

**Greener Staplehurst Group
Minutes of Meeting (Zoom)**

Monday September 20th 2021

Present:

Mina McPhee(Chair)	Jose Castro
David George	Richard Smith
Adele Sharp	Stuart McPhee
Martin Ralph	David Charge
Margaret Filby	

1. Apologies

Paddy Riordan	Peter Spearink
Jon Grimwood	

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

Approved

3. Matters Arising

a) Gate to Wimpey Field

No one is responsible. **Action: MR agreed to take this on.**

4. Report on Litter Picking RS

Very successful day. Comments were made on how clean the village was, apart from the station area and the shops area. 2 new volunteers joined, plus one who is interested in joining GSG. Payback Team did a lot of heavy work. Thanks to Jean, Joan and Malcolm Buller. GSG thanked RS for his hard work organising the event.

5. Planting/ Beds Updates

a) **Planters at Parade MR**

All plants bought from Bumbles are now in the planters at The Parade and watered **MR** Commented on the fantastic plants, all in flower. The use of perennials will make life easier in the future.

DG pointed out that there is still £500 left for plants from this year's grant from SPC.

b) **Station Rd Bed SM**

Stuart now has control of the beds although the weeds are persistent. **MR** has handed over some plants which **SM** will now plant. **MR** stated that he has a large amount of seeds for those who would like to use them.

c) **Herb Bed Mina**

Herb bed has been cleared. Bags of weed etc need to be cleared from the site. **JG** has offered to collect the bags of green rubbish in the past.

The intention is to plant herbs at the front of the bed and flowers at the back. Need plants to be bought for this. **MR** has spoken to Bumbles who have said they are prepared to do a deal at the end of the season on herbs

Action: Mina to ask JG to collect bags from the bed. MM and DG to discuss the herb bed planting and DG to talk to Bumbles and buy plants when Bumbles are ready.

d) Jeffrey Close & Jubilee Field wild flower beds

DC has spread cuttings from Great Dixter on existing wild flower meadow at Jeffrey Close. These now need raking up. There is still a bag of cuttings left which could be spread on another strip beside original bed. Then raked up later. Bed needs to be strimmed soon. Strimmer is in workshop at village centre. **DG** has the key. Two more areas were prepared and covered at Jubilee Field and the Jeffrey Close site. Need to see state of ground under the covers and decide how to proceed.

Action: DC & MR with help of DofE volunteers to rake cuttings. DG to strim bed when ready. DG and MR to check covered areas and make decision if ready to use.

6. Volunteers Update MM

Discussion on ways to keep volunteers updated and engaged. Suggestions were:

Dedicated Facebook page

Email

Other social media

Next Village Update will have a large section on volunteering.

Use the Bioblitz to publicise GSG in future

RS stated that it was important for the GSG to use all various media, and that the Group should have a Communications Strategy.

Action: MM will liaise with DG and JC and devise a communications plan for the GSG volunteers.

7. Wimpey Field

a) Funding Proposal

There is a view that volunteering will not be sufficient to bring WF under control and then maintain it although volunteers are an important part of the mix. There is a risk that GSG could lose management of WF if the area is not kept well maintained. There was agreement that a discussion should be started at Parish Council about the necessity for funding to bring the site up to date. This is to be done in conjunction with a request to the Parish Council to organise a 10-year review as specified in the original Wimpey Field Management Plan. This will give a clear indicator of all that needs to be done at WF and also the timelines for this.

Action: SM to take resources discussion forward to SPC

b) Security Cameras

There was a discussion about the purpose of the cameras and whether the expenditure was justified. It was suggested that due to the expense involved, it may be sensible to start with just two cameras. **Action: A vote was taken and it was agreed to ask for funding for 2 cameras. MM to request Parish Clerk to put the matter to Parish Council.**

8. GSG Budget and Project Plan 2021-22

In order that GSG can be accountable and ensure that proper planning is not only undertaken but actions agreed are carried forward in an appropriate manner, MM suggested that a well-considered budget request should be put to the Parish Council Strategy and Finance Committee as they plan the next Parish budget. This will allow all of GSG's planned expenditure to hopefully get advance approval, making it quicker to get expenses agreed. This means however that all projects planned for the next financial year need to be thought through and planned for now with cost estimates alongside each. Please read the list circulated before the meeting and think about what you might like the Group to get involved in.

Action: DG to talk to Alison about Bioblitz funding to query whether this should be a GSG expense or a PC wide cost. All to Email MM with requests for projects for the next financial year and an indication of expected costs linked to that project.

9. A. O. B.

a) Margaret Filby, a member of Staplehurst Horticultural Society, was welcomed to the meeting. She will act as liaison between the two groups and the SHS will offer assistance where they can. Margaret told the group about some of the activities of the Horticultural Society.

b) Litter Picking Expenditure RS

£2000 has been allocated to Litter Picking by MBC as part of the Welcome Back Funding.. £1500 of that is for equipment and the remainder to be used to buy customised safety vests. RS put forward costs and proposals of the wording – circulated in advance. The Group voted to have 'SPC Volunteers' printed on the vests. Litter picking equipment will be used solely by the registered pickers. Vests to be used by all Staplehurst volunteers.

c) Community Centre AS

Help is needed to clear area at back of workshops, of rubbish left by Payback Team. Also need a method of disposal. **Action: MR to organise DoE volunteers to do this. MM to ask JG for help with disposal of the waste. AS and MR to liaise on date and time.**

10. Date of next meeting

Monday 25th October at 8.00pm

Meeting closed at 9.31pm