

Ide Parish Council

Ide Community Orchard Working Group

Minutes of a meeting held on Zoom at 6pm on Monday 1 November 2021

1. Present: Peter Cloke (chair), David Howe, Mel Liversage (Parish Clerk), Alice Purcell (Ide School), Richard Cottle, Mark Thomas, Richard Sharman, Jess Paine, Nick Bradley.

2. Apologies from: Trevor Gardner, Andy Bragg and Phil Willcock.

3. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 13 September 2021 were approved.

Action: Mel will post on [website](#)

4. Peter Cloke spoke to his emailed update:

- 4.1 A Stage 2 grant application was submitted on 25 October to Viridor Credits by David and Nick. The application is for half the purchase price (ex VAT) of the land; and for the whole cost (ex VAT) of 2 new wooden gates and 8 picnic tables with integral benches.
- 4.2 A successful Open Morning was held on October 9 attended by 90-100 people. 35 people visited the Orchard. Thank you Mark for your orchestration of the visits.
- 4.3 A strimming and mulching morning for the new trees took place on September 10th. Further work will be carried out this week (Friday morning if anyone would like to help). [\[Post meeting update - mulching and base clearing now complete - NB\]](#)
- 4.4 Hedges have been cut back and reduced - thank you Andy for sorting this out. Stuart Brooking has been carrying out tree safety work near the electric substation which has necessitated opening up the redundant gateway into the path going under the old railway bridge.
- 4.5 Resident (?) fox and dormice have been spotted in the Orchard.

Action: Peter and Alice to make a joint visit soon to the Orchard to plan a school visit.

5. Fund raising.

5.1 DH reported that the Stage 2 Viridor application had been accepted without the need for requisitions or amendments, so we have cleared the technical qualifying hurdle, inside the deadline of 31 October. We expect to hear quite soon whether the assessors score it high enough to go forward to the funding committee on 7 January 2022.

5.2 NB reported that £21,949 has been raised or pledged from 24 donors since the summer launch.

5.3 Two possible donors had sought reassurance that it is the Parish Council's permanent intention not to sell the land on for development; and that the Parish Council's land would not be liable to take over by the District Council. NB reported the reasons for the Parish Council being the least of all bodies likely ever to want or need to sell on; that a prime motivator for buying this land is to protect it from developers; and that, unlike County and District Councils, or the Church Commissioners, the Parish Council has no pressures to raise money to provide services from a diminishing budget. NB explained that he had set out these reasons in letters to the parishioners in question. DH had also explained that the Parish Council is a statutory free standing body, able to own land, and that it would need an Act of Parliament to allow the District or County to take over its property.

5.4 Two other potential donors had sought assurance that the hedge on the southern border of St Ida's Close would continue to be cut annually when the Parish Council took over. At present the Commissioners cut the side of this hedge, but not the top, annually at the Commissioners' expense. The top is cut, or not, variably at different parts of the hedge at the discretion and expense of the adjacent residents. Peter Cloke has written to them both to assure them that the current arrangements, at least, will continue when the Parish Council takes over.

5.5 Three people have donated via tree sponsorship. Individuals vary as to their wish for a plaque. But they do want to sponsor an identified, specific tree. NB has met with one couple on site to choose their tree, and took photographs of them, for them, by their tree. We will ensure that they receive a plan of the orchard planting with their tree identified on it.

Action: Julian Perrett to complete the process of producing a map of the new trees planted.

Action: Group agreed on a single notice board listing donors and tree sponsors, once we own the land.

5.6 NB, PC and DH reported that they will be meeting on 2 Nov to plan the second wave of the Appeal for Funds, to follow up pledgers, non responders, and those who have expressed an interest (TG has emailed his advice - but away on work this week)

Action: NB, PC, DH, TG to meet 2 Nov to plan details of second wave.

6. Winter Programme

6.1 New planting.

There are three dead apple saplings which PC will replace.

PC will also plant 3 new young walnut and 4 plum trees donated by Peter Pattison.

Action: Peter Cloke

6.2 Sunday 5 December 2021 identified for a morning open day and working party.

There is pruning of old trees to be done by members who have access and experience in high lopping.

There is clearance of previously cut logs and branches, which cause a hazard in long grass, to be done.

Action: Peter and Mark

7. Request for variation to the Option Agreement

7.1 NB reported on a request made by Strutt & Parker (on 1 November 2021 by email following telephone contact with NB,) on behalf of the Commissioners, for a variation to the Option Agreement. The variation would involve granting an easement by way of a deed of grant in favour of Western Power Distribution to lay electricity cables between the substation building (located on land to the north of and adjacent to the Orchard close by the eastern end of St Ida's Close) and Pynes Farm Yard. The purpose of laying these cables would be to supply electricity to the proposed ten house development at Pynes Farm Yard. S&P assure us that all expenses in drawing up and executing a variation will be met by the Commissioners.

The group raised a number of issues: the complexity of the water piping and inspection junctions in the highway at the eastern entrance to the Orchard; the presence of multiple water pipes running along the northern border of the orchard; the need to lay this cabling at all given there is an existing electricity supply in the High Street; a foul drain running north down the hill from Pynes Cottages; the presence of a border wall with neighbours near the entrance which would need protecting / repairing at the CCs' expense; and the importance of the planned date for the work to be done.

We agreed we would wish to be as helpful as possible, and that the best way to do that is to make sure this is really necessary; that the CCs have appreciated and acted on the issues and potential conflicts involved; and have provided detailed technical information on the depth, route, size, extent and proposed timing of the installation.

7.2 This is a matter for the full Parish Council to consider, in addition to this Working Group, at its next meeting.

Action: NB to write in reply to S&P (Victoria Leeming) setting out the points raised above; and requesting information and clarification, if possible by 17 November when the Parish Council next meets.

[\[See letter accompanying these minutes as a separate attachment\]](#)

8. Dates of next two meetings:

Monday 6 December 2021 6pm

Monday 10 January 2022 6pm

END - NCAB 3 11 21

Approved 6 Dec 2021