

Minutes of the Kingston Village Action Group Meeting held on 23 May 2017

Present: Vicki Scott, Steve Berry, Barrie Lambert, Tony Wheeler.

Apologies: Tim Ambrose, Will Dorman

1 The **minutes of the previous meeting** held on **11 April** were agreed.

2 **Matters arising**

2.1 **Membership of the Group**

John Crabb had replaced Fiona Harrison as one of the Group's two KPC representatives. He had been informed of this meeting.

Tony Wheeler reported that several people who had recently moved into the village might be interested in joining the Group. He would ask Steve whether the leaflet aimed at such newcomers mentioned the Action Group and, if not, whether it could be amended to do so before the next reprinting.

2.2 **Village web site**

The Group's minutes now appeared on the KPC web site, as did the revised constitution. However, it transpired that access to information about the Group was available only via the KPC site rather than via the portal where all the other main village organisations had their own entrance. Tony would raise this with Jeanne.

2.3 **Parish Meeting**

The main speaker – from the SDNP – had been given a torrid time after his presentation on the grounds of lack of public consultation over the issue of the possibility of 11 (perhaps) new houses in the village.

Steve had presented a report on the Group's activities to the meeting, drawing attention – among other things – to the Group's failure to attract more recruits.

2.4 **Unsung Heroes**

Vicki had accepted a framed certificate on behalf of the Action Group Volunteers at a presentation in Lewes at which various voluntary groups were represented. It was agreed to ask Beverley Wakeford-Brown whether this could be hung in the Pavilion, perhaps above the fire extinguishers.

3 **Finance**

3.1 The position was unchanged since the last meeting, with Steve still being owed £95. A cash donation made in March meant that the total authorised to spend on bulbs and other flowers was £105. When these matters had been resolved, the account balance would total £270.

3.2 Steve had still to obtain the signatures of Beryl Burrell and Diana Arlett to give their consent to being removed from the authorised list.

4 Environmental update

4.1 Footpaths

Fiona had been asked to make an informal approach to the landowner who had withdrawn permission for the two new stiles on Kingston Hill just before they were due to have been installed by the SDNP. However, she was reluctant to do so. The Group agreed that this route would not, therefore, be pursued. However, at a later date Steve would propose an alternative method of securing statutory footpaths here.

4.2 Bulbs and other flowers

Approximately 1000 crocus had been ordered with the money donated by Parviz Behdad. The bulbs were likely to be delivered in August – Steve had been in recent touch with the company who would give him a week’s notice on their delivery – and planted soon after on the green at Snednore. The total value of contributions made by villagers during the past six months - in cash or kind – was now approximately £370 including hundreds of primroses, many packets of wildflower seed and woodchips.

More primroses were still available to collect from Peggy Nicholson’s garden but in view of the dry weather it was thought that we should now wait until the autumn before doing this.

The wood chips donated by Rosemarie Jeffery had been collected and used as a mulch on the path between St Pancras Green and The Street. Another section of this path had recently been prepared as a seedbed. Donated packets of wildflower seed had been sown here earlier in May. Sunflowers – grown from seed by Katherine Mondon – would be planted here in June.

4.4 Waitrose Grant Application

Steve had yet to submit the redrafted text to Waitrose but would do so very shortly. It was thought unlikely that the Group would benefit by more than £100.

4.5 Tesco “Bags of Help” scheme

Further progress had been made with this application since the last meeting, with a useful letter of support (in response to a request) having been received from the Head of Iford and Kingston School.

However, an obstacle had been encountered. On being asked to complete the form (required by the application) giving consent (as a landowner) to planting on Kingston verges, ESCC had responded that a “cultivation licence” was first required. In addition, we would also need to demonstrate that we had the permission of all landowners adjacent to the

proposed planting sites. In effect this meant the owners of all the houses in Ashcombe Lane and Wellgreen Lane – an extremely challenging task!

Steve had queried the need for this in correspondence and the query had been referred elsewhere in ESCC. In the meantime, it was agreed that we should proceed with the application without the consent of the county.

5 Zero Heroes Money

5.1 The History and Heritage Group had made some progress with the proposal to use some or all of this money on a leaflet describing a village walk – or walks. Tim would report on this at a future meeting.

6 Planning

6.1 The KPC had recommended rejection of an application for the demolition of Woodstock House on The Avenue and the construction of a larger replacement on the grounds that the proposed new house was out of keeping with the village environment. This had yet to be considered by LDC.

6.2 Two other applications had been submitted by Tom Rae. One was for the construction of a steel-framed barn on Top Yard and the other for a mobile food dispenser at Kingston Farm, for use between May and October.

6.3 The SDNP proposal for the construction of houses opposite Snednore had been dropped. The KPC were seeking a meeting with the SDNP to discuss the proposal for housing development on the site of Castelmer Fruit Farm.

6.4 Tony also reported that the site near Kignstonridge – the subject of heated discussion at the Parish Meeting – had been designated specifically as a site for gypsies in 2007 when retrospective planning permission had been granted for one caravan. This had been renewed in 2009, again in 2012 and a second time in 2015. No objections had been received on any of these occasions. He had arranged to visit the site in the company of the SDNP Enforcement Officer.

7 Blue Plaques

7.1 It was agreed that the paper drafted by Steve should be put to the Parish Council for adoption. There was no logical objection to the scheme on grounds of cost since in any given year the Council would be free to decide how much, if any, money to spend on it.

7.2 While there were at least three former inhabitants of the village sufficiently famous to warrant inclusion in Wikipedia, none of these were household names. However, the same might be said of many of the 800 or so people commemorated by the London scheme now run by English Heritage.

7 AOB

7.1 Speedwatch

Tony would ask the KPC whether it would support another effort to slow the speed of traffic passing through the village by means of volunteers using equipment to measure vehicles' speed.

7.2 Air pollution

The KPC was considering how to get measurements made of NOx outside the school at peak times. It was thought that these might exceed the recommended safe levels.

8 Next meeting

This (it was agreed later in correspondence) would be at 4.45 pm on Tuesday 27th 2017 at The Pavilion.