

Stoke Environment Group

Minutes of Meeting 16 on 18th January 2023

Attendees: Fi McQueen, Ian Upshall, Andrew Boyle, Polly Burns-Cox, Sarah Evans, Dave Evans, Nicolette Williams, Jason Morgan, Trevor Williams (9)

Apologies: Helen Grant, Karen Housego, Dave Smith

- 1 Welcome and Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the last noted meeting on 23.11.22 agreed.
- 3 The aim of the meeting was to agree which projects on the task list to take forward in 2023, and to allocate a lead to each project.

- **Grafting Workshop**

Andrew has ordered some apple tree root stock. Practical grafting demonstration proposed to be held on **Saturday 18 February**, indoor venue to be confirmed. Open to all SEG members, maximum of 15 people. The new grafts will be potted for planting in the autumn.

ACTION: Ian to book and confirm venue.

- **Management of the Village Hall Spinney**

The standard advice when coppicing hazel is to coppice 30% of hazel each year. Coppicing was done last year resulting in vigorous sprouting growth. Proposed to this year to not take 30% but leave a variety of ages. Suggested to use some of the £250 donation from Bob Dennis to buy some nesting boxes and feeders from the RSPB.

ACTION: Polly to buy bird boxes.

Agreed dates to undertake pruning and tidying:

Sunday 5th February at 10.00 to meet for an hour for a recce of what work needs doing.

Saturday 11th February – to carry out tidying, pruning, and putting up bird boxes

Saturday 25th February – to finish off the work.

- **Bus stop sprucing**

Agreed to include on 2023 task list, and that the Bus stop outside the pub should be priority. The Parish Council is happy for SEG to carry out the work, proposed to be funded from CIL budget.

Work plan for when weather turns warmer:

- Painted attractively by local artists
- Replace 4 Perspex panels with two strengthened glass panels and two of the panels replaced with a solid sheet and painted with blackboard paint so can be used as a noticeboard.
- Two solar panels would enable a couple of lights to operate within the shelter.

ACTION: Jason and Trevor to coordinate and set a date in diary for initial meeting.

- **Telephone box refurbishment**

IU to confirm with Karen Housego who is leading the project. The area adjacent to the box has been replanted and woodchip put down.

ACTION: Jason offered to weatherproof the box.

- **Benches**

It is proposed to use some of the CIL funds for siting benches for people to sit and enjoy a view, to include sites accessible for those with restricted mobility. Sarah has spoken with some landowners regarding the idea, but it needs to be clear whose responsibility the bench would be if on private land. Therefore, it was suggested it could be preferable to place on open common spaces, such as at the Village Hall or on the Playing Field in the corner, or on road sides.

ACTION: Sarah to lead on looking into possible places not on private land and by the end of the year have a potential plan, to include improving current benches.

- **Community Hub/Library of Things**

Agreed to put this on hold for the moment due to amount of projects actively progressing.

ACTION: Nicolette to continue to liaise with member of the community who may be able to offer help with this project as well as the development of a wildlife area.

- **Community Woodland Garden**

Agreed to keep on project list but unable to develop at this stage; waiting to hear further from the land agent for an update on buying a plot of land.

- **Open Garden**

SEG to attend the Open Garden event held by the Sundquists in May. Ideas for a stall to be discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION: Nicolette to finalise designs for banners and place order.

- **Enviro Fair – Saturday 3 June 2023**

Fi coordinating the invitation of stalls and speakers. Trevor suggested inviting a speaker from [River Action](#) and Alasdair Cameron from [Somerset Wildlands](#) is hoped to be available.

ACTION: Trevor to contact a representative of River Action and invite the group to make a presentation at Envirofair 23.

- **Somerset Wildlands (Curry Moor)**

It was agreed to remove from the task list, assisting in the practical management of the 74 acre plot behind Currymoor Pumping Station, in order to focus on the already agreed projects.

- **Improving Biodiversity of common areas**

Further to planting bulbs around the village last November, the results are anticipated this spring or next spring.

- **Newsletter**

Karen/Nicolette to bring forward to next meeting to discuss next edition.

- **Talks** – ideas for speakers ongoing.

- **SEG Comms**

Agreed that improvements to be made this year to make better use of the website.

ACTION: all project leads to keep Dave E. updated to highlight activities on SEG website/social media.

- Any other items to include in the task list?

Apple pressing – autumn 2023

3 Future agenda items:

- social events
- fundraising.

4 **NEXT MEETING DATE:**

Wednesday 15 February 2023, 7.30pm, in the Café, Royal Oak.