

Town Estate Charity

Annual Report 2020 - 2021

1. Grant Making and Projects

- Four grants were made over the year totalling £1,687.60 from the Tunnel Tech North Grant Fund to the following groups:
 - Misson Community Association £1,000
 - Misson Parish Council £350.00 towards the Pinfold hedge laying
 - St John the Baptist Church £237.60 towards the Christmas tree lights
 - Misson Village Volunteers £100 towards the Halloween Treasure Hunt
- Project 2020 continued community fundraising and received a fabulous £881.33 in parishioner donations. The project was delayed through the suspension of the Nottinghamshire County Council LIS Grant to allow NCC to focus on Covid-19 priorities. However, the NCC grant has now been reinstated and payment of £1,869 was made in May 2021 allowing the project to proceed. A bench for the Pinfold has been commissioned and tree planting will take place in autumn for project completion by the end of 2021.

2. Line Bank SSSI Management

Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Grant to deliver the Woodland Management Plan

- Woodland Improvement (WD2) grant of £1,240 per year for five years was approved from 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2024
- In December 2020 we were notified that our first-year claim had been reduced to £476.75 due to an 'eligibility breach' as the land parcel contained a 'permanent grassland' designation which is not compatible with the WD2 designation. On challenging the breach, we were advised by Rural Payments Agency (RPA) staff to ask for the parcel to be remapped. This was done 'virtually' giving a new designation of 13.77ha of woodland, more than enough to justify our claim. However, no further grant funding has been received.
- The second-year claim for £1,240 has been made and we await a decision (expected December 2021).
- Subsequently, RPA sent an inspector to walk and map the parcel using GIS on 12th May 2021. No report has been received to date and no changes made on the RPA site.
- No management works have taken place as our preferred contractor, Phil Rowell, could not attend in spring so will commence in autumn 2021.

- A management visit is planned for 6th July 2021 with Mark Speck, Senior Conservation Officer, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to prioritise the works to be done this autumn.

Countryside Stewardship Mid-Tier Grant to deliver the Grassland/Fenland Management Plan

- Following approval from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) of ‘splitting’ the Line Bank site into two separate parcels a successful application was made for a CS Mid-Tier Grant to manage the fenland/grassland area.
- A Grassland Improvement Grant (GS2) of £839.74 a year for five years was approved from 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2025
- The first-year claim has been made in May 2021 and we await a decision (expected December 2021).
- Advice on a suitable contractor to cut the fenland on an annual rotation will be sought from NWT at our site visit.

Management Issues

- A major concern over the year was the safety of the public/young people accessing the ponds for unauthorised recreation. Following advice from the TEC insurers water hazard signs were erected adjacent to the water bodies. In addition, Managers liaised with Misson Primary School who worked with parents and children on water safety, and also placed messages on village social media. The issue remains live during 2021 as a number of water hazard signs have been removed and are being replaced.
- Over the winter of 2020/21 the Environment Agency (EA) undertook tree felling works without any liaison with TEC Managers. These works were outside the SSSI management plans and a dialogue is being sought before further EA works take place over the winter 2021/22. Managers have shared the SSSI management plans with EA and are awaiting a site meeting. Sadly, the EA have continued to work on the site without consultation and implemented herbicide spraying and cutting of the flood bank in June 2021 to remove all broadleaf flora.

3. Finance and Governance

- The TEC Constitution was revised over the year to allow for virtual meetings
- Three new policies were approved in order to manage Project 2020 with village volunteers, namely:
 - Equity & Diversity
 - Health & Safety
 - Safeguarding
- Two informative articles were published in the Parish Newsletters delivered to all households, including the TEC Annual Report July 2020.

- Managers sought to take advantage of a current account switching offer from NatWest bank and transfer our banking to the Co-op Bank. Sadly, at the 11th hour the Co-op Bank insisted that the charity name of our NatWest account did not match the full Charity Commission registered name and would need changing. With this impossible requirement the application to switch was withdrawn.
- Online banking options with NatWest are currently being sought and/or the transfer of our current account to their new Community Account.
- The charity made a deficit of £655.46 for the financial year ending 31st March 2021. The expenditure on new signage for Line Bank and an increase in grant making being contributory factors.
- The balance of current assets at the end of the financial year was £45,633.05. The Annual Accounts are appended, which Managers will be invited to approve at the TEC AGM on 7th July 2021, together with an Income & Payments Summary for publication.

Annual Report approved at the public AGM of the Town Estate Charity on Wednesday 7th July 2021, in Misson Community Centre.