

Village Green Working Group Meeting 11 July 2016

Agenda:

- General review of Village Green condition through on-site walk around the perimeter
- Plan for one or more working parties to address items that are agreed should be addressed

Participants:

- Jim Donahue – PC – WG Chair
- Cormac Neeson of the cricket club
- Gill Goodwin – WOTHabs representative
- Gavin Jones - Whitchurch primary school sports teacher
- Alistair Aitchison of the football club

Apologies:

- Jon Stewart – PC

Held at: Whitchurch Village Green

- Cormac and Gavin commented that the VG was looking in good condition generally and that the recent school sports day was a big success. Cormac suggested that it could be an opportunity in the future for a larger social event on the VG following the sports day in the future.
- Several members that the grass clippings appeared to left at several locations around the edges of the VG. The WG members stated their clear preference for the cutting to be placed in one or more compost heaps. The following points were noted:
 - The PC purchased a compost bin that was by the pavilion but had not yet been used.
 - At the March WG meeting Jon proposed to store the compost behind the batting cage.
 - WG members said that they would be happy with compost bins at either end of the VG if it made it easier for grass cutting, and potentially even a third by the pavilion. The number and location need to be agreed.
 - Councillor Donahue said that he would discuss these matter with Cllr Stewart, and clarify the placement of cuttings in future contracts if it was not currently clear.
- Cormac noted that while the grass was quite short at the moment, he felt the frequency was insufficient earlier in the season. The grass cutting contract calls for 1 cut per week for the cricket field. Jon had stated that it the grass needed cutting more frequently earlier in the season and was given approval to increase the frequency and claim back for petrol costs for the extra cutting.
- The Laurel hedge needs trimming - as convenient, but it is not urgent. The guidelines call for trimming late spring or early summer.

- The north stopcock needs to be re-done similar to the other stopcock. This is the PC responsibility. The PC should hire a plumber. David Matimoe can advise on the work that nee to be done.
- The following items were identified as needing action by working parties and most should be completed before the Fete, the first weekend in September, where possible. It was also noted that these items are not the responsibility of Cllr Steward as they are outside the scope of his grass-cutting contract. He is of course welcome to participate but should feel no obligation:
 - Nettles and brambles in the upper left corner of football pitch seemed to be the top priority. Alistair and Gill agreed the areas to be cut back. As this is urgent to avoid problems with children fetching balls in the Nettles, Alistair will likely use a strimmer on this area in the next couple of weekends.
 - Alistair will plan to reseed the areas in front of the goals that are bare again in the September/October growing season. He will need to order 3-4 tons of soil at £60 each. This should be available in the VG WG budget, and Cllr Donahue will seek approval at the September Council meeting.
 - The woodchip pile by the pavilion is unattractive and there are large nettles growing through it. It should be tidied up. It is not clear if these wood chips are still needed or if they can be dispersed at appropriate locations around the VG. Perhaps by the football pitch after the nettles are cut back.
 - The sprouting branches on the bottom of the lime trees should be cut back as it is not tidy and blocks grass to the sunlight.
 - Behind the batting cages needs cleaning up. One of the cricket nets is badly overgrown and in danger of being damaged.
 - We discussed whether the large mound by the batting cage should be strimmed. It may not be worth doing this season, but there seemed to be consensus that the mound should be removed in the winter. Ian Smith had volunteered to remove it and we should take him up on this offer.
 - Remove the fencing along Eastfield Road – now derelict – as it served no useful purpose. It is thought to be a remnant of the time when the cricket field was private property.
 - Weeds in holly hedge around CP be cut back/pulled out.
- Councillor Donahue will work with the other WG members to organise a working party tentatively for the August Bank Holiday weekend before the fete, inviting other members of the village.
- We discussed the row of Beech Trees along Eastfield lane. Gill Goodwin of WOTHabs repeated her desire to had these cut back to hedge height and eventually create a wildlife hedge in this area. Other members thought thinning Beech trees at their existing height would be more appropriate. No agreement was reached but members felt this was not an urgent priority and a final decision could be taken at a later date.