

Minutes of the Kingston Action Group Meeting Held on 15 October 2019

Present: Vicki Scott, Tim Ambrose, Steve Berry, Dinah Morgan, Rob Watson, Tony Wheeler.

In attendance: William Meyer, Lewes District Councillor

Apologies for absence: Will Dorman, Barrie Lambert, John Bewick

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 September 2019 were agreed, **subject to the correction of a typographical error in line 2 of para 8.1, where “by” needed to be replaced by the word “but”.**

1 Matters arising

1.1 Kingston News

Steve would send another reminder to the Editor of The Kingston News about Rhys Hayden's Offer to allow his Kingston Village website to host issues of The Kingston News not so far archived.

William mentioned in passing his objection to what could be seen as the politicisation of TKN, the two most recent editions of which had featured Maria Caulfield on the front page although there was no obvious local relevance in the articles.

1.2 OVESCO (Ouse Valley and Estuary Energy Company)

Dinah would invite someone from OVESCO to the next meeting to talk to the Group on energy saving, including solar panels, insulation, wind power etc.

2. Finance

2.1 Steve was still owed £584.31 and Tim, £4-00, leaving a balance of £411.69 **but he had not yet produced the promised short statement of account** to show how the £4000 had been spent. He had spent a further sum on crocus bulbs amounting to approximately **which it was agreed he should be refunded.**

3 Footpaths

3.1 Following confirmation of the ownership of the fields across which the Group had suggested re-routing the footpath between Kinston and Swanborough to avoid the footpath being churned up by horses, Steve had sent the large-scale map and ownership details to Chloe Rowling at ESCC with a view to them trying to persuade the landowner to use the alternative route suggested. In her response, she had asked whether the Group wanted to suggest to the landowner that the proposed new route be made a permanent right of way. It was agreed, however, that such a suggestion might be seen as provocative, especially if it were seen to emanate from the Group and **Steve would write to Chloe accordingly.**

- 3.2 Steve had not yet followed up the contact established with Chris Smith who ran a website called Don't Lose Your Way and who might be able to help get two footpaths on Kingston Hill designated as statutory rights of way.

4 Future Management of St Pancras Green

- 4.1 Following the discussion of this topic by the KPC at its meeting on 11 July and the request made to the Group to develop its proposals, including consideration of alternative sites, Steve had drafted a paper for consideration.

- 4.2 It was agreed that this was both too long and too emotive. Rob had sent Steve a suggested and much abbreviated revision which it was agreed would form a better approach. This accepted that the other village green ("Juggs Green" for want of any other alternative name) could offer considerable scope for improving biodiversity although relatively few people would see the results. The St Pancras Green proposals should not be abandoned but the Group might accept that their implementation could perhaps be postponed for 12 months. **Steve would circulate a revised paper for comment, based on Rob's redraft, before submitting this to the KPC by their deadline of 1 November for discussion on 21st.**

- 4.3 It was suggested that a visit to the White House – but the one in Kingstonridge rather than further afield – might be instructive. The owners there had been developing a meadow in their garden for some years.

5 In Bloom

- 5.1 Dinah and Rosemarie Jeffery had attended the awards ceremony on Friday 13 September at the Amex Stadium in Falmer and had been delighted to accept a Silver Gilt award on behalf of the village. Tim had reported this in an article due to appear in the November issue of The Kingston News, noting there that the judge had praised villagers' efforts to contribute to biodiversity by allowing their lawns to remain unmown. It was hoped that the Pavilion Committee would agree to the framed certificate being displayed in the main room. **Vicki would ask.**

- 5.2 **It was agreed that more photographic evidence of the Action Group's efforts – for example in planting snowdrops and crocus – should be assembled in the course of the next few months in case Kingston entered the competition next year. It was not clear whether there would be a charge, should that happen.**

- 5.3 It had emerged that Kingston had two overgrown and unused allotments near Gower's Croft at the lower end of The Street. No-one present had been aware of this. It was agreed that pressure should be brought upon Lewes District Council – owners of the land concerned – to bring these allotments back into use and offered to village residents in the first instance. **Tony would provide more information to enable Dinah to draft a letter for Jeanne to send to LDC.** Flourishing allotments might contribute to the revival of the village Flower and Produce Show.

6. **Planning**

- 6.1 Outline planning permission having been given earlier in the year for four new houses at the Audiburn Stables site, a more detailed application had now been submitted. The designs were circulated at the meeting. At this stage, comments could only be submitted on the designs and the layout.
- 6.2 It was agreed that the development as illustrated – which included no affordable housing - was uninspiring and suburban, that it threatened to change the established character of the village, that it was not in conformity with the South Downs National Park Authority's own Plan and that it should be called in by the SDNPA.
- 6.3 Discussions with the potential developers of the Saxondown Farm site continued but there had been no progress to report.

7 **Traffic/pollution**

- 7.1 John Bewick had sent yet another e-mail to Kirsty Smallbone at Brighton University in an effort to get a response about the possibility of air pollution monitoring at the school but had heard nothing. He would keep trying.
- 7.2 The survey of traffic entering the village from the garden centre end had now been completed. It had shown the average (mean?) speed to be 32 mph, although it was not known whether this included the section where the speed limit was 20 mph. The survey would be discussed at the November meeting of the KPC.

8 AOB

- 8.1 It was agreed that the long-term future of Kingston's bus service should be kept in mind. **The feasibility of community run, electric transport between the village and Lewes should be examined by the KPC.**

8 **Next meeting**

This would be held at 4.15 pm on Tuesday 26 November 2019 in the Pavilion.
Members were asked to note the earlier time.

