

**Minutes of Oxton Society Executive Virtual Committee Meeting  
 3 November 2020, 5.00 p.m, via Zoom platform**

**Present:**

Rhiannon Evans	(RE)	(Chair)
Alan Chape	(AC)	(Secretary)
Jeff Willis	(JW)	(Vice Chair)
Griff Round	(GR)	(Treasurer)
Steve Weber	(SW)	(Planning and Amenities)
Bob Knowles	(BK)	(History Group)
George Harrison	(GH)	(Tree Group)
Cllr Allan Brame	(AB)	
Patrick Toosey	(PT)	
Steve Ferguson	(SF)	
John Booth	(JB)	(Hanging baskets)
Dave Barden	(DB)	(Membership Secretary)
Annette Capper	(ACa)	(Friends of the Arno)
Chris Jarrey	(CJ)	
Carla Walker	(CWa)	
Heather Alcock	(HA)	
John Heathman	(JH)	
Carolyn Weber	(CWe)	

**Apologies**

Don Firth-Williamson (DFW)

**Welcome:** The Committee welcomed John Field (JF), joining as a new Committee member.

Jay Little was present for the item on Secret Gardens

**1. Minutes of previous meetings**

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 1 September were approved. Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Officers held on 27 October were circulated.

**2. Matters Arising on Officers Minutes**

• **Secret Gardens 2021**

Secret Gardens Coordinators had met – Kirsty Cotton and Lisa McCartney taking over for 2021, working with Jay Little and Lesley McGarrity. Uncertain whether 2021 event can be held but some optimism and decision to be made in January, with all planning suspended until then. Provisional date of 9 May agreed and plans for virtual event again if necessary. By 2022 there will be lots of changes in the Task Group as many current members are retiring after 2021.

• **The Willows**

Tree Group and tree surgeon had looked at crown raising/thinning work required on tree at front of the Willows – work to be done Jan/Feb 2021. AC had submitted tree works application. There may be an issue with the light box and wiring.

Three shops and one flat had so far been let

Notice Board – Oxton Joinery were happy to refurbish the board and to do the work for free. Need to make sure new board is always up to date and attractive. Paul Smith looks after it currently, CWa to also be involved. Needs new notice on how to join the Society, to tie in with new membership leaflet.

**Action: CWa/DB**

Bins in front of Willows had been moved and stored elsewhere after involvement of WBC Environmental Health. All the keep a watching brief.

Defibrillator – this had now been ordered, financed by donations, Community Fund and Oxton Society, and would be located on shop wall. Needs to be monitored – John and Anne Field to be involved, need two more people as backup, JH volunteered. Linked to NW Ambulance – when call 999 get a code which opens the defibrillator. Training is needed for those involved, and all Committee to view Youtube training video – RE to send link.

**Action: RE**

- **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Booklet & other publications**

Booklet had been distributed to all members, along with the latest Newsletter, 3 History Periodicals and Annual Report. Thanks were expressed to AC for the booklet, BK for the Periodicals and CWa and CWe for the Newsletter, and to SF who organized the distribution. Two distributors had commented on how members appreciated receiving the pack.

Jim Poynton, Impressions, had done an excellent job producing the booklet, and we should ensure that all publications go through Impressions as they provide good quality and value for money.

Booklet marketing – 1,000 printed, 500 left for sale at £5 each after membership distribution and copies sent to Civic Voice, Merseyside Civic Society and CAW.

Committee members to try to sell 5 copies each: AC will have copies on hand. New members joining will get copy of booklet.

History Periodicals being sold with an on-line arrangement, could use same for 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary booklet? Would need to add cost of postage. In longer term also to be sold through Oxton Books, RE to contact.

**Action: RE**

- **Design Award**

SW reported on the outcome of the Design Award. Panel had considered three schemes. Design Award and plaque awarded to Beechwood, Poplar Road for side extension. Commendation to West Ridge Lodge, Ingestre Road, for conversion of garage to garden room.

### **3. Membership Report**

The Membership Secretary circulated a report showing that membership was down this year, some people still not renewed and would be emailed. It had not been possible to have the usual membership drive this year. From next year there would be a move to Standing Orders for membership renewal, BACS and Paypal not to continue.

### **4. Finance Report**

The Treasurer circulated the current income and expenditure account for the year. No financial difficulties at the moment but in the longer term if Secret Gardens 2021 could not go ahead and income was purely from membership there might be a need to consider other ways of fundraising. If seeking donations from members, best to do it for specific projects eg hanging baskets, Xmas lights.

## **5. Planning Report**

SW circulated a report on four new applications. The most significant was for 3 Talbot Road, for subdivision of front garden and construction of new house, which had provoked much discussion in the Planning Group and some variance of views.

## **6. Tree Report**

GH circulated a report on five applications, no issues. David Coombs, Coordinator of the Tree Group, would be finishing at the end of November. Ron Jones filling in temporarily but another member is needed to take over. SF and ACa to consider whether any garden owners or members of Friends of the Arno might be interested. ACa asked for job description – GH referred her to the protocol on the website for this.

**Action: SF/ACa**

## **7. History Group**

Minutes of the meeting of the History Group held on 5 October had been circulated. The digitization project was going slowly, with website development and the sorting and labelling of photos to populate the site.

Idea was put forward for webinars on particular aspects of Oxtun history.

BK is preparing a children's Oxtun tour/quiz, currently in draft. ACa suggested that this could include the Arno.

**Action: BK**

## **8. Friends of the Arno**

ACa circulated a report on FOA activity. There had been some theft and vandalism on benches but these had now been repaired and returned. Donations totalling £500 had been received from park users over the past few months. The Green Flag status had been retained despite a very difficult year.

## **9. Xmas Lights**

There would be no switch-on event this year. Quotation from contractor accepted and work to go ahead on lights. Over £1,100 had already been raised by the Justgiving campaign, above the target, and business donations of around £1,000 were hoped for. The Oxtun Artists had made decorations for the tree. The Christmas tree would be erected 14 November and volunteers were needed to help with this. A time capsule would be buried under the tree with items from Oxtun Society, FOA, local schools. The lights would be up by 28 November and would be switched on that day.

## **10. AGM**

An AGM early in 2021 was now unlikely, but possibility of a Zoom AGM, with up to 100 participants. The format would need careful consideration, with formal business being done quickly and then speakers talking about specific projects/subjects, and some interactive element. Members could be surveyed in advance by email on what they would like to have discussed. Officers to consider and bring forward proposals for a February/March Zoom AGM.

**Action: Officers**

### **11. Government local listing proposals**

WBC was submitting an expression of intent. If successful, this item will come back to the Committee

### **12. Any other business**

JF raised the topic of rewilding. Society could work with the FOA and garden owners to bring colour and vibrancy to the village. The patch of land at the corner of Jarrow Close and Village Road could be a pilot project.

**Action: JF**

### **13. Date of next meeting**

- Next meeting **to be held in January 2021**, date to be arranged.

CMW/8 November 2020