

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL  
**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of a meeting held on 5 July 2010

Present	Cllr Mrs J M Way (Chairman) * Cllr I D Crawley * Cllr J R Nicholson Cllr S Robinson
Apologies	Cllr J A Byrne Cllr Mrs S E Thorpe
	* denotes absence from part of the meeting

**Matters Arising**

Bank at Shortwood – The Clerk confirmed that Mr Geoff Brookes had cleared the scrub, the ash trees had been removed and the leak repaired. Mr Boyles, one of the residents pressing for this work to be done, had made a donation; the others had indicated they were not happy with the work so had chosen not to contribute. The residents had said they would then maintain the site but the Clerk had heard nothing further.

Shortwood Green larch copse – Mr Geoff Brookes was to provide a quote for some scrub and ivy clearance and the Clerk would chase this up.

Registration of council land – Some larger scale maps had been provided by the Registry Office and original deeds were being sought out. The original Lowsley Williams Deed which covered the gifting of quite a few areas involved in this census, had not yet been found, and a 1922 map was required to identify these. Cllrs offered to help the Clerk to mark up the maps and sort out the appropriate deeds (originals were required by the Registry Office), and Thursday 15 July at 10am was agreed for Cllrs Crawley and Mrs Way to make a start.

Land at Walkley Wood – resident Ms Steffie Stern had written complaining about her neighbour and pressing for her licence to use the land adjoining her property. A draft had been requested from the solicitor and was awaited. The Clerk would notify Ms Stern that the matter was in hand.

Water leak at Whipps Lane – The problem had been ongoing for about 3 years. Severn Trent had checked again and was adamant the leak involved spring water and referred the residents to SDC, since which, Mr Mike Brinkworth had advised Cllr Mrs Way that it had been proved that the problem was indeed a Severn Trent leak which it had finally dealt with.

**NORTON WOOD**

The Clerk would instruct Charlton Abbots to carry out the remedial tree work agreed, and at the same time will ask them to deal with two other trees identified as needing attention. The Clerk suggested the sycamore be removed altogether but this may be more expensive than to reduce it, so she would have done whichever was cheaper. The Clerk advised that amounts were budgeted in the revenue budget and designated funds to cover work required, the exact cost of which could not always be anticipated. The general aim was to keep £6k available which had to date proved adequate to cover eventualities.

Although Go-Grow's detailed plan of action had been approved, Cllr Crawley felt that a written agreement should be drawn up to cover its activity in the orchard. Cllr Nicholson and the Clerk advised that decisions were recorded in the minutes, that it had been decided to see how the initiative developed, and the council should be wary of giving a formal licence with consequent 'rights' as responsibility for public areas remained with NTC. Cllr Mrs Way advised that Go-Grow had put up a sign informing the public of its activities 'with NTC approval'. Cllrs Crawley and Mrs Way agreed to prepare a draft joint statement in discussion with Go-Grow and a representative would be asked to attend the next meeting of the committee to ratify this.

The Clerk confirmed that Mr Gerald Bufton had repaired the fence over the Jovial Foresters car park, although Cllr Mrs Way thought there was another hole, which the Mayor agreed to check out.

#### **SIGN BOARDS IN TOWN CENTRE**

Cllr Nicholson had discussed the project with Imagemakers and showed the meeting another example of the company's work. The central map would best be produced from an OS map and a street plan, and Cllr Nicholson was making contact with a person at SDC who could draw up the 3D map from these. Cllrs would then need to write any text and provide photos (which could be copied as drawings) of images to surround the map (@ £120 each). Once Imagemaker's quote had been formally accepted, three drafts would be provided during the production process, before the final design was agreed. Mrs de Lacroix offered to prepare a mockup using images of buildings discussed.

NB. Rights to the final images should be obtained so that these could be used elsewhere.

Now that it had been decided to go with Imagemakers for the map, the Clerk would close the file with Malcolm Lane, who had been storing the boards for two years, and have them delivered to the TH initially, so that technical properties for the map could be calculated to fit. The Clerk warned again that NTC should expect a substantial bill for Malcolm Lane's aborted time and effort over this project.

#### **TOWN INFORMATION CENTRE (AND TOURISM ISSUES)**

The TIC was ticking over nicely.

#### **MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL PROPERTY**

Shortwood churchyard leaking spring – the Clerk had rejected Rev Earley's view that the problem was not the PCC's concern. She repeated to the meeting the extensive efforts NTC had made in 2005 to get the PCC to admit that NTC was inheriting a problem which the PCC had failed to fix, as reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding drawn up at the time. NTC had offered to research a solution to the problem, which it had done, taking up a great amount of time and effort. The PCC had written to offer 1/3 of the cost of £9600 (quote from July 2009) to redirect the spring around the churchyard walls. The Clerk would reply to the letter reminding the PCC of its agreement with NTC and reiterate that NTC did not have the liability nor budget to rectify the PCC's problem.

#### **BUNTING HILL REGENERATION PROJECT**

Members considered the proposed policy prepared by Cllrs Crawley and Mrs Way which had been circulated with the agenda. Any costs for repairing fencing etc would have to be included in next year's budget. Responsibility for rights of way rested with GCC although Cllr Nicholson thought parish councils had the right to maintain footpaths if they so wished, but Cllr Crawley warned this might mean that NTC would be seen to be assuming ongoing liability. The lower footpath had not been open to the public for years, was dangerous and it would be a big job to reinstate and then maintain it. Boundaries of NTC owned land were not totally clear. It was agreed to put forward to full council three of the recommendations in the report as a starting point.

<b>PROPOSED to recommend that NTC approve the following policy statement as a starting point for the management of Bunting Hill</b>
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1 To seek the preparation of a management plan with the intention of protecting and maintaining biodiversity, including through continuing scrub clearance and rubbish removal.</b></li><li><b>2 To ensure appropriate access is maintained at the top of the slope with signing, and if necessary fencing, to ensure users are aware of its status and the potential risks, particularly from the steep and precipitous slopes and the quarry face.</b></li><li><b>3 To ensure the extent of the Town Council's ownership is clear to adjacent landowners, and take appropriate action to deal with any encroachment.</b></li></ol> |
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A letter had been received from GCC regarding ZNA73 (the lower footpath); Cllr Nicholson would prepare a response tomorrow. The letter was taken by Cllr Crawley to work into his revised backup document.

Cllr Mrs Way commented that she no longer had a conflict of interest since Nature in Nailsworth was now dormant.

**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

Cllr Nicholson hoped to be in the area within the next few weeks to visit the wholesaler: Festive Lighting Company. The meeting was reminded that the council would be required to switch to LED decorations (about 20 @ £500 each) so needed to consider a new scheme to be built up over several years as it was believed the current motifs could not be converted, although hopefully the existing wiring and power connections could be re-used. It was agreed to include a first tranche of funding in the next budget.

**NEW COMMUNITY BASED CO-OPERATIVE ENERGY COMPANY**

Cllr Crawley was concerned about the state of the town's electrical infrastructure with continuing regular power failures, and Cllr Nicholson had invited Mr Brian Oosthuysen to attend the meeting in September. He urged members to hear what he had to say as an introduction to energy source options, eg. a wind turbine could provide the opportunity to generate community funds of £100k p.a. through feed-in tariffs. The question was raised about ensuring that locally created power was used locally first.

**REVIEW OF COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

The policy statement was last revised in March 2003, which the Clerk explained was more a way of defining the responsibilities of the committee rather than a mission statement. Since then, NTC had adopted an Environmental Policy which might need to be taken into account for any revision.

Currently this committee covered tourism matters, including the town guide, although the Clerk drew attention to the recommendations from the recent Town Newsletter Committee that it should take on all communications/publications. Council would need to look at and decide if it wanted to re-evaluate areas of responsibility, and whether tourism and publicity should be managed by the same committee. The Policy Statement would eventually be redrafted in line with the Environment Policy, and a Snow Warden was also now part of the equation. However, as the committee was currently heavily committed, it was agreed to leave this until there was more time.

The Mayor offered to meet with Mr Julian Wilson GCC to review the town's grit bins and look at locations for new ones requested, as per the list already submitted to Mr Wilson by the Clerk. Cllr Nicholson had established with Bottle Green Company that it would be happy to give 6-8 grey plastic barrels to NTC free of charge.

**STROUD VALLEYS CAR CLUB**

It appeared that the Nailsworth-based vehicle had been withdrawn, and the Car Club had written asking for contributions towards a replacement. The request would be put forward to the next grants allocation meeting, but members were keen to establish the Club's exact plans and be sure any contribution (which would only be small) was going towards a car for Nailsworth.

**FORESTRY COMMISSION – LARCH DIE BACK**

The Clerk had been notified that there was a serious risk of disease to trees in the South West, with advice on what symptoms to look out for and report to the Forestry Commission. The Clerk was aware that there were larches on council land at Shortwood Green and Cllr Nicholson offered to inspect them closely.

**REPLACEMENT LITTER BINS**

The Mayor reported that the litter bin outside the Youth Club had been replaced.

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Date

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Chairman