



## Minutes of Oxtton Society Committee Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 17.00, via Zoom

### Present:

Rhiannon Evans	(RE)	(Chair)
Jeff Willis	(JW)	(Vice Chair)
John Heathman	(JH)	(Secretary)
Alan Chape	(AC)	
George Harrison	(GH)	(Tree Group)
Cllr Allan Brame	(AB)	
Dave Barden	(DB)	(Membership Secretary)
Heather Alcock	(HA)	(Planning Group)
John Field	(JF)	
Chris Jarrey	(CJ)	
Annette Capper	(ACa)	(Friends of the Arno)
Lisa Stafford	(LS)	(Secret Gardens)

**Apologies** were received from Steve Weber, John Booth, Griff Round, Carla Walker, Dominic Wilkinson

### Announcement:

The committee noted with great sadness the death of Andy Corkhill who despite suffering from a long illness, had enthusiastically and greatly continued to serve the Oxtton community and the wider area in his role as a local politician.

### 1. Minutes of previous meetings

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 were approved.

### 2. Matters Arising on the Minutes

#### 2.1. Secret Gardens

Lisa Stafford updated the committee with arrangements so far for the 2022 SG event. Date of the event is Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Task group nearly complete, but some vacancies have arisen, namely 2 people to do risk assessment of gardens, and Tickets Manager. Request for volunteers required in future newsletters (**Action LS/CW**).

Discussion on insurance and overall health and safety management of the event. WBC will advise that a H&S Manager be appointed for the entire event in addition to the previous risk assessment duties undertaken for the actual gardens. HA has detail of useful risk assessment tools. (**Action LS**)

Other items discussed were the need for a simplified ticket purchase process, and, on the day, the ability for the various stalls to take debit card payments, if possible.

Lisa will continue to attend future committee meetings up to the actual event.

## **2.2. Letter received from Friends of Birkenhead Park (FoBP)**

175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the park in 2022. RE proposed a link up of the Secret Gardens event with the Park celebrations.

**Action: RE/LS** to agree format

## **2.3. Carbon Literacy**

AC outlined need to invite a Cool Wirral representative to attend the next committee meeting to help the Society set out its strategy for climate change. **(Action JH)**

JH explained outcome from recent training and presented the Society's group statement on climate change. (See agenda reports). Committee accepted this document and wording.

JF raised points that should be addressed:

- a) Oxtun houses are a real problem with significant gas usage to heat them.
- b) We should have a public meeting on this subject
- c) How do we deal with the issue of installing solar panels in a conservation area

The committee agreed that following Cool Wirral advice, a public meeting should take place to introduce this subject to our members and to form a way to work together with them to reduce our climate impact.

## **2.4. Village Centre**

**a). Defibrillator. (JF)** No new activity for the defib machine. JF received an enquiry from Dave Coombes, on behalf of Birkenhead Lawn Tennis Club, about installing their own device at their premises.

**b). CCTV. (AB)** No significant news. The project is progressing as planned.

**c). Christmas Lights (JH)** All arrangements are now in hand for a switch on event on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November. Finance approved by Society Officers for (pessimistically) a £1750 loss. This includes new lights to be installed across The Willows shops and also on lamp posts along Claughton Firs. DB requested a pitch for membership to which JW raised the point that the leaflet for new members needs to be updated and ready for this event. Action **DB/JW** to carry out document refresh and gain approval.

**d). Christmas tree area development (JW).** Unlikely this will go ahead due to lack of suitability and space to grow any plants. However, Jay Little has continued to offer her generous donation to the Society for any other improvement scheme we may have.

**Action All** – Any ideas for Jay's donation?

## **3 AGM wash up**

RE updated the committee on the recently held AGM. A successful meeting in that 37 people attended despite the Covid risk, with good engagement from the audience. Citations were read out for Patrick Toosey, Carolyn Weber and Steve Ferguson and individual presentations to each of them will follow by RE, AC and JW.

#### **4. Membership report.**

DB reported that activity is slow, as usual for this time of year. He is chasing 30 memberships for renewal payment.

**Action All** We all need to keep a look out for people moving into the area and let Dave know so he can deliver a membership pack.

#### **5. Finance Report**

The finance report from GR was referenced in his absence outlining the need to restructure our bank accounts. Approval was received from Committee to proceed as per GR's proposal.

**Action: GR**

#### **6. Tree Report**

RE has approached Pete Gommon and agreed with him that he will take on the tree planting scheme following Steve Ferguson's retirement from carrying out this role **and also Queens Canopy project.**

Tree Group will liaise with Pete in all relevant cases.

The Queen's tree canopy project: RE and ACa discussed possibility of the Society working together with Friends of the Arno to achieve the aims of this national scheme.

#### **7. Planning report**

JW outlined the process **leading to the Society's support for the major refurbishment** works being undertaken at 14 Arnot Road.

JW continues to lead the Planning Group **until Dominic Wilkinson starts to cover for SW**

#### **8. History Group**

As per report circulated.

#### **9. Friends of the Arno**

As per report circulated. JW commended the quality of the report.

#### **9. Hanging Baskets**

JW presented the letter received from John Booth indicating his intention to cease leading this project. Whilst John's son Phil Booth has offered to carry out the plumbing maintenance, there will still be the need for a dedicated leader and organizer for this project. In addition, it was felt that a full assessment of the present plumbing apparatus should be undertaken in **order to provide a strong basis for continuing maintenance. (Action JW to arrange)**

#### **10. Newsletter & Social Media**

The target date for getting the majority of word content to Carla for the next newsletter is 8<sup>th</sup> **???**October. **late Oct?** This will hopefully mean delivery to members and businesses can take place before 15<sup>th</sup> November to allow Christmas Lights article to have an effect

**Action All contributors**

#### **11. Any other business**

a). RE mentioned that the Civic Voice AGM is due to take place (2pm 15<sup>th</sup> October), if anyone is interested in attending. (It is a Zoom meeting; details on their website)

b). JF raised the issue of traffic and parking (chaos) in the village:

- a). We need more parking warden presence and enforcement
- b). Can we introduce a 20mph mandatory speed limit?
- c). Can we draw up a traffic plan for Oxton, and how would we take this forward?

In answer to a). AB stated that he does ask for more traffic patrols, but this cannot be more frequent due to manning levels and also that for items b) and c) these have been on the traffic department agenda for some time, but progress is slow.

It was suggested by AC that if an article was written for the Jan/Feb 2022 newsletter, drumming up support, then this might be a way of forcing some interest from the Council and change.

**Action JF**

JF raised a query on our relationship with The Friends of Birkenhead Park and whether we could do more to assist this organization. RE responded that whilst we, constitutionally, cannot offer monetary help, we can offer any advice and specialist skills help from within our membership. Ian Wray at the Friends of BP knows who we are.

(Subsequent action JH will email Ian Wray just to close this point off.)

**12. Date of next meeting**

Next meeting to be held by Zoom on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December starting at 17.00

The meeting concluded at 18.33