

**Burwash Parish Council
Environment and Maintenance Meeting**

**Minutes of the Working Party Meeting on 21st September 2023 at
7pm
Held Virtually on Zoom**

Attended By: Cllr Terry Johns (chair), Cllr Scott Chambers, Cllr Colin Chapman, Cllr Natalie Crabtree, Helga Castle, Halina Keep, Julian Kenny.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Sylvie Franklin

2. Disclosure of Interest

There were none.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting 8th June

Approved by the Full Council.

4. Management of High Street Trees

Interim Pollarding has been completed. Members questioned the viability of tree adoption.

It is clear that the original concept of tree adoption and maintenance of shoots and base area is not working. A small percentage of trees and bases are being maintained but generally they are not being maintained by the adoptee. Part of the reason is the resident identified on the tree has moved away or no longer with us. The chair indicated that the Parish Clerk has tried to locate those adoptees named with limited success. WP members were aware of residents who wanted to adopt a tree but it would be necessary to identify those that were vacant. Chair to discuss further with Parish Clerk.

It was noted that the Parish Clerk was checking the last safety survey of the Pine trees on the triangle at Burwash Common

5. Emergency Plan

Chair confirmed that the Emergency Planning Equipment Boxes are now in place at the Village Hall and the Pavilion Burwash Common.

Standby Power

Following the approval of Full Council the chair wrote to UK Power Networks seeking funding for the installation of Emergency Generators at our two evacuation centres. A negative response has been received, praising our resilience planning but indicating that funding was not available.

The availability of alternative power at these centres in the event of an emergency is the key to their viability in our area, which is and will continue to be subject to power outages.

The chair has discussed this with the Parish Chair who has asked for costings to be presented to the Parish Council.

Additional Information for Emergency Planning

The Emergency plan requires the identification of vulnerable residents so that we can provide assistance in an Emergency. The law on Data protection allows this information to be held centrally by the Parish Clerk only.

The WP agreed that the only way this information should be gathered is by Self Identification. It was suggested a carefully worded item in the Parish Bulletin may be the way forward. The chair to raise at Full Council.

Volunteer Teams to crew Evacuation Centres

We have identified the Crisis Team in the emergency plan but volunteers would be needed to respond in an emergency to help with the running of the centres. Ideally we should identify at least 10 residents per centre and provide some basic training in the organisation of the centres.

Subject to Full Councils approval a carefully worded item in the Parish Bulletin should raise sufficient interest.

6 Carbon Footprint Report

The working party discussed the Impact Report from the Centre for Sustainable Energy. The report was compiled using data from a number sources and there is a clear indication in the report that it should be taken "As a guide, not gospel".

The report highlights areas the Parish Carbon footprint is high, similar to other rural areas which rely heavily on personal transport and the delivery of household food and goods.

The Parish housing stock is generally elderly and difficult to insulate resulting in poor Environmental Performance ratings.

On the positive side the Parish Council are pursuing a number of climate related initiatives.

EV Charging point project for the village car park

Cycle route planning to link the railway stations to the village

Local Farmers Markets

The council should continue to consider the carbon footprint in relation to all new projects.

The WP recommended the Parish Council make the Carbon Footprint Report available on the Parish Web Site and place a paragraph in the Parish Bulletin highlighting its availability.

7. Downs Meadow Maintenance

Julian confirmed that the scouts had assisted him in treading down the Bracken in July, but the level of growth has exceeded expectation.

Neighbours have asked the Parish Clerk to deal with the brambles which are invading gardens.

The whole meadow is in danger of becoming overgrown unless a more aggressive method of clearing is taken. Concern was expressed about the bracken roots and the need to remove without division to avoid repopulating.

The WP recommend a contractor is asked to clear the undergrowth so that a fresh start can be made and the meadow planting managed. Julian indicated that the agreed plan for a small orchard at one end of the meadow could be pursued once the area was cleared.

8. Wild Meadow Planting

The planned Wildflower Meadow planting did not take place last year. A discussion took place regarding the opportunity to undertake the project this year and the possible sites.

The preparation of a successful planting site and the likely cost was considered excessive considering the unpredictable nature of the outcome. The advice received suggested it would take up to three years to achieve a successful wildflower area.

In conclusion the WP felt it would be better to select a small test area, have the grass cut and then spread wildflower seeds. Wild About Burwash to be approached to see if they are willing to assist.

Date of the Next Meeting: Thurs 23rd November 2023

Item's for the Next Agenda: To be forwarded to Cllr Terry Johns