



Minutes of Oxtton Society Committee Meeting 7th February 2023, 19.00 St Saviour's

Present:

| | | |
|-------------------|-------|--------------------------------|
| Jeff Willis | (JW) | (Vice Chair and Planning) |
| John Heathman | (JH) | (Secretary) |
| Griff Round | (GR) | (Treasurer) |
| Heather Alcock | (HA) | (Planning) |
| Alan Chape | (AC) | (Conservation and Partnership) |
| Bob Knowles | (BK) | (History Group) |
| George Harrison | (GH) | (Tree Group) |
| Annette Capper | (ACa) | (Friends of The Arno) |
| Steve Weber | (SW) | (Planning) |
| Dominic Wilkinson | (DW) | (Planning) |

- 1. Apologies** were received from Chris Jarrey, Dave Barden, Carla Walker, Don Firth-Williamson, John Booth and Allan Brame
2. Jeff Willis chaired the meeting in the absence of Chris Jarrey
- 3. Approval of minutes.** The minutes of the last meeting were approved as amended.
- 4. Conservation**
 - a. Planning Report. As per previously emailed: No issues raised.
 - b. Resident's leaflet: To be sent to the 970 addresses in the conservation area. Approved by committee to spend approx. £1500 in printing of the leaflet, plus a newsletter and history periodical for all the 970 addresses also. This will hopefully generate some new members. **Action JW**
 - c. Trees report. As emailed previously. JW queried the need for us being consulted on tree applications due to perceived lack of action from WBC. Watching brief on one contentious application on the list to see if WBC agree with our assessment and refuse felling (52 Birch Road). **Action: GH** to discuss future of tree consultation with Ron Jones. **Action HA** to seek out possibility of assistance from WBC wardens.
 - d. Heritage lamp posts. JW outlined recent butchering on lamp post on Christchurch Road and recent correspondence from St lamp section at WBC. There are 8 heritage posts in the village and the committee agreed that we need to take action to protect their future survival. **Action JH** to write to St lamp department a) asking for detail on proposed strategy to link up heritage with the need to keep lamps lit (as per letter received from WBC) b) request that no further works are carried out without Oxtton Society consultation, and c)

offer to “work with” the street lamp department by providing some financial assistance to preserve the current heritage lamp post stock (this may include an offer to paint the posts).

- e. Character Appraisal. AC outlined recent cases where WBC appear to be acting in a more robust manner in demanding better designs. This despite the absence of new design guides.
- f. Solar power. JW presented society’s statement (previously emailed) which was agreed by the committee as our current stance. **Action AC** to meet with planning dept at WBC to seek out further guidance on this subject.
- g. Climate Change / Cool Wirral. JH has contacted WBC representative but so far no response.

5. Finance

- a. Xmas lights financial statement was circulated by GR. The event made a loss of £3357 which the society will fund (as previously agreed by committee prior to the event. Discussion on this point and agreement that the society cannot be expected to offer this level of funding every year. More sharing of costs with business input, just giving, and more takings at stalls required.
- b. Future expenditure strategy: JH reminded all present to send in their ideas for conservation expenditure projects in writing. **Action All**
- c. A change in the proportion of profits going to the society from the secret gardens event was proposed. This was to reduce the 40% that the society currently takes to 30%. The ‘spare’ 10% to be loaded on to the main youth charity for the event. This change was approved by the committee. It was noted that the commitment of the charities assisting at secret gardens needs to be reinforced in light of the contribution they receive – this has already been passed on to the SG main organizers. Also, it was agreed that the funding format for charities would be reviewed as necessary, probably annually, prior to each event. **Action GR**

5. Sub-group reports

- a. **Friends of the Arno.** See circulated report. ACa outlined ongoing initiatives and reminded all that a QR code is on the noticeboards to take you to their latest information site
- b. **History Group.** See circulated report.
 - i. Walks programme for 2023 has been published. This needs to go on the society website. **Action BK** to send to JW
 - ii. Details of the event at Hulme Hall to be sent to JW for publicizing.
 - iii. Blue plaque lead roll still vacant. (Update by JH 090223 – this role will now be filled by John Field)
- c. **Membership:** No items of note to report.

6. Communications.

- a. JH updated from recent Carla Walker email: Last date for next newsletter copy is March 19th. **Action All**

7. Village items

a. Secret Gardens.

- i. All planning in progress – to date there were 15 gardens to be opened.
- ii. A set of merchandise for the event was proposed by Kirsty Cotton, but details on this have not been forthcoming. **Action JH** to find out latest on this initiative for committee approval.

b. Hanging baskets. JW updated the meeting from notes from JB. Phil Booth has agreed to maintain current infrastructure at a rate of £20 per hour. It is estimated that total expenditure required will be approx. £100. Committee approved this expenditure. JB will be ordering the baskets for the spring and also organising the installation team.

c. JH updated meeting on recent meeting of business owners (not well attended, but the engagement of representative from Wirral Chamber of Commerce (Laura Dodd) to speak to all business owners to gauge their level of enthusiasm to work together more. This consultation is still in progress. There is some appetite for a village Eurovision event, but this is purely a businesses idea and not something the society will be involved in, other than to ensure Secret Gardens plans are not affected.

8. AOB

a. Constitution changes. Hopefully a revised document will be presented for approval at next committee meeting. **Action JH**

b. Birkenhead library proposed site move. ACa outlined a chance the the library may move site to the current Town Hall. This was agreed by committee to be a severely detrimental proposal which the society should object to. **Action JH** to make society objection known to whomever (Allan Brame / WBC)

9. Date of next meeting.

This is proposed to be Tuesday 4th April 2023, starting at 7pm at St. Saviour's.

The meeting finished at 9.15pm