

Westleton Common Advisory Group

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 14th September 2023 at 7-30 pm in the foyer of Westleton Village Hall

Present Nick Shearme (NS), David Rous (DR), John Bebbington (JBe), Joyce Burtenshaw (JBU), Barry Banks (BB), John French (JF).

1 – Apologies. Julian Alexander (JA) (after the meeting). Ian Webber (IW).

2 - Minutes of meeting held on Monday 13th March 2023. Agreed correct.

3 - Matters arising not on this agenda.

3a – Unsafe bench. As reported previously this bench has been replaced. A plaque commemorating the late Roy Jones's service as chairman of this group has been installed on this bench.

DR reported that the seat in the sandpit in compartment 10 is loose. BB also reported that the seat by the path in compartment 3 is split. These seats will be replaced as soon as practicable.

4 – Welcome to new members. NS welcomed John French and, in his absence, Ian Webber to the group.

5 – Installation of drop-down posts. As CR was unable to join us at this meeting, we were not sure of the current state of play. We believe the posts have been ordered but are not sure if they are available or of the design. JBe will seek clarification from Ian Haines. (email sent 15/09/2023). *After the meeting DR was able to clarify what he intended to do, and explanatory notices will be put on the notice boards and website (minute 5a).*

(JBe had met IW and explained the reasons for installing drop-down posts at the footpath entry to the common as he was unfamiliar with the proposal.)

5a – Publicity. JBe will draft a note for publication on the website and on the notice boards reminding people of what is proposed and advising people that the installation of these new posts is imminent. When this note has been published and a few days allowed for people to read it the installation can proceed.

6 – Discussions with owners of Cleeves.

Ian Johnson, Nick Shearme, Barry Banks and John Bebbington had met with Mike and Rebecca Sury "on-site" at the Cleeves. At a subsequent meeting of Westleton Parish Council the proposals to provide water and drainage to their studio were agreed "in principle". Mr & Mrs Sury will submit detailed drawings/plans for further consideration.

7 – Refreshments for Saturday working parties. Following further clarification by Juliet Bullimore on Saturday 16/09/2023 we understand that Pam Hargreaves and Grania Webber will be organising these refreshments. Juliet has handed over the "kitty" money to Grania.

8 – Suffolk Coast and Heath working parties on Tues 19 Sept and Tues 24 Oct.

These working parties are confirmed. DR will meet the teams at the start of each day. Subject to weather conditions they will be clearing the sand cliffs in compartment 13 to encourage nesting sand martins. DR has other work lined up for 24 October if the work on sand martin cliffs is completed. JBU will organise the catering for Tuesday 19 September and JBe for Tuesday 24 October.

Portable lavatories have been ordered.

9 - AOB

NS – we have more fire warning signs available so we should think about where to put them next year.

DR - the existing fire warning signs will be left in place until at least the end of October so we can be confident there is no likelihood of fire.

NS – he, DR and JA have tidied up the container.

NS – he and DR have marked the birch trees to be felled in the wetland area in compartment 11.

DR – we need to replace the catering table. JBe will explore websites for a suitable replacement.

BB – there is excess growth of birch in compartment 1 near the beehives. All agree this should be cut back. DR advises that the best approach would be to cut them down manually and treat the stumps to prevent regrowth. This would need to be done over several seasons. Using contractors to pull them up would do too much damage to the soil structure and surface vegetation. JBe will seek advice for SWT/DEFRA/NE about this strategy and on appropriate treatment for the stumps. (Email to NE and SWT sent 18/09/2023.)

BB – reminded us of the firework debris left last year that caused some irritation to at least one visitor. To be referred to Firework Committee.

10 – Date of next meeting.

Probably second week of January 2024.