

Hartwell Pocket Park – Ashwood Acre

Notes of a committee meeting held on Monday 23rd January 2023

	Action
1. All members of the committee were present: Simon Smith, Liz Smith, Sue Hamilton, Sue Scott-Evans, George Jones, David Heron, Derek Hawley	
2. Notes of September meeting – agreed as accurate	
3. Produce Show and Hay Rake Members pleased to be involved with a better attended Produce Show and preferred serving refreshments outside the kitchen. Hay Rake – well attended, went well including hot dogs and cider. Thanks to Phil Williams for joining in with the cooking.	
<p>4. Current state of the park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn planting of bulbs – flowers awaited with interest – aim to plant new drought tolerant late flowering perennials on bank in early spring. • Volunteers/Friends – good core of regulars though overall numbers have reduced somewhat since immediately after the pandemic. Friends list needs to be fully revised to update contact details. • Information board logs – agreed an urgent need to find a new solution to mounting display boards. Simon had done some research but commercial information boards tend to be large and expensive though durable. Research to continue including using a bespoke solution involving treated timber mounted above ground level (steel legs/ concrete posts?) to avoid decay. • Willow arch tunnel – needs repairs – try using willow whips from current growth in the park. • Bench repair – missing spar found in autumn – keep for any future use. • Orchard area – to improve air and light to apple trees aim for a more radical prune in March. • Yellow rattle trial – new seed sown in November 2022 on approximately one third of meadow after mowing grass short as a comparison trial with the hoped for success of self- seeded areas. Await results. 	<p>Derek to review and update list and contact people whose email addresses may have changed.</p> <p>Simon, Derek and anyone else interested to continue search for a durable solution for information boards in keeping with ethos of park.</p> <p>Organise at a spring tidying session</p> <p>Organise at a spring tidying session</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildflower beds near willow structures – incorporate into park landscape – short mow in spring. 	
<p>5. Machinery servicing – mower, strimmer and hedge trimmer due for service – arranged for early February.</p>	<p>Derek to oversee collection and delivery</p>
<p>6. Events 2023 especially May event, Spring Celebration with plants, – same Saturday in May as usual (13th May). Similar format to 2022. Derek no longer running extensive summer plant stall – seeking a suitable replacement to operate bedding plant stall on same lines as Blisworth Wild Flowers in 2022. Derek will contribute to and run the plant donations stall. Hartwell small animal shelter tombola etc to be invited (insurance to be checked). Other possibilities Wildlife Trust stall, music from saxophone group, bird box and bee house stall, refreshments, local honey producers etc. Publicity via Facebook and whole village leaflet + roadside signs.</p>	<p>Sue H to contact Blisworth Wildflowers – already done and booked (thanks Sue) All members to look out for a solution to someone running a summer bedding plant stall. Simon to follow up on saxophone group Derek – contact Wildlife Trust Simon and Liz – following up on honey producers. Dave – make bird boxes etc Liz, Derek – arrange publicity leaflet design and printing</p>
<p>7. Green Flag Community Award entry in 2023 confirmed</p>	<p>Derek – entry submitted</p>
<p>8. Maintenance of main path – agreed to keep path clear of encroaching grass and weeds using herbicide applications by qualified contractors used by parish council at the pocket park’s expense.</p>	<p>Derek - to contact contractors</p>
<p>9. Wildflower survey midsummer – agreed to approach Wildlife Trust for a follow up survey to one undertaken in 2019 – survey probably June/July. Consider making park a corporate member.</p>	<p>Derek – contact Wildflower Trust re survey and possible park membership</p>
<p>10. Log ring – need to replace logs to ensure future safety. Possible solution is using commercial treated and guaranteed chestnut logs supplied by a company in Herefordshire. Expensive but a partial grant may be a possibility. Derek to follow up on quote re. installation, maintenance and guarantee. Logs would be larger than current ones so fewer would be needed.</p>	<p>Derek – follow up with chestnut log suppliers</p>
<p>11. Website and Facebook page - Looking for someone to take over running of website + make more use of Facebook to publicise volunteer sessions.</p>	<p>Liz – to check Facebook Derek – to seek a web maintainer from Friends of Ashwood Acre</p>

<p>12. Finance – Current balance at bank £3309.13. A donation of £300 had been received from the Produce Show – we are very grateful for this. There is an outstanding invoice for £36. Expenditure in the coming months will include servicing of machinery, renewing the log ring with a finished product and providing more durable supports for the badly weathered tree trunks that support the information boards. Thanks to Sue for providing the financial information.</p>	
<p>13. Working party dates -a list of future volunteer sessions was tabled and will be put on the park website and Facebook. The first session of 2023 will be on Saturday 18th February at 2 pm.</p>	<p>Simon – website Liz - Facebook</p>
<p>14. AOB – Liz mentioned that A level biology students from Wollaston School will be doing fieldwork in the park later this year</p>	
<p>15. Date of next meeting – Annual General Meeting – provisionally Tuesday 13th June.</p>	