

Allington Hill Volunteers Committee Meeting

Wednesday 24 September 2014

Present: Cathy Harvey (Chair), Sal Robinson (Treasurer), Chris Toombs, Kevin Trott and Paul Bowditch.

1. Apologies.

Deanne Trott sent her apologies. (N.B. Adam Shearing has stepped down from the Committee as he is now at University).

2. Minutes of the Committee Meeting of 13 May 2014.

The minutes were agreed and signed.

3. Treasurer's Report

West Bay Car Boot Fund –£900 grant obtained towards a bench (£500) and extension of the wild flower meadow (£400), both in memory of WWI.

Peoples Postcode Lottery – the application was not accepted.

Bridport Town Council – £500 grant obtained for improving access to Coopers Field for buggies, wheelchairs, people with impairment and a wheelchair friendly picnic table.

Loyds Community Fund – we have been granted at least £500, again for improved access / picnic table, could be more if we get enough votes from the public.

Allington Parish Council –£500 grant towards general running costs.

Sal reported that cash + bank = £1512.44, of which £500 is grant money earmarked for one / two WW1 Memorial benches, £73 is remaining grant money allocated to the flower meadow and £80 is a donation towards an annual Young Volunteer award, leaving approx £860 available for general use.

The Summer Picnic made a profit of £117.

4. Report from the Cathy.

a) Management Plan for Coopers Wood.

A knowledgeable volunteer has offered to survey Coopers Wood and mark trees which should be removed, as the overcrowding is causing stress to many trees. However, if a Management Plan is done via the AONB then funding can be applied for from the Forestry Commission to pay for felling of trees. Allington Parish Council asks that the Woodland Trust be kept informed of progress.

b) Storage on Site.

Allington Parish Council is investigating purchasing a shipping container to be put in Coopers Field for storage of equipment. We have been offered a trestle table – Kevin said he could store it for now.

c) Woodland Trust Tree Packs.

We have been allocated 2 packs of 106 saplings. There appears to be no interest from the community re planting a tree in memory of someone who dies in WW1. Sal suggested extending it to anyone killed in war or conflict.

d) WW1 Memorial Bench.

Cathy has found out that the benches at the Community Orchard behind St Mary's church were made by pupils of Colfax School and she is going to contact the school to find out if more could be made – they need to be as "rustic" as possible.

e) AONB Sustainable Living project.

Cathy gave an update from Ian Rees, AONB Countryside Officer; more information will be available soon.

f) Christmas Tree Festival.

Cathy has booked for this – the theme will be Golden ???. The trees have to be decorated on 1 December – "working" groups will be held to make decorations as in previous years.

g) Woodland Trust Manager.

Tim Russell is currently on sick leave.

h) Overgrown path up to the hill from the Park Road entrance.

This has been reported to the Symondsbur Estate, who say

"The Estate has no objection to any volunteer cutting back or widening the public footpaths over our land or even to the Woodland Trust doing so. The Estate's legal obligations are limited to making sure the footpath clearly defined and unobstructed, so in relation to any further work - e.g. cutting back or widening the path – the Estate would prefer to assist by way of charitable donation which has the additional benefit of enabling the volunteers to obtain a 25% tax recovery.

As I mentioned to you before, we don't have any farm workers of our own who would carry out this work.

I hope we can come to some arrangement with your group before the Spring."

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5. Flower Meadow Project.

Wildflower seed had been bought and we are ready to go.

Agreed that one further cut be done in October, with raking and then seed planting following that.

We will need approx 4 cwt of sand to mix with the seed so that we can see where they have been strewn as we go.

West Bay Beaver Scouts are keen to be involved and a local child has asked if she can help.

6. Facebook Page.

The Committee agreed that there should be 2 Administrators for the Facebook page and that they should be Cathy and Sarah Worner. If one or both resigns then the committee will appoint replacements. This policy will be reviewed annually, around the time of the Annual General Meeting.

7. Business Cards and 2015 Calendar.

Agreed that Cathy will have new business cards printed, to include details of the FB page.

Agreed that we will produce a 2015 calendar – Cathy to take this forward, as usual. She will ask for suitable photos via the FB page.

8. Winter Work Parties and Projects.

a) The Hill Itself.

- The Drive - agreed that this be opened up on the Symondsburyside, to let in more light and air.
- Oak Tree Cross - agreed to heighten the canopy to help keep the area drier and less muddy
- Hollow Way is looking good.
- New steps on Park Road side of hill – these are excellent but we need to keep an eye on the state of the treads after rain as we don't want them to erode away as happened previously.
- Blackthorn area and bracken – this will be scythed once growth has stopped for the winter.
- Devil's Bowl area at top of hill – the blackthorn, bracken and saplings need to be removed – there are not supposed to be trees etc on the top of the hill.

b) Coopers Wood & Field.

- The AONB will arrange for some of their hedge laying team to come along to a working group in February to help lay the hedge on the Hospital Lane side (northern boundary) – saplings from the Woodland Trust tree packs can be used to fill gaps. The top (southern boundary) hedge will then be layed by our volunteers.
- Western boundary – there is too much willow in this area. This needs thinning and the removed material used for a new dead hedge to protect the wall. Also, the canopy needs to be heightened.
- Eastern boundary hedge – some of the ash needs to be removed and extra trees from the tree packs planted. This hedge will be layed as and when.

9. November / December Events.

a) November.

- WW1 Tree Planting Event - Saturday 15 November, from 11.00. Agreed that this will be a low key event as not many people seem interest in helping. A few trees will be planted in suitable locations in Coopers Field with the rest being bedding in until required later. No bonfire but may have one February / March when there will be wood available from the work done by the volunteers.

b) December.

- Christmas Tree Festival.
- Christmas Do – agreed to ask Annie at the Oddfellows if we can have a “drop in” party there, with people bringing their own food along to share, with possibly a “fun” quiz. Suggested that this been in early December.
- Sarah Worner is arranging a dog training event for 14 November, in Coopers Field. Agreed that there is no problem with this but that she needs to inform Allington Parish Council and to fill in a Risk Assessment (Cathy to provide).

10. Any Other Business.

None.

Signed:-.....Date:-...