

Stoke Environment Group

Minutes of the Meeting 19th August 2021

Attendees: Andrew Boyle, Dave Evans, Sarah Evans, Helen Grant, Karen Housego, Fi McQueen, Ian Upshall, Lyn Silcock, Dave Smith, Trevor Williams, Sue Edwards. (11)

Apologies: Emma Arthurs, Polly Burns-Cox, Janice Pearce, David and Susan Crabbe, Adrian and Louise Grinter, Helen Ley, Jo Valentine, Charlotte Sunquist, Edwina Hansford, Jane Williams, Sarah Shuttleworth, Rob Hensley. (14)

1. Welcome

Welcome to Sue Edwards.

Many thanks to Phil Stone for running two tours of North Curry Community Woodland attended by approximated 14 residents of Stoke St Gregory. The tours were informative and inspirational. A good example of what can be achieved with dedication and hard work. A model for SSG going forward.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of Meeting 2 (July 2021) were agreed without amendment.

3. Approval of Constitution

A Group constitution is necessary for a number of reasons, not least to open a bank account and to apply for funds and/or grants in the future.

A draft constitution was sent out two weeks ago. A small amendment to the 'Membership' section was made as a result – to include residents of neighbouring communities (e.g. Athelney, Stathe etc.) and those who may live outside the Parish but manage businesses in our community. The amended version sent out on Wednesday 15 August.

An amendment was suggested to clarify the minimum age. It will now read "16 years and over". With these amendments, members (including some not present) formally agreed the Constitution (dated 19 August 2021).

The Constitution was signed by Ian Upshall (Lead Coordinator/Chair) and Dave Smith (Grants & Funding Coordinator).

4. Appointment of Group Officers and Committee Members

Formal agreement of officers as follows:

Lead Coordinator/Chair – Helen Grant proposed Ian Upshall. Seconded by Lyn Silcock.

Secretary – Trevor Williams proposed Fi McQueen. Seconded by Dave Smith.

Financial Manager – Dave Evans proposed Polly Burns-Cox. Seconded by Karen Housego.

Furthermore, it was agreed that the following would undertake specific roles:

Media Management– Dave Evans

Grants and Funding – Dave Smith

Primary School Liaison – Janice Pearce

It was noted that there were no Working Group appointments at this stage. These appointments may be made in the future as the group grows and the number of tasks increase.

5. Finance Arrangements

Agreed to open a clubs and charities bank account with Lloyds Bank. Ian Upshall has part-completed an application. The account will have three signatories – Ian Upshall, Polly Burns-Cox and Dave Smith. This was agreed by the members.

Trevor Williams noted that it would be necessary to arrange a quarterly internal ‘audit’ of the accounts by a non-signatory member. This was agreed.

6. Review Task List

Ian Upshall reminded members of the task list. This is a dynamic document that will be updated periodically. IU will forward an updated version to Dave Evans to upload to the website.

7. Work Progress Reports

Footpath Group – Sarah Evans

Good progress and work underway. Sarah has spoken to most of the land owners, and has permission to cut back and make styles accessible. Charlotte Sunquist really pleased to have the help of the group. Going very well!

Many thanks to everyone, really making a difference to our community.

Trevor Williams offered hard wood non-slip boards to help with repairing steps etc. He would cut to length.

Bus stop – Polly Burns-Cox

Polly has done some weeding. The PC has moved the bin today, from where it was hidden in the hedge to location adjacent to the bus stop. Polly is going to clean the bus stop and is looking for a small group to weed and plant the area.

Litterpick – Ian Upshall

Lyn Silcock adopted Woodhill, and this is now leading the way. Ian encouraged members to 'adopt' roads, lanes and spaces and to litter-pick as and when required. We now have the following areas adopted:

Woodhill – Lyn Silcock

Playing Field - Annette Smith & Karen Housego

Pincombe Drove, Pound Drove, North Drove - Jane & Trevor Williams

Slough Lane - Ian Upshall

Willey Road - Dave Smith

Huntham Close and Huntham Lane - Andrew Boyle & Karen Housego

Church Close - Helen Grant

Ian Upshall will speak to PC about using their litter pickers and storing them at a central location, making them easier to borrow.

Many thanks to everyone who has adopted a road. It is making a difference.

Pamphlets – Karen Housego

Karen is gathering suggestions on 'home' looking at green products for use throughout the house. Contributions would be very welcome. She is also putting a green hamper together for a raffle for the Envirofair, if anyone would like to donate something.

Please email Karen any suggestions you may have on housego20@yahoo.com

Trees & Hedges – Ian Upshall update

Reimagining the Levels via Phil Stone helping with hedge and tree application for VH boundary. All agreed with PC and VH, which is excellent.

There is some unease about using an artificial membrane. Other suggestions were made. It was decided to explore the possibility of de-turfing by hand, cover with cardboard (obtained/recycled from the Village Shop) and then woodchip (potentially obtained from Somerset Waste Partnership). The trees and hedge saplings could then be planted through the woodchip and cardboard.

VH happy to engage with the SEG in the management of the Copse and create a habitat area.

8. Envirofair – October 16th 2021

Janice Pearce sent her apologies and update will follow.

It was noted that we have a number of organisations attending, including Somerset Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Somerset Beekeepers, Somerset Waste Partnership, Trevor & Jane Williams (Seed, vegetable and plant swap). The WI to arrange refreshments.

9. Hedgehog Update

Trevor Williams Reported that a number of photographs have been taken of our local hedgehogs. Sightings of 24, but this may possibly include doubles. Also a photo of three hedgehogs together. Pictures and information will be displayed at the Environment Fair.

10. Media Management Report

Dave Evans is overseeing the Facebook site and Website.

Dave has also produced an impressively designed leaflet on the Environment fair and has printed 100 to be handed out at the Fete on Saturday 21 August.

Dave and Ian (and Brian Jeanes of Climate Action Athelney) have submitted contributions to the Autumn issue of Stoke News so there will be plenty of publicity of the group and the Environment Fair. Dave Evans is also preparing an article for The Leveller.

11. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held at The Village Hall on 16 September 2021. A date will be agreed for the following meeting which will focus on the Environment Fair.

12. Close

The meeting closed at 9pm.