

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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Washington Parish Council Open Spaces (Recreation, Allotments, Footpaths and Conservation) Committee

MINUTES of Open Space (Recreation, Allotments, Footpaths and Conservation) Committee Meeting held on Monday 19th February 2024 at Washington Village Hall (Doré Room).

PRESENT: Cllr S Buddell, Cllr B Hanvey, Cllr T. Keech (Chairman), Cllr G. Lockerbie and Cllr J Luckin

ALSO: Clerk to the Council Ms Z Savill. One member of the public.

ABSENT: None

The Meeting was opened by the Chairman at 8:15pm.

0/02/24/1 To Approve apologies for absence

None. All present

0/02/24/2 To Co-opt Cllr Lockerbie to the Committee

Cllr Lockerbie confirmed his willingness to serve on the Committee and it was **RESOLVED** that he be co-opted.

0/02/24/3 To Receive Declarations of Interest as defined under the Localism Act 2011 and Consider Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

0/02/24/4 To Approve the Minutes of the last meeting

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the OSRA meeting on 20th November 2023 which were duly signed by the Chairman.

0/02/24/5 Public Speaking

A member of the public spoke about their interest in looking after Vera's Shelter jointly with a neighbour on a voluntary basis. The Chairman thanked him and that this was being discussed later in the meeting under a separate agenda item. He would be informed of the Committee's decision after the meeting.

0/02/24/6 To Report Actions and Matters Arising from the last meeting:

The following report of actions and matters arising were reported:

Action	Progress	RESOLUTION at OSRA Meeting 19 th Feb 22024
Arrange trespass warning notice on gate to the rear of allotment	In progress. Notice purchased 12 th Nov 2023 to be affixed to gate leading to the copse/rear of allotment.	The Clerk agreed she would try and get this done before the next meeting.
Survey of the graveyard wall to advise on safe removal of ivy and other vegetation by The Street	Gumbrills surveyed the graveyard 9 th Nov 2023 for safety (head stones) and suggested that a specialist surveyor look at the wall. Overgrown vegetation which overhangs neighbouring property has been removed by the householder.	RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Clerk to arrange a survey and approve costs in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
Engage Groundsman to replant hedging in gaps on the recreation ground: quotation agreed FC Dec 2023	In progress. Awaiting works to be carried out.	Clerk to chase
HS2 Tree works recommended in 2023 annual inspection: engage Sawing Heights – agreed FC Dec 2023	Works to be carried out in May when ground conditions allow.	NOTED
Arrange repair of cracked viewing panel of defibrillator cabinet in Hampers Lane.	To be actioned. Difficulties in finding contractor to replace panel.	RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Clerk to arrange replacement cabinet in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman
Replacement of MUGA lights for LED by Case Electrical	Pending update to this meeting.	RESOLVED to NOTE that Case Electrical had confirmed they will get written confirmation from HDC that no planning consent is required for the lights. Clerk to chase
Approve planting of daffodil bulbs in specified areas of the Recreation Ground by Mrs Wilmshurst's gardener	Bulbs planted and signs of growth by some of the benches, trees and fencing	NOTED
Allotment rent 2024 invoices	Actioned. Some payments due.	RESOLVED that the Clerk invoices for pro-rata rent due by those who have served notices to vacate by end of February.
New safety surfacing on Play Area	Completed. The shiny appearance of the surface, which caused concern from a member of the public, has disappeared as expected. This is entirely normal according to the contractors and	NOTED

	<p>a ROSPA inspector. No safety issues raised in the quarterly inspection reported to this meeting.</p>	
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- O/11/23/7 Allotment: To Agree inspection arrangements for the site.**
The Committee understood that monthly site inspections would be conducted by the Stewards. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to contact the Stewards again by way of a reminder.
- O/02/24/8 To Receive notice to quit from tenants of Plots 6 and 11a and Consider any further action**
The Committee **RESOLVED** to note confirmation from the Tenant of Plots 6 to vacate by end of February. A notice received from the Tenant of Plot 11a to vacate would be effective from 1st January 2024. There were some items still on Plot 6 belonging to the Tenant which they wished to leave behind for the next person. It was **AGREED** to ask that the Stewards inspect these and decide if the items were in a good state of repair to be left behind or if they should be removed by the Tenant. Clerk to action.
- O/02/24/9 To Consider an allotment tenancy application.**
The Committee **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Clerk to decide the tenancy application pending a site visit by the applicant with one of the Stewards. It was noted that there were two vacant plots: 7A and 7B (divided into two last year) and 11A. Plot 6 would become available 1st March. The decision to be ratified at the next OSRA meeting.
- O/02/24/10 First Extension Graveyard: To Review February 2024 Inspection Report and Consider any recommended actions.**
The Committee discussed and **RESOLVED** to note ongoing maintenance and that there were no hazardous findings in Cllr Luckin's report. It was **AGREED** to request that cuttings from the wall near Banks Cottage be removed by the Groundsman when he commences the grass cutting schedule in March/April. Authority to be delegated to the clerk to make the arrangement.
- O/02/24/11 Washington Recreation Ground: To Review quarterly Play Area inspection report and Consider a quotation for repairs**
The Committee noted the safety inspection report from HAGS and that there were no hazardous findings. It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the quotation of £476 for recommended works to the damaged seesaw seating and picnic bench. HAGS had indicated they could do these with the other works already agreed and highlighted in the report, in March when the weather improves.
- O/11/23/12 Washington Recreation Ground: To Discuss and Agree arrangements for routine maintenance**
The Committee discussed options for the retainment of a handyperson for odd jobs around the village. It was **RESOLVED** to post local social media pages with an invitation for expressions of interest to contact the Clerk. Cllr Luckin agreed to circulate a draft for the Committee's approval before publication.
- O/02/24/14 Washington Recreation Ground: To Report the last MUGA lights electricity readings**
The Committee **NOTED** the following MUGA light readings:
December 2023: 06131.
January 2024: 06131 (no change)
- O/2/24/15 To Appoint a caretaker for the 2024 Vera's Shelter gardening**
The Committee was informed that Mr Steve Trott was unable to continue his role of looking after the shelter gardening because he had moved outside the area. There was an expression of interest from three individuals living close to the shelter, two of whom were willing to share the

role on a voluntary basis.

Following a discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to appoint Mr Andrew Armitage, who had given a presentation earlier, and Mr Alan Hill to the joint role of cutting the grass and keeping the area tidy. Any requirements to carry out other works or expenditure would require the approval of the Committee to be funded from the Council's maintenance budget. The role would be covered under the Council's Public Liability policy for volunteers. Clerk to offer the role to Mr Armitage and Mr Hill and to thank the other applicant for their interest.

O/2/24/16 To Receive a report from a member of the public about the use of Vera's Shelter and to Consider any recommended action

The Committee discussed local concerns that the shelter's historic value and purpose for walkers and visitors to rest on the benches, was being negatively impacted by its unofficial use as a community book exchange. It was noted that the books had recently been moved to the Council's nearby decommissioned phone box. The Committee **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** to allow this if books are stored tidily but to review again if the arrangement is abused. The new caretakers to ensure that the shelter is protected from any further storage of books, notices and other items. Clerk to notify them of this requirement.

O/2/24/17 To Consider making an application to register Vera's Shelter as a Community Asset

The Committee discussed a proposal by two residents for the shelter to be a registered asset of community value. It was noted that registration is subject to approval of an application to Horsham District Council. The Committee agreed that there was nothing to be gained from the registration. The shelter's historic status and amenity value was already protected by virtue of its ownership by the Parish Council and its inclusion in the Heath Common Design Statement. It was therefore **AGREED** not to make the application.

O/11/23/18 Any other urgent Open Space, Recreation & Allotment and Footpaths and Conservation issues that may arise OR items for the next Agenda.

Cllr Luckin reported that a fallen tree was still blocking a bridleway in the parish the other side of the A24 bridge to the South Downs. It was agreed to send a link to Cllr Luckin so that she could make a report to West Sussex Public Rights of Way, which had statutory enforcement powers against the landowner.

O/11/23/19 Date and Time of next meeting:

It was NOTED that the next OSRA Committee meeting would be held on Monday 15th April 2024.

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:14rs.

Signed.....

Dated..... 22/04/24