

Report to Ide Parish Council meeting on 17 Nov 2021

Update from the Weir Meadow Working Group (WMWG)

1. The last meeting of the WMWG was held on the 18th October 2021.
2. Fundraising for the purchase of Weir Meadow and the Northern Fields continues apace. To date (week ending 5th November) a total of £36,555.88 has been raised through donations and pledges. The pancake breakfast on 9th October was a success, with 90-100 people attending, and a dozen or so taking the site tour. Further funds are expected from the Jumble Sale on the 20th November. The cricket fun day raised £2,618, and Cricket Club calendars produced by Clare Wills are now on sale. A further round of communication with parties initially contacted by letter and funding prospectus is to be undertaken.
3. A site meeting with Victoria Leeming of Strutt & Parker on 7th October to inspect the leat and weir determined that while there has been some erosion of the north bank (at the corner where the leat turns northwards) the wall forming part of the highway is in good repair and it was agreed there is no active concern or risk needing immediate action.
4. The Forestry Commission has been approached to determine if the Northern Fields would be suitable / eligible for the FC administered England Woodland Creation Offer grant scheme. A meeting scheduled for the 2nd November was cancelled by the FC but a new date will be arranged for early in 2022. Initial desk-based impressions from the FC were that the site offered potential with no immediately identified constraints.
5. One key issue of discussion was the future use of Weir Meadow by people wishing to walk their dogs. Concerns were raised about fouling of the cricket and football grounds if dogs are allowed to roam freely. It was agreed that a way of managing this will need to be found through the use of signage, dog-free zones, waste bins and making best use of the open space that Northern Fields, Triangular Field and the Community Orchard will provide. Developing some form of recreational / land use management plan that covers all of these open areas together was proposed as a potential approach.

The next meeting of the WMWG is on the 29th November 2021.

From Richard Cottle, Chair WMWG – 5th November 2021