

Town Council Climate Group Meeting, the Foxlowe 1PM June 27<sup>th</sup>: Draft Minutes

Present: Cllrs Bill Cawley (Chair), Matt Swindlehurst, Barry Birch, Phil Barks, Paul Powner, Mark Johnson. Paul Chauveau, Alison McCrea, Jane Tattersall, Penny Oakley,

### SITES IN LEEK

Matt S outlined context of his and Nigel Yates' initiatives to make public spaces more wildlife and climate friendly. Specific Leek projects included one on land between Brough Park and John Hall Gardens where meeting to be planned between him, MCA, JHG and SMDC. (This meeting now set for July 27<sup>th</sup>)

Kiln Lane site was suggested. PO and JT detailed previous issues with attempts at wildflower planting there, including multiple ownership, a problematic ash tree and one householder who insisted on diligent mowing. That house now up for sale, and PB agreed to keep watching brief.

The question of improving the planting regime on the two roundabouts by Sainsburys was mentioned. BC offered to investigate the possibility of attracting sponsorship.

DH noted paucity of paths/decent verges in Leekbrook area. Mentioned Town council project to enhance the Leek War memorials with planting.

BB said the project to put plant boxes under town signs (maintained by members of Allotment Society) was now likely to start next year. As the one site already planted by MCA members had taken hold this would stay in place, for the time being at least.

BB noted that he had that morning received an offer of £3000 from Your Housing for Haregate in Bloom, a new project aimed at increasing resident engagement in planting/gardening/green spaces. MJ noted that this might fit well with the possible inclusion of Haregate in the SWT Verges project, should that get through the final stage of the National Lottery bid.

### LAND AROUND PICKWOOD

PC outlined good progress on Ladydale Village Green, including near-complete fencing, opening of footpath and installation of sprinkling system. Hadn't been possible to proceed with work with schoolchildren but Forest School are enthusiastic users of space and probationers had continued good work on improvements upkeep. Deer had become a big problem, reinforcing the need for fencing and gates.

The QEII wood project was in good shape, with plating completed in time and a sprinkling system installed.

Attempts to establish a wildflower meadow had been less successful and AM and PC agreed to set a date for AM to visit site and advise on suitability.

PC also said he would check on state of path down to Ladydale.

PO mentioned discussions with landowner over making the Co-Op land site adjacent to Ballington Wood more wildflower-friendly.

#### HERBICIDES/PESTICIDES

PB noted the response from District Council to his enquiries about herbicide use – that while they tried to limit their use in a few situations it was still employed in some difficult instances.

PO noted she still had no reply from Leek Town Council on the same issue. MS said he believed a policy was in place not to sue but he would follow up.

#### NEXT MEETING

Was agreed to invite Nigel Yates, Cabinet Member for Climate and Environment to next meeting, likely September.