

Greener Staplehurst Group

Meeting Minutes

Thursday 23 February 2023 – 8.00pm

Location: Staplehurst Youth Club

Present:

David George (DG)
Jose Castro (JC)
Bill McLaughlin (BM)
Stuart McPhee (SM)
Martin Ralph (MR)
Natasha Thomas (Chair)

Apologies:

David Charge (DC); Mina McPhee (MM); Paddy Riordan (PR); Louise; Jaqui V

Minutes from previous meeting – Approved.

Full Review of Projects/locations:

Project/Location	Notes/Plans/Ideas for coming year	Lead
Parade left (3 beds) (1; 2; 3)	Noted it's too early to clear the beds completely as wildlife has been noted, with caterpillars and other evidence of eggs etc. second bed is going to be coronation bed; golden yellow flowers; foresee thinning out and it's self-seeding and is drought resistance - insect friendly beds	MR
Bigger Planters (Fish and chips shop)	Needs a review and refresh of planting. Some bulbs or existing plants are looking a bit	
Parade (4;5)	recently planted bulbs - clear looking pretty tidy - not too much planting planned but potential for two centre pieces for the beds.	DG
Parade (6)	Bulbs coming through, a few items may have been lost to the snow/cold snaps therefore an update on a few herbs are planned for the coming year. To date all plants have been donated.	SW/NT
Maddie's Herb Bed	lost sage; feverfew and other bits mentioned in chat; pruned a gooseberry bushes; soil condition; water logging; very exposed location some a review will need to be done and potential update to planting to provide more sheltering affect.	SW
Kebab Shop (3 beds)	fairly empty but have been weeded and bulbs planted; we need someone to help water - lady has an outside tap which she has said GSG can make use of	DG
Village Sign (South)	Watering Continues to be an issue (side note to review options for portable sprayers). – DG doesn't feel he can	MR/NT

	<p>keep up the care so NT/MR have said they will take over this bed.</p> <p>Need to update planting with more drought hardy plants and potentially a tumbling daisy for impact and easy care.</p>	
Village Sign (North)	Need to update planting with more drought hardy plants and potentially a tumbling daisy for impact and easy care. Currently bulbs which were donated are coming up)	DG
Jubilee fields	(Groundsmen for water - working schedule) - Paddy get the footballers water it/groundsmen - Adele is managing jubilee field let's ask her for support - red planting - red rudbeckia/ red flowering roses	MR/DG
Jeffrey close	we need thinking on this - put something with more height in it - there are some plants - foxgloves; verbenas; ox-eyed daisies - let's set up a planting day. Martin will supply plants and we will provide working. Payback could clear it - Martin to confirm.	Group
Ponytel Pond	payback team needed - last year cleared the willows and council organised for it to be cleared back totally; to prevent drying up; cut back willow's whips; hoping for frog spawn; Fortnight time payback to support (11th of March -Jose email the clerk) - general clear out to come - residents keen to keep it tidy up; borough clears the flat bits - encourage wildlife - bat box and bird boxes - potentially a scout project	MR
Headcorn road	trees planted by bill and martin; more trees to add to the area.	MR/BM
Jubilee Trees	<p>Some planted and some with David charge - lets get update on those from leads.</p> <p><i>*Added post meeting: A large number of trees available, they are approx. 4 feet high and only saplings; there are various types. They are all native to this area. As they couldn't get them in the soil to do weather conditions, DC picked them up and has kindly planted them in his allotment to be held until planting is possible.</i></p>	PR/DC
Wimpy Fields	<p>Plans for this year - figure out who should do what - Jose will email us on all the bits.</p> <p>Open up square empty glades; Widen footpaths - should be Bradley; Remove areas of blackthorn where it's encouraging too much - spray paint the ones that need to come out; Log piles - hibernaculum's - for the wildlife they were wired together - we need to identify how many there are and where they are, and which need sorting out.</p>	JC supporting – lead to be confirmed at a later date

	<p>Fruit tree saplings - clearing around the base (payback); Pond clear out has been done; Bull rush clear out - martin did that - is an annual effort; clarity on pond - is there a liaison and can Richard help us understand.; Bramble cutting back - inside pond perimeter so we need to do it on a day out there; Anglian water to manage pond - Richard to reach out and get some action; Proposed survey on insect life and small bats and animals - reptiles march and oct; butterflies m-o;</p> <p>Medway to cut dangerous tree branches so may get contact from them for input.</p>	
Chestnut avenue bed	<p>Current state is a bit flooded – things have been cut back and bulbs planted - verge by the path bulbs coming through; flooding killed lots of it and concrete is an issue - top soil to chestnut bed - let's check with Adele if there is any available at Village Hall. We need some more soil. Verbena extra to move there from the Parade. This area needs group support so it will be on the rotation for 'work days'.</p>	SM/MM
Chestnut hedge	<p>Bulbs coming up and new planted. To expand the bulb planting in Autumn, and increase the Crocus' to enhance the impact along there.</p>	NT/MM
Verge on the South Side of village	<p>Consider extending bulb planting on that side of village to brighten up the entrance/exit on that side in Spring.</p> <p>Will look for ownership and permission as appropriate. TBD</p>	NT

Budget Review:

Water butts – follow up with Parish Office on progress. They need to be bought from this years budget. SM

Soil-herb Garden; DG to purchase.

Portable watering solution to support watering the beds across the (lets research and make purchases) – JC to share recommendation.

Hosepipe situation in Wimpey fields - find out from Paddy - request council to attend to pressure in wimpey field so we can comply with the management plan.v – DG/JC

Coronation Community Event:

8th of May - help out community event (coronation event) – group to consider options for this date and discuss in the future. Parish might have an idea, that we can support on.

Dedication to Peter Spearink and Jon Grimwood

- Tree for Jon; GSG to offer to pay for the tree in Wimpey Field
- Rename the Wimpey field – The Peter Spearink Nature Park
- Rename the Christmas tree chipping event after Jon Grimwood
- Plaques to be placed, one each for Jon & Peter at the Parade as a dedication, onto a Parade bed each

Request approval from Council.

Any other Business:

- Tree survey - healthy trees; moderate risk due to impact it may have by falling on the a229; young mature avenue; offer to share the documentation;
- Eco day GSG run as group get a handover from Louise; fourteenth May was the previous event; Day to meet and do a handover (JC)
- Allotments they can help and they have grants e.g. portable toilets weeks' time there will be eight plots at dickens gate Bill/Jose and bill to liaise
- Communities are owner solar panels and funded by councils Jose to send links for agenda next time
- Tree at martyrs memorial Maidstone council cut it down so let Richard to ask for update or info
- Planting lists to be shared with DG

Agreed meeting cadence:

The group in attendance agreed to meet on the first Wednesday of every month going forward, noting the meetings will be held in the Staplehurst Youth Club with confirmation from S.McPhee on availability.

Date of next meeting:

29th March 2023 (moved due to Easter break and impact on availability)