Members Agreed that with effect from November 2021, the rent will be one peppercorn per year. 27/21 Clerk
17. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 18 October 2021 at 7:30pm.