



OTFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF OPC RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE at The School House on Monday 28 February 2022 from 7:30pm

Present: Cllr M Evans (in the Chair), Cllr P Clucas, Cllr R Rogers, Cllr J Lawrey and J Kelly
Also Present Mr M Richards (OAA) and Parish Clerk
District Councillor J Edwards Winser (for the Public Forum)
4 Members of the public

Public Forum: All the members of the public attending the meeting were interested in Telston Park and potential improvements to the area. The placement of the Picnic Tables was discussed. It was agreed that these will be placed in the Recreation Ground at Hale Lane instead which is more open and widely used.

Discussion continued regarding improvements that could be made to Telston Park. Local residents made it clear that the protection of the rear gardens of adjoining properties was of prime importance and letters received prior to the meeting also highlighted this. Telston Park is an area of woodland that has been allowed to grow naturally and local residents would like to keep it this way.

It was agreed that the Committee will do a site visit along with Mr Thomas and see what can be done to promote the naturalness of the area and encourage wildlife with bat and bird boxes and potentially more tree planting. It was also agreed that a permanent solution to protecting the culvert will be considered. This will all be carried out in consultation with residents.

1. Apologies for Absence – Mrs K Drake (OSA).
2. Declaration of Interest - None.
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 November 2021 were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters arising from the previous meeting.
 - a. A suggestion was previously made to hold a Garden Safari in Otford. It was agreed that initially this will be raised by Cllr Mary Evans at the Meeting of the Electors in April asking if anyone in the village would like to organise this. If there is no response, a request for volunteers can be made in the Newsletter.
5. Allotments
 - a. A written report was received from the Allotments Association.
 - b. Plot Lettings. All the plots are now let and there are 13 people on the waiting list.
 - c. Brian Thomas has been mowing the main paths periodically between March and October. It is hoped this will continue during 2022.
 - d. Tree Work. A tree that is covered in ivy and is looking unhealthy and overhangs the allotments needs to be cut back. This tree is on OBM's property and they will be asked to remove the overhanging branches. 28/21 Clerk Continuing
 - e. The hedge alongside the main track to the garage and Mill Meadow has been cut back by the OAA members as far as they are able. The growth on the trees needs to be cut down to the level of the top of OBM's boundary fence. Mr Thomas will be asked to advise on how best to approach this work. 29/21 Clerk Continuing
 - f. The field fence behind OBM has been reinforced with seven new stakes.
 - g. The hedges have all been cut back with the exception of the one next to the playground. Seven trailer loads of ivy have been removed so far with one more expected before the job can be finished.
 - h. Plaque for Stan's Bench. As the plaque has not been found, F&GP will be asked if a replacement plaque can be made. 1/22 Clerk
 - i. Old Tyres on the Allotments. 30/21 Clerk
The Otford Allotments Association have agreed to stop using tyres on the allotments. This will be added to the Tenancy Agreement. The removal and disposal of existing

tyres on the allotments will be discussed by the OAA Committee at their meeting in March.

6. OSA
- a A written report was received from Mrs Drake.
- b Extra storage adjoining Hale Lane Pavilion (storage container).
No progress has been made on this item for a year and it will now be removed until it becomes active again.
- c Defibrillator training course for the public. Now pandemic restrictions have been lifted, arrangements are being made to hold a defibrillator training course. 24/19 Clerk
Continuing
- d Petanque. The Petanque Club has been the successful recipient of a grant awarded by Oxford Parish Council for the replacement of the barge boards and surface stones. Completed
- e Victory Cup. It was Agreed that Cllr Clucas will speak to the Organiser of the Oxford Fete to see if a competition could be created for this Cup. 21/21 PC
Continuing
- f The OSA has requested that the gym clubs holding classes on the Recreation Ground and Tennis Court are asked to pay £25 per year and join the OSA. 2/22 Clerk
7. High Street Recreation Ground
- a A report was received from Brian Thomas.
- b Eric Dilley Pavilion. The gutters have been repaired. 31/21 Clerk
- c The Maple tree by the picnic tables will be removed in the near future and replaced with a Tulip tree.
- d Four Broadleaved Lime trees have been planted along the Northern hedgerow.
- e The three Robinia trees will shortly be dead wooded.
- f The hedge has been cut.
- g The cargo nets on the toddler MPU have started to wear and will need to be monitored.
- h A tree that is overhanging the Eric Dilley Pavilion is scheduled to be removed. The Football Club will be asked to remove all of their goalposts etc from around the tree so the work can be carried out. 3/22 Clerk
- i The Tennis Club is having work carried out to their courts during the summer. The contractors will be approached to find out the cost of painting work being done to the Parish Council courts at the same time. 4/22 Clerk/ME
- j Summer Fun Day. This will take place on Tuesday 26 July in Oxford from 10am until 2pm. The Oxford Village Memorial Hall has been booked in case it rains.
8. Chalk Pit
- a This area of land has been returned to SDC and the lease has ended.
- b Members considered how to keep the chalk grassland area well tended and the Bee Orchids and numerous wild flowers cared for. Members agreed that SDC will be asked if the Parish Council can continue to mow the grass to preserve the area. 32/21 Clerk
Continuing
9. Hale Lane Recreation Ground/Pavilion/Telston Park
- a A hedge planting and fencing scheme will be prepared this year. 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
Continuing
- c The Black Poplar in Telston Park has passed the latest tree inspection. Two Ash trees in the area have had to be felled due to safety concerns.
- d Antisocial behaviour is continuing in and around the playground but there has been no damage to the equipment so far.
- e Anti-climb paint will be applied to parts of the roof of the pavilion and some of the other structures to prevent access by youths.
- f The top hedge has been cut by a contractor with a tractor mounted hedge cutter.
- g The notices in the play area advising that the equipment is for use by primary school age children only have been replaced. 33/21 Completed
- h Guttering at the pavilion. Repairs and replacements need to be carried out. 34/21 Clerk
Continuing
- i Cllr Kelly has informally asked parents for feedback on the play area and recreation ground. Parents of younger children like it as it is but the parents of older primary school aged children have asked for more age-appropriate equipment to be added. 22/21 JK
Completed
- j Hale Lane Pavilion – store doors. Quotes are being sought. 35/21 Clerk
10. Oxenhill Wood
- a Maintenance of the area continues.
- b The next meeting of the Oxenhill Wood Management Committee will take place on 16 March 2022.

11. Village Green, Pond and Palace Approach
- a 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
Continuing
- b The Medlar tree is going to be pruned shortly and the Lime growing beside it will be pruned to allow more light to reach the Medlar.
12. Cemetery
- a Cemetery Path. Quotes are being sought. 24/21 Clerk/BT
- b Four shallow rooted trees have sustained damage in the recent storms. One will be felled, one will be reduced by approximately 60% and the other two will be monitored.
13. Palace Park Wood
- a DVLP. The application submitted by the Council has been waiting in limbo since the start of the pandemic. The Clerk will write to the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership again to ask if they have any intention of considering the application. 3/22 Clerk
- b Ash Die-back Removal and Hardstanding. Work has completed on the site. A small amount of spoil remains to be collected by the contractor. The logs remain to be collected by the purchaser. 17/21 Continuing
- c Drainage at Palace Park Wood/Cemetery 18/21 Continuing
The formal agreement has been signed. A copy signed by both parties is awaited for our records.
- d Jubilee Field. A further four Oak trees have been planted in Jubilee Field bringing the total to 7 Oak trees in this area. The trees have all be registered on the Queen's Green Canopy website.
It is RECOMMENDED that the Council obtains an A4 official plaque (£129) to be placed in the field to commemorate this. 5/22 Council to Consider
- e Hedgehog Highway. Members agreed that road signs needed to be installed in Sevenoaks Road, Shoreham Road and Bubblestone Road as a minimum. This will be considered again once advice has been sought from NWKCP. 6/22 Clerk/ME
14. Correspondence
15. Other Matters
- a Vegetation Clearance. A new budget code for vegetation clearance from footpaths and other problem areas will be added to the 2022 Budget with £1000. 25/21 Completed
- b Budget 2022 – A new budget code has been added to the projects section to build up funds for Hale Lane Play Area. 36/21 Completed
- c Otford Parish Council gave an undertaking to DVLP to pay £1,000 for 5 years to help them to carry out work in Otford and surrounding areas. 37/21 Clerk
Due to Otford Parish Council not receiving expected grants due to Covid restrictions and review meetings not being able to be held, it has had to self-fund urgent work. The Clerk will write to DVLP and advise them that the remainder of the undertaking (£2000) will be paid at a rate of £250 per year.
- d Following the decision of the Planning Inspectorate to allow the footbridge over Otford Station to go ahead, Cllr Clucas asked that the trees on the site are identified on the plans. 38/21 Clerk
- e Budget 2022 – Tennis Court. As the tennis court is widely used, a budget item should be included for the renewal/maintenance of the playing surface to be built up over a few years. 39/21 Completed
16. Date of Next Meeting – 23 May 2022 at 7:30pm.