

Meeting of ECONET

12th February 2018

Parks Department Offices, Prospect Park 7:30pm

Present:

Alan Stevens
John Lerpiniere
Steve Ayers (Minutes)

Apologies:

Judith Oliver, Tricia Marcouse

Minutes of the last Meeting

Have not been produced

News and Updates

CROW: Have a full program of varied tasks, including 3 hedge laying. Sessions have been well attended with up to 18 people

CLAYFIELD COPSE: Turnouts have been disappointing of late but there was no-one to give further details.

MAPLEDURHAM: Typical turnout is 5 - 6 people, although it would be difficult to accommodate more than this number. Recent tasks centre around clearing undergrowth to allow small, self-sown specimen trees to thrive and form a new boundary into the managed grass area. Judith is keen to have fire. Alan suggested letting the fire brigade know in advance and later provided contact info. "The number is (0118) 945 2888 and ask for the Control Room. I give them a call at the start of the task to tell them who we are and what we're doing together with the location with a postcode".

A few orchard trees have died and it was agreed that ECONET would fund replacements.

McILROYS: Tasks continue under Phil Allen's supervision with up to 6-10 people attending. Holly undergrowth is being removed.

WATERLOO MEADOWS: Tasks continue although normally with just 2 people. There is potential for this to be an even lovelier site.

RUWG: No longer have practical sessions, so will not appear in future agendas.

Health & Safety

No issues reported.

Accounts

There is £12840 in the bank account, of which £984 is proper to Cemetery Junction. An additional £960 is outstanding for completed work. Reading TCV have paid our affiliation fee and is understood will contribute £200 towards our insurance.

Year-to-date our income has been £2480: Tasks £420, Willow £120, Bean Pole Day £250, and Christmas tree sales £1410. The latter is down from a peak of £2k+. Perhaps we overinflated our prices for sub-standard trees, and need to have better quality control over the trees we cut?

Expenditure: £3530: Fo Cemetery Junction £1180, Insurance £350, CROW refreshment & transport £760, Tools & PPE £530, web site £70, 1st Aid training £160 & Oakfest contribution £120

2018 Events

a) Bean Pole Day is on 21st April 2018:

Trish later reported... "the people who came last year were given the date in November and reminded at the end of January and asked to confirm attendance. Most people have; still need to hear from Ways and Means as the only "big" tent that hasn't yet responded.

There seem to be a lot of peasticks (hazel) at Bowdown that Roger is cutting, but minimal beanpoles. We are doing a beanpole day at Discovery Centre this year on the Sunday of the May bank holiday so will try to sell poles etc there. If there is a shortage of peasticks for Reading, please tell me in advance and I will collect. I am at Discovery Centre first weekend in April.

I have contacted a besom man, and got no response. Have set Dan Ackam onto this but haven't heard anything yet. Judith, if you have another contact please try them as my attempts are fruitless so far.

I have a new basket maker who will come to the event and make plant supports on the day. (I have given up trying to persuade Christine to make these and I am unconvinced that I will get much made beforehand)

Starting publicity in Berkshire Break, Caversham newsletter and Round & About this week; then will consider the papers nearer the time

b) Christmas Tree sales

Cutting for the 2018 Christmas event is on Friday 7th December with selling planned for Sat 8th. Trish reports that she hasn't yet contacted Caversham Court regarding the 8th but it is on her to-do list

c) National Meadows Day - 7th July 2018

Judith suggested 'we' might like to run an event. It was agreed that funds could be made available, but someone needs to organise the event and provide some details regarding the plan and costings. Steve agreed to let Judith know the meetings view on this.

Secretary note: Steve spoke to Judith on 17th February and updated her on the meetings view.

Tools

Nothing to report. There is money available!

AOB

Steve has 13 metal Longworth traps and 13 plastic 'trip-traps' which are no longer used at Mapledurham. John would talk to his Mammal Group contacts to see if they can make use of the.

DONM was set for Monday 10th September 2018. This will be the AGM