**Kingston Action Group**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2022.**

Present: Vicki Scott (Chair) Steve Berry, Barrie Lambert, Alex Leith, Tony Wheeler

Apologies: John Bewick, Dinah Morgan, Rob Watson.

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 23 February, were approved. There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda.

2. **Finance**

2.1 Steve had circulated a summary showing the current position. No bank statement had been received since 28 January when the paper balance was £1250.27. Since then, both Rob (£210.15) and Steve (£839.86) had been repaid sums owing to them.

The rent (which had increased to £75.50) had also been paid. Income remained at £338 per annum.

2.2 We still awaited a decision about the outcome of our grant application to CARES but had heard that this might be forthcoming around Easter time.

A grant application had been made to the SDNPA (Volunteer Action Fund - £400) and one was about to be submitted to the Chalk Cliff Trust (£4100). The first of these was for staging for the greenhouse and a pond liner and the second to cover the cost of the new paths and the last section of the fence.

Steve had asked the KPC for the unallocated portion of the £1000 set aside under the Council’s small grant scheme but this had now been given to another parish body. The first tranche (£1000) of the money promised to the Group by the KPC had been credited to the Group’s account on 23rd March.

2.3 It was agreed that we should take steps to increase our income through the sale of Lewes Lottery tickets, perhaps through an article in the Kingston News and also via a mention on the What’s App group linking to a full explanation on the village website

3 **Planting Plan**

3.1 The Planting Plan submitted to the KPC in February had been approved at the Council’s meeting on 9 March. This set out detailed spending proposals for 2022/3 with suggestions for the following years totalling £10,000 in all. In subsequent correspondence with the Parish Clerk, it had been agreed that payment would be made in stages. We would need to send receipts to the Council confirming expenditure.

3.2 The Plan included proposals for an additional meadow area on the village green and an entirely new one on St Pancras Green. As a concession to those who had complained about the uncut areas of grass on the village green exacerbating their children’s hay fever, there would be only one uncut area on the village green rather than two. The new meadow would take the place of one of the areas of grass left uncut last year. The management plan for the village green had since been explained and agreed on site with the contractor from Barcombe Landscapes.

3.3 The precise area(s) of meadow to be established on St Pancras Green would need to be agreed with the KPC once the position of the new sporting and recreational facilities (boules court, table tennis, outdoor gym) had been settled.

4 **Footpath Action Plan**

4.1 This plan was also considered and noted at the March meeting of the KPC. Chris Moulder, Vice Chair of the Council and the leader of the footpaths joint working group had since written to the Rights of Way team at ESCC suggesting a meeting but although the paper had been welcomed, the offer of a meeting had been declined. The chances of securing ESCC funding for improvements to rights of way were extremely limited as the Council were currently only able to finance a handful of such schemes each year across a 2000 mile network.

4.2 A meeting had now been arranged with Jan Knowlson, the SDNPA Ranger (for 14 April) and it was still planned to send the paper to the Ramblers Association.

4.3 Among other things, we hoped to get agreement that all footpath signs should – eventually – state the number of the path, its destination and the distance thereto.

4.4 ESCC had agreed to repair the surface of the footway to Ashcombe Hollow, after many representations from the Action Group and the KPC, dating back several years – very welcome news!

5 **Community Garden**

5.1 Diana Crabb had very kindly donated a greenhouse to replace the one destroyed by storm Eunice. This had been transported and erected but not yet glazed as extended concrete foundations first needed to be installed since the new greenhouse was slightly smaller than the one its predecessor.

5.2 As agreed at the last meeting, Steve had bought bottles of wine for Ray Harrison, Phil Biddulph and Dave Hoare to express our gratitude for their help with removing the fallen tree and erecting the fence. Another bottle of wine had been bought for Diana Crabb so Steve was now owed £40.00.

5.3 In further developments, Phil had now – without charge - replaced all of the rotten wood at the front of the greenhouse, enabling guttering to be installed on both sides, linked to water butts, more of which were now needed.

5.4 At a meeting convened by Rob and held on 24 March to discuss planting, there had been a broad consensus about the need for additional paths including one around the greater part of the perimeter. Hoggin (a mixture of sand, gravel and clay) seemed the most appropriate material for this. It had been agreed that we would need to hire a mini-digger for the paths and Phil Biddulph had agreed to operate this. Rob had afterwards circulated a paper summarising the views expressed at the meeting.

5.5 It appeared that we were likely to get a quick response from the Chalk Cliff Trust, one way or another. If the response was positive, we should get the paths made as quickly as possible and then get on with planting. A local nursery which grew all its plants without peat had offered the Group wholesale prices.

5.6 The issue of the need for a mains water supply was still outstanding but would not be forgotten.

6. **Report from KPC**

6.1. ESCC were now actively considering additional traffic calming measures on Ashcombe Lane/Wellgreen Lane including rumble strips but no action was imminent.

6.2 Unfortunately, the new Parish Clerk, Lynn Mounfield, had resigned. It was hoped that a local replacement could be found but in the meantime a locum was providing continuity.

6.3 The recent appeal for volunteers to fill various positions in village organisations had been successful and David Hoare, one of those who had come forward, had been co-opted to the Parish Council. Alex would make a further appeal on behalf of the Kingston Action Group but in the meantime Steve would invite Catherine Dampney to join.

**7 In Bloom**

7.1 This year’s judge, Chris Murphy, would be coming to The Pavilion at 2-00 pm on 12 July. He had expressed a wish to meet as many people as possible with an involvement in the areas covered by the competition. It was assumed that Maria would wish to be involved and we would let her know.

8 **AOB**

8.1 Steve would contact Ray Thomas and suggest that the Tuesday morning volunteers group clean the road signs in the village, some of which were now almost too dirty to read.

9 **Next meeting**

This would be on Tuesday 7 June in The Pavilion at 4.45. (Please note the change of day).