

**The notes from the meeting of the Friends of Cockleton Meadow held the treasurers home, on Wednesday 19 July 2017 at 6.00 pm.**

**PRESENT: Community Representatives:** Martin Bilson (Chair), Steve Benstead, Terry Benstead, Sue Waters, Ellis Gant and Doreen Gant

**1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fuller and McKean

**2 TESCO FUNDING**

The treasurer provided an update showing that most of the project had now been completed and paid for. The main item not yet completed was to improve the access by providing some form of hard standing for disabled visitors to the site. All quotes received so far are too expensive. An alternative form of covering is required and will be costed. The chairman will provide photographs of the achievements to date. The treasurer will complete a report to Tesco requesting the balance of £2,000 to complete the project.

**3 GREEN GYM VISIT 12 July 2017**

40 volunteers were at the site for at least three hours. This visit was funded by the Tesco grant. There was a complaint received from a local resident about the bonfire. The chairman has spoken to her and explained that to keep the cost down, clippings etc. are burnt rather than removed from the site. He apologised for not advising residents that it was happening. He will ensure that local residents are informed about the next visit and the need for another bonfire. The Fire Brigade were informed. The volunteers managed to dig out the raised beds, paint the storage unit, paint the gates of the pond, clear brambles and generally tidy the pond area, make a water collection system, put up most of the bird boxes, make a walkway for hedgehogs and complete a record of wild flowers and butterflies to the site. Everyone enjoyed the day and the volunteers are looking forward to the next session.

**4 JO COX MEMORIAL PICNIC**

About 20 people attended the site on Sunday 18 June for a community picnic. Donations were requested and a total of £27.43 was collected. This will be kept as Petty Cash for use on the site. Petrol for the mower, vinyl gloves for the volunteers and some mending plates and screws have been purchased (with receipts) and a balance of £11.68 is being held.

**5 GREEN GYM VISIT 20 September 2017**

This visit has been agreed from Parish Council funds to predominately rake the flower meadow once it has been cut by the local farmer. The farmer has also offered to cut the roadside of the hedge of the site once Island Roads advise him to cut his own. A new composting system will need to be made as the pallets previously obtained were used to construct the water collecting system. If there is time, volunteers will be asked to dig the ditch which helps feed the pond with water draining from the meadow, cut the inside of the hedge and cut back any further brambles. There will be a need for another bonfire but residents will be informed in advance this time including via a Gurnard News article.

**6 FUNDING**

Councillor Jane McKean advised by text that she is still completing a "Countryside Stewardship" application for further funding for site. Most funding applications are only for capital expenditure, so local fundraising is required to cover the cost of on-going maintenance. Ideas are required for the next meeting, but it was suggested that when the apples are harvested, donations are requested at the Harvest Festival (16 and 17 September). It is hoped to hold further events on site to encourage locals to use the facility, so ideas are required for this at the next meeting. The lack of toilet facilities was

discussed and a portable toilet and tent have been offered for a loan period which can be stored in the unit.

**7 REGULAR VOLUNTEERING WORK PARTIES**

It has been suggested that to keep the site in good condition, that a regular working party for volunteers is sought – maybe a Sunday morning. As Chairman, Martin will draw up a list of regular jobs and is willing to teach volunteers how to use the equipment that has been purchased with the Tesco funding. Further Risk Assessments will be required before this happens, so the clerk will ask for assistance from Gift to Nature for this. A volunteer log will be left in the unit so that total hours can be recorded.

**8 APPLE PICKING EVENT**

In view of the date of the Harvest Festival, the first apple picking event will be held on the weekend of 9 and 10 September. It is hoped that one apple from each tree can be taken again to Deacon's for identification. Sue will make some further labels for the trees before the event.

**9 WEBSITE**

The website is now live and Ellis advised that there has been 30 hits so far. All members can contribute to the site by sending material to Ellis to inclusion. It was suggested that a link to the website is made from the Cockleton Meadow Facebook Page – Ellis advised he is able to do this.

**10 LOCATION OF BIRD, BAT AND INSECT BOXES**

Terry and Steve showed a draft of a map (picture taken by a drone) and will use stickers to identify all the different types of wildlife homes which have been installed. This will be mounted onto a board and kept in the unit.

**11 VISITOR CARDS**

A squirrel feeder type box is to be purchased to hold the Cockleton meadow "visitor card" to obtain feedback on the site.

**12 RAISED BEDS**

Signs are to be erected on the newly cleared raised bed sites – one was requested for Sue by Gurnard In Boom, the others to be planted with herbs and possibly lavender and maybe gooseberry and blackcurrant bushes. If the fruit trees are to be considered, a cage and netting system would be required to protect the fruit from the birds. As there are no funds available for this at present, but possible could be purchased in the future using donations.

**13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Mindful of costs, the next committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 3 October 2017 at 6.30 at the home of Doreen and Trevor Gant

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm