

## **Report to Ide Parish Council meeting 19 January 2022**

### **Update from the Weir Meadow Working Group (WMWG)**

The last meeting of the WMWG was held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The work of the group has essentially been dominated by the fundraising process to purchase Weir Meadow and the Northern Fields.

#### **Fundraising and Borrowing**

Fundraising for the purchase of Weir Meadow and the Northern Fields has to date (10<sup>th</sup> January) raised £39,266. A further round of appeal letters with brochures went out in early November to parties initially contacted by letter.

Significant work has been undertaken by members of the Working Group in developing the approach to, and specifics of, a loan application to DALC for the borrowing requirement from the Public Works Loan Board. Consultation with residents regarding the amount to be borrowed will be required (along with a favourable response) in order to progress an application. A survey letter will be distributed to all residents over the weekend of January 15-16. Two Zoom Q&A sessions will be held on 22 January 2022.

Nick Bradley and David Howe reported at the meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> on the proposed timetable and process for consultation. There was some discussion at the meeting on whether the consultation should be opened up to gain views on the potential use of the Northern Fields, but it was decided that the consultation should be kept simple and focused on borrowing.

#### **Dogs in Weir Meadow and Northern Fields**

Nick Bradley reported on his online searches to see how other local authorities deal with the use of public open space / sports fields for dog walking. It is clear that the management response varies according to use and circumstances e.g. children's play areas are fenced off and no dogs are allowed; playing fields may have some access for dogs, but with restrictions such as cordoned off cricket squares, or instructions to keep dogs on leads etc.

It was agreed that we will need to consult residents about this issue, obtain the range of views that there will be, and come to a solution specifically for Weir Meadow, incorporating the ability that we will have to utilise the Northern Fields and Triangular Field as well.

The next scheduled meeting for the WMWG is on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

From Richard Cottle, Chair WMWG – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022.