



Minutes of Oxtan Society Committee Meeting 7th June 2022, 19.00 St Saviour's

Present:

Rhiannon Evans	(RE)	(Chair)
Jeff Willis	(JW)	(Vice Chair and Planning)
John Heathman	(JH)	(Secretary)
Alan Chape	(AC)	(Conservation and Partnership)
Griff Round	(GR)	(Treasurer)
Cllr Allan Brame	(AB)	
Chris Jarrey	(CJ)	
Bob Knowles	(BK)	(History Group)
John Booth	(JB)	(Hanging Baskets)
George Harrison	(GH)	(Tree Group)
Annette Capper	(ACa)	(Friends of The Arno)

1. **Apologies** were received from Steve Weber, Carla Walker, John Field, Don Firth-Williamson, Dave Barden, Dominic Wilkinson

2. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

One action remains outstanding regarding the tree planting scheme. **(Action JH and JW)**

3. Secret Gardens

- a. Finances: GR presented the latest income/cost statement for the event. The profit for the event is approximately £39,000. The partner charities are receiving their share of the profits in stages. It was noted that non-cash payments represented approximately 70% of sales and the systems adopted to achieve this were very successful. Discussion on whether capital costs for items like gazebos should be charged directly to the Secret Gardens project; agreed that this will be considered for future events. A replacement PA system is to be investigated for possible costs / specification. Dave Pennington to be asked to source this **Action JH**
- b. Plant stall: RE proposed to the committee that the entire takings from the plant stall should be allocated to The Friends of The Arno, and not split with some funds going to the Oxtan Society. This proposal was approved by the committee **Action GR**. ACa expressed her thanks on behalf of The Friends of The Arno stating that it will be very welcome as some members of the plant stall team had questioned why the Society took a percentage of the stall takings. This new financial arrangement will continue for future events.
- c. SG Strategy: JW outlined the enthusiasm for holding an event in 2023 from the wash up meeting of the Secret Gardens organizing team. This positive attitude principally being led from Kirsty Cotton and Lisa Stafford. Accordingly it is proposed that an event will take place in 2023 as opposed to perhaps running the event bi-annually. New gardens are required which means early communication to residents needs to occur. It was noted that gardens from

outside the Conservation Area are allowed, as long as they are close to the CA boundary. A Secret Gardens strategy meeting between Officers and Kirsty Cotton and Lisa Stafford needs to take place preferably in September 2023. **Action JH** to arrange

4. Conservation

- a. Wirral Borough Council Local Plan. AC outlined the current status of this. The closing date for comments to be submitted on the draft plan is June 24th. As far as conservation and heritage is concerned, we have no objection or comments to make on The Plan. There is a possibility that the Plan may be challenged by developers who would want to build on green belt land particularly as the number of new housing required over the next 10 years will be argued to be undeliverable on brown field sites.
- b. Local Listing scheme. AC updated the meeting: Only one submission has been made to the pilot project team from the whole of the Wirral (the one from us). The thought being that it is seen to be no advantage of protection to any building carrying this new heritage status.
- c. Tree canopy management. It is thought that the trees in Oxton are becoming too big and unmanageable by residents. With trees being a notable part of Oxton's unique appearance, we are in danger of losing this special feature as mature trees have to be felled if they are deemed too big and unsafe. The additional complication being that most of these mature trees are in private property. A short survey of examples of this situation is to be compiled to try to ascertain the scale of the issue. AC will approach Eric Bowman (Head of tree preservation at WBC) to propose a way forward.
- d. Planning items (as circulated). It was agreed that the Society will not take up any further involvement with the enforcement order issued at 14 Hughes Lane.
- e. Resident's leaflet: In progress. It was agreed that assistance from a professional document designer could be obtained **Action JW**. The wording of the document to be circulated for comment **Action JW**
- f. Design Awards. A call for candidates for this award will appear in the next newsletter. From our knowledge, few candidates might be forthcoming. (JW is leading this item)
- g. Tree report (as circulated). Discussion on process of applications being approved by WBC and notified back to The Society; clarification required **Action GH**. In particular we wish to know whether approval was granted for the works at 1 Glenmore Road **Action GH**.

5. Finance

GR queried a funding of £1000 made to the History Group for document digitisation. BK responded that it is likely that the work will not be completed in time due to a lack of people with the necessary I.T. skills. A portion of the funding up to £1000 may need to be returned. General discussion on the shortage of I.T. skill within the committee. Agreed that BK can source someone suitable to assist **Action BK**.

6. **Newsletter**. RE stated that someone will be required to take on the Twitter account when she retires as Chair. **Action CW**. JH outlined material for next newsletter and confirmed that copy to CW must be submitted by 30th June **Action ALL**

7. AGM.

- a. Format. Date - Wednesday 28th September 2022. RE outlined format: Subject speaker followed by AGM business and award presentations. Glass of wine to be offered on arrival. Previous candidate for main speaker not available; suggestion of Cool Wirral leader. **Action AB**.
- b. Draft report (as per email circulated). RE to work with JW on completion with

photos.

- c. Awards (for services to Oxton and the Society) to Jay Little and Leslie McGarrity were approved.

8. Sub-group reports

- a. Membership. NB the wrong report was included in the original agenda report pack. The correct membership report for this committee meeting was circulated separately by email. No queries raised.
- b. History Group. RE has a recording of Mike Carr talking history, and will pass on to BK for documenting. BK stated that resource to carry out this type of activity is difficult to obtain and very time consuming.
- c. Friends of the Arno: Report as circulated. Meeting with WBC to see if further work on the re-discovered steps into the quarry can be developed.

9. Village Centre Items

- a. Defib machine. JH stated that new pads for the machine are required after each use and that these cost approx. £50-60. The pads also need to be replaced every 2 years if not used in anger. Query whether our 'contract' with the NHS states we are liable for this cost or is it the ambulance service.
Action JF to clarify
- b. Hanging Baskets. JB stated that baskets are up with some repairs carried out to watering infrastructure after recent shop front works. A hanging basket was presented to RE in part recognition of her service to the Society in light of her imminent retiral as Chair.

10 Society Business

- a. Civic Voice. Following recent query raised on cost to renew this subscription RE outlined proposal that being part of this national grouping is the right thing to do. Approved by committee. A letter to CEO of Civic Voice to be sent advising on our reservations of renewing our membership in light of lack of support recently from them. **Action RE**
- b. Retirement of Chair. RE notified the committee that Chris Jarrey has asked to be considered to take over as Chair of the society when RE steps down at next AGM. A note in the next newsletter will be the final call for nominations which can only be made up to 1st September.

11 Date of next meeting.

This is planned to be Tuesday 7th October starting at 7pm. St.Saviour's. A meeting to confirm AGM matters may be called if necessary.

The meeting finished at 21.00