

TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL – EXTERNAL COMMITTEE
KILN FIELDS RESERVE AND WILDLIFE VENUES SUB-COMMITTEE
NOTES OF A SITE MEETING HELD ON 07.08.20

PRESENT:

Town Councillors: Mrs. Jean Curteis, Callum Knowles, Dr. Lisa Lovelidge(Chair).

Non-Councillors: Dave Bournier, Jon Burnell, Roger Finniss, Peter Friend.

Tenterden Town Council Staff: Lesley Owers taking notes.

- 1. ELECTION OF CHAIR.** Dr. Lisa Lovelidge was voted Chair. Lisa would like the Town Clerk to enquire if the councillors who were absent would still like to be members of the sub-committee, as meetings were often unable to go ahead due to being inquorate.

ACTION: Town Clerk to enquire whether the councillors who were absent would still like to be members of the sub-committee.

- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS.** Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. Kate Walder. An introduction was made to Peter Friend who lives in Abbots Way, who had expressed an interest in joining the sub-committee.
- 3. MINUTES OF SITE MEETING HELD ON 6TH FEBRUARY 2020.** The minutes of the site meeting held on 6th February were agreed.
- 4. MATTERS ARISING.** None.
- 5. UPDATE FROM MAINTENANCE TEAM ON WORK CARRIED OUT SINCE LAST MEETING.** Roger advised that they had cleared the majority of the Himalayan Balsam and had shredded some of the brambles for wildlife habitat. The remainder of the willow wood would be given away. The weld mesh for the safety gates at each end of the culvert was ready to be put in place. Jon Burnell had been monitoring the Chelsea Cut which we were advised to do by Colin Reader and Jon was pleasantly surprised at the amount of butterflies, pollenators and wildlife present on this designated patch. Jon also reported that common newts were breeding in large numbers in the pond and there were small frogs and the arrival of marsh frogs.

When Donald Duffus cleared the pond he kindly sowed some wildflower seeds on the bank of the pond and cornflowers had started to come up.

Dave and Roger had planted 150 plug plants in the Millenium Gardens but unfortunately there are now only around 120 left due to vandals. These are now ready to be planted out.

When Colin Reader revisited Kiln Field he was pleasantly surprised at how many wildflowers there were. He spotted some Wild Lettuce – which is not native to this area, Pyramid Orchids and Frogspit in the pond. He said that we are creating some good wildflower and wildlife areas within the town.

- 6. REPLACEMENT OF GATE AT THE ENTRANCE TO KILN FIELD.** Dave Bourner expressed his concern about the condition of the wooden gate at the entrance to Kiln Field as the wood had rotted. The pedestrian access gate was also in a bad condition and could be replaced at the same time. Peter Friend pointed out that the side gate was not wheelchair friendly and suggested that whilst replacing both gates that the pedestrian gate replacement should provide disabled access. It was agreed to investigate the possibility of replacing both the main gate and pedestrian access gate with Ashford Borough Council as this is an issue with security of the site.

ACTION: To look at the Lease Agreement with Ashford Borough Council to check who is responsible for the gates and to contact ABC.

- 7. POST AND RAIL FENCING AROUND PERIMETER.** Dave Bourner was concerned that on the Redrow site it looked as though there was no longer a green corridor showing between the garden fences of the proposed new houses and the site boundary. Dave had discussed his concerns previously with the Town Clerk. Callum Knowles advised that if this was the case then there was no point in us erecting another fence alongside it and advised that if that was the case, then we needed to find out from Redrow what type of fencing they were planning on erecting as we would have to have the same.

ACTION: To check this with Redrow and to fence off our boundary as soon as possible.

- 8. POND DIPPING PLATFORM AND FOOTPATH.** The Committee agreed to accept the quotation from Marmax for the 100% recycled pond dipping platform at a total cost of £2678.50 plus VAT and to order this as soon as possible. Recycled pond dipping platforms are very difficult to find so we only had one quotation for this. Specialist installers of recycled platforms are hard to find and it was agreed to accept the quotation we had received from Ray Sargent of Holwood Ground Maintenance at a cost of £3600 plus VAT. Ray was recommended to us by Marmax as he has vast experience installing recycled pond dipping platforms. This will now go to the External Committee for approval on 14th September 2020.

We had also received quotations from Ray Sargent and George Bryant for construction of the pathway leading down to the platform which would be DDA compliant. After consultation of the sub-committee, it was agreed that the surface of the pathway would need to be a resin/bonded surface rather

than Type 1. This is because the wetter months could be a challenge and a resin surface would give easier traction especially for wheelchair users.

Peter Friend advised that he had looked after the pond in Goudhurst and that the pond at Kiln Field is likely to be contaminated and the water must be tested before the pond dipping platform is put into use by the public. Roger Finniss advised that testing would definitely be carried out and the water would be tested regularly but he was quietly confident that the water quality was good due to the fact that there was Frogspit in the pond and also due to the evidence of wildlife that is presently in the pond.

Peter Friend requested that the work on the platform and the footpath should be done before the rainy season because of the impact of heavy machinery on the ground.

ACTION: To request new quotations for a resin surface for the footpath.

- 9. POSSIBLE ADVICE FROM A WOODLAND EXPERT.** It was agreed that we should seek advice from a woodland expert on how we could improve the woodland at Kiln Field. Peter Friend commented that there is great potential for development and growing an entirely different range of vegetation. Roger Finniss commented that there is an ancient woodland the other side of the gill and that the mature woodland the other side is self governing with bluebells. Frankie Woodgate from Weald Woodscapes had agreed to do a site visit to Kiln Field, free of charge for the initial visit, to discuss the committee's overall vision for the woodland. During the visit she would give us an idea of where she may be able to help further with potential on-going management of the site.

Cllr. Mrs. Curteis suggested that we ask, if on the same day, that Frankie could visit St. Michael's Recreation Ground to give us advice on native species of trees.

ACTION: To email Frankie and to arrange a meeting date for both projects.

- 10. PROPOSED GRASS VERGE TO BE LEFT TO WILD FLOWERS BETWEEN COLONEL STEPHENS WAY AND HENLEY MEADOWS.** It was agreed to ask for delegated authority from Kent County Council to leave this specified area to wildflowers. Lisa Lovelidge suggested that we should look at other areas around the town. Roger Finniss suggested the area outside Westwell opposite West View.

ACTION: To contact Paul Woodhatch at KCC about the grass verge at Colonel Stephens Way.

- 11. AN UPDATE ON GRASS VERGES AROUND THE TOWN FROM DAVE BOURNER, ROGER FINNISS AND JON BURNELL WHO HAS VOLUNTEERED TO MONITOR THE VERGES.** The maintenance team advised that they will carry on mowing until the drainage is improved in the culvert in the Dene at the bottom of St. Michael's Recreation Ground. They

have bought a new springtime harrow so when it is mowed in September they can use it for raking up and can sow in the autumn.

Colin Reader advised that the triangle section in Appledore Road was not suitable to be left to wildflowers and was best to be left to wildlife. There is a rumour that a consultant was looking at the drainage there and that KCC are going to clear it. Callum advised that if the triangle is to be cleared that we need to make it clear that is not being carried out by Tenterden Town Council.

Lisa requested that if there are any other grass verges which could be left to wildflowers that signs are erected on these. Jon Burnell has asked for a list of designated grass verges to be sent to him so that he can start to monitor them and keep a record.

The current designated grass verges in the town are at the entrance to Chalk Avenue, Craythorne, the verge opposite the Fat Ox and the wildflower meadow at the bottom of St. Michael's Recreation Ground.

- 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.** Peter Friend expressed his concerns at bonfire activity on the site, as there was a day when a bonfire did cause an issue for him and his neighbours in Abbots Way. He advised that the Ashford Borough Council website stated that people should be told when bonfires will be taking place. Callum advised Peter that this is a recommendation only and not a requirement. Roger reported that there was one day of burning brambles which was a necessity but they had written permission from Ashford Borough Council to do so. Roger advised that they do as little burning as they need to and they felt that they would rather burn these responsibly, rather than somebody else come along and set fire to them for a fun thing to do. Roger apologised to Peter, as this did cause an issue at the time and he guaranteed that there would be no more burning as such, as the brambles that are left will be used for the wildlife habitat.

Peter Friend requested on behalf of his wife, that we erect a sign advising people not to park in the corner where the pedestrian entrance is, as cars often park in such a way that their drive is blocked. Callum advised Peter that it is an adopted road and that we can ask people nicely to park responsibly but we cannot enforce it. A 'No Parking in front of these gates' sign had already been ordered to be erected on the gate. Roger suggested that as the new passenger gate would give disabled access that we could either bollard the road in front or yellow cross hatch it. Callum suggested speaking to Mike Hill to ask if the road to the entrance could be crosshatched because of the proposed disabled access gate.

ACTION: To speak to Mike Hill about the yellow crosshatching.

- 13. ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER – PETER FRIEND.** Peter Friend who lives in Abbots Way was voted in as a new member of the sub-committee.
- 14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** To be confirmed.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXTERNAL COMMITTEE:

- (i) Non-council members be allowed to vote should they sign the Code of Conduct to ensure a regular quorum. Terms of Reference to be amended accordingly.
- (ii) To note our approach to Ashford Borough Council to request that the main gate and passenger gate at the entrance to Kiln Field are replaced, as the wood has rotted and for the passenger gate to be replaced with a DDA compliant gate to provide disabled access.
- (iii) To agree to the quotation to install post and rail fencing to define the boundary between Kiln Field and the Redrow development - £4,400 + VAT.
- (iv) To agree to the quotation from Marmax for a 100% recyclable pond dipping platform which will be DDA compliant - £2,678.50 + VAT.
- (v) To agree to the quotation for a resin bonded, non-slip pathway leading down to the pond dipping platform, which will be DDA compliant - £7,840 + VAT