

Minutes of the Village Green Working Group AGM Meeting

The meeting was held on Monday the 24th February at Little Croft House, Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch on Thames, Oxon RG8 7EJ at 7.30 pm.

Participants:

Keith Brooks - Working Group Chairman
Gill Goodwin – WOTHabs representative
Alistair Aitchison - Football Club representative
Lesley Prater – Community representative
Cormac Neeson - Cricket Club representative

Apologies:

Gavin Jones - Whitchurch Primary School representative

AGM

The working group voted for Keith Brooks to remain chairman.

1. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.
2. Update from the football club. Last year the football club had several working parties one of them replaced the turf in the Spring however this proved difficult to keep moist so this year they have reurfed in the Winter. Following the damage to benches it was suggested that the goal posts could be removed when not being used to minimise attraction of visitors however this was not feasible as they are used every week and they are very heavy and difficult to handle. Consequently it was suggested that cameras could be installed and also a sign on the gate indicating their presence. This will be investigated and the Parish Council asked to fund this.
3. Update from the cricket club. The new pavilion – the cricket club have been asked to pay for half of the cost of building however this is too much at its present cost. The club were also concerned that this cost had spiralled out of control and was now too big. Alternatively the present building could be renovated and the tea hut replaced with a modest structure which would reduce costs dramatically. The cricket club pay half water bill with the owners of the field paying the other half since they also use the water supply. They will be contacted to clarify the situation.
4. Update from the school. Students will be encouraged to participate in weeding and planting in order to fire their interest in plants. They can look after the mound and also the border leading up to the school with some guidance and help. In this respect Gill and Alexa (Green Team) will liaise with the school. [See map below.](#)
5. The maintenance of the village green will continue with two main components that is the contractor employed by the Parish Council and the volunteers. The contractor's schedule is organised in the spring once we know the cricket match schedule: the village green is cut on the

Friday before home matches on the Saturday and Sunday. Also the contractor is responsible for mowing in the Maze and clearing the Muddy Lane area during the year. The schedule for the volunteers has been agreed and will follow that detailed below. In this way the village green will remain a well looked after space and a valuable asset for the community. We need to get some Stump Killer for using during the tasks and we will ask the Parish Council to pay for this.

Description of area	Planned tasks	When to be Done	By Whom
Cricket pitch	Mow and roll, to Cricket Club requirements		Contractor/Cricket Club
Football pitch	Mow, as required for sports use		Contractor/ Football Club
Outfield on northern boundary	Cut back brambles, nettles and any invasive scrub	Once a year, late autumn	Football Club
Outfield alongside eastern boundary:	Mow	Monthly, approximately, leaving rough grass close to the trees	Contractor
Winding grassy pathways through area of mixed growth which extends from beech hedge to the south end of cricket pitch	Mow	Monthly or Bi-monthly	Contractor
Long grass around mature lime trees	Cut	Once a year in late summer: Late July/Aug when seed has set	Contractor
Area of mixed growth which extends from beech hedge to the southern end of cricket pitch	Remove goose grass, thistle, brambles and other particularly pervasive plants	As necessary before seed has set (May/June)	Work Party (WP)
Spinney/shrubbery and adjacent plants	Prune/light cut all	Late summer (Aug/Sept)	WP

Description of area	Planned tasks	When to be done	By Whom
Laurel hedging at car park entrance	Trim top and sides to keep to reasonable and manageable dimensions.	Once a year, in late spring or early summer.	Work Party (WP)
Car park	Check and remove weeds	As necessary	WP
Holly hedges at western and northern boundary of car park	Trim top and sides to fence height	Once a year, in April-May.	WP
Deciduous mixed hedge on eastern boundary of car park and to north of Little Croft	Trim top and sides to fence height. Forward-growing shoots cut back to 1m for neat profile.	Once a year, in dormant period: Dec. to early March	WP
Beech Hedge along southern boundary	Trim top and sides to approx. 1.5m Also remove any overgrowth of ivy from trunks, and/or cut ivy stems at base.	Once or twice: Main cut in August or September. If untidy, an early summer trim advisable. As necessary	WP
Southern side of beech hedge Beside road/pathway	Remove troublesome plants from where obstruct pathway (e.g. nettles, thistles, dock, goosegrass, brambles)	As necessary	WP

6. The presence of dog mess on the village green was discussed and as a result it was decided we

would put another sign at the top of Muddy Lane in order to remind people to act responsibly. The working group are very concerned that this can occur and will do their utmost to stop it.

7. As a result of the damage to the benches last year they have been replaced by new ones financed by the Parish Council and this was organised by Cllr. Jon Steward for which we are very grateful for.
8. Some village residents asked for the redundant concrete posts on the road up to school to be removed as they were both unsightly and dangerous. We obtained three quotes and the Parish Council selected one and the posts will be removed soon at their expense.
9. The village green roller was used to block off the gate as a security measure however the cricket club recommended that this should not occur in the future since it is open to the elements and this is detrimental to its normal function requiring substantial repair and expense.
10. A working group is required which will be on the 22nd March 10-12 am so we will be contacting people to get willing hands to do the following –

WORKING PARTY FOR VILLAGE GREEN (south end) 2-3 hrs.

Holly hedge: trim to approx 6in. above fence height.

Ivy on beech hedge: remove/cut at base. Brambles, especially by roadside and on the mound: pull out/cut/stump kill as necessary. Stray hollies: dig out small ones, cut and stump kill larger ones. Retain the holly clump growing in area nearest the mature beech. Clear weeds from alongside edges of car park and near entrance. Clear wood chippings heap from CP and use on muddy patches and under holly hedge. Gather fallen debris lying around (including from west side of cricket field and at north end). Can put beneath hedgerows.

11. It was decided that we should have our next meeting in June.