

Kingston Action Group

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20 February 2024

Present: Vicki Scott, Steve Berry, Catherine Dampney, Barrie Lambert and Rob Watson.
Apologies: Will Dorman; David Hoare.

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November were approved.** There were no matters arising not covered by agenda items.

2. Finance

2.1 A statement had been circulated before the meeting. The balance shown in the most recent bank statement dated 12 December was £2393.35 Taking account of various payments owed, the true balance was £1061.64. In addition, we stood to get £1326.76 from the SDNP via the CARES (Community Action Resilient Ecosystems Sustainability) grant. £1154.31 was still earmarked for village planting.

2.2 Money would be needed in the near future for gravel for the bog garden; posts for the sign; seeds and plants etc.

3. Community Garden

3.1 During the winter, the new seat had been installed and the surrounding area dug out and filled with shingle. An article about this development including a picture of the seat, had appeared in the December issue of The Kingston News. The raised bed had, sadly, been damaged – though not irreparably – by a reversing vehicle. Mulch, in the form of woodchips, had been donated and some of it spread over the flower beds.

3.2 Future plans included installing the splendid new sign made by Signosaurus – “Kingston’s Community Wildlife Garden” and completing the bog garden. This would be c 18 inches deep with a liner punctured (by a garden fork) at 1 metre intervals. Above that would be a leaky hose and then successive layers of gravel, soil and compost. The hose and the liner had already been purchased. The path might need a new layer of hoggin but would first need thorough weeding. Seeds would soon be sown in the greenhouse and the surviving herbs would be labelled.

Steve had still to put up the digital photos printed by Tony for display on the notice board, which was to have a new lock. A leak was to be repaired shortly.

3.3 Catherine circulated a very full draft of a Health and Safety assessment on the Garden. This would be discussed at the next meeting.

3.4 There was still no news from LDC regarding the ownership of the fence separating our Garden from the adjoining land at 9 Gows Croft.

3.5 We had been given guttering, brackets and a downpipe from a greenhouse. David would see whether these could be used later on our greenhouse to channel water into the bog garden.

4 KPC update

4.1 There had apparently still been no decision yet following the hearing on 21 August at County Hall in Lewes on the subject of the proposed footpath between the ridge (Windmill Field) and Ashcombe Lane at Audiburn. The Inspector deciding the outcome had power to accept the proposal, reject it outright or accept it in principle with modifications to take account of objections from affected landowners and householders. It was hoped that he would adopt the third course.

5 South East In Bloom

5.1 The gold certificate awarded to us for SEIB 2023 had been framed and put up in The Pavilion. It was agreed that we should enter Kingston for the coming year's competition and that – ideally - someone from KPC should accompany the judge on his/her visit. Tony offered to update the supporting document.

6 Nature Recovery Group

6.1 The Group had revised the proposals for changes to the management regime on St Pancras Green. These – and other suggestions for managing both land owned by KPC and land the management over which KPC had some influence (eg verges owned by ESCC or LDC) - were to be discussed informally with the Parish Clerk and KPC members before the next formal meeting of KPC on 16 March. KPC had already agreed to stripping turf from a small area near the tennis courts and sowing the area with wildflower seed. This had been planned for October but would now be done in the Spring,

7 Planting in the village

7.1 The 2000 crocus planted on St Pancras Green last autumn had been very slow to appear but were now in bloom, although in disappointing numbers. Those on Snednore were similarly unimpressive perhaps because the surrounding grass had been cut at the wrong times over the past year. Steve would contact LDC.

7.2 Around 3000 snowdrops had been planted in verges along The Avenue, leaving 2000 still to put in. It was hoped that this could be done on 22 February.

8 Traffic

8.1 Two sessions – one in the morning and one in the afternoon – of Community Speedwatch monitoring had been held although no cars had been recorded as having exceeded the speed limit.

8.2 Damage to verges along Wellgreen Lane and Ashcombe Lane had been very marked during the winter, aggravated by wet weather and contractors' vehicles being parked partially off the roads - action which sometimes forced pedestrians with wheelchairs or children's buggies into the road. Catherine would contact ESCC to see what might be done. Placing logs along the edge of the road had helped in the past.

9 Litter

9.1 Ray Harrison – and others – had spent many hours collecting local litter. Barrie reported that there was to be a major collection along the C7 on Saturday 24 February starting opposite Wellgreen Lane at 8-30.

10 The next meeting would be held on 9 April at 4.45 at The Pavilion.

