

The Conservators of Therfield Heath and Greens
The Therfield Regulation Trust
c/o Royston Golf Club, Baldock Rd, Royston, SG8 5BG
Registered Charity No. 277881
Chair: Clare Swarbrick

Clerk: Carol Fossick
Email: clerk@therfieldheath.org.uk

Summary Minutes for Meeting held Thursday 22 October 2020 via Zoom

In attendance : Clare Swarbrick (CSW), Ben Harrop (BH), Clive Hall (CH), Colin Smith (CS), John King (JK), Neil Guttridge (NG), Robert Law (RL) and also for part of meeting Vincent Thompson (VT), Carol Fossick (CF) as clerk

1.10/20 Apologies for Absence

None

2.10/20 Declaration of Interest

None but Conservators may wish to declare an interest/abstain on matters regarding Sun Hill.

3.10/20 Approve Minutes of 24 September 2020

Approved

4.10/20 Matters arising not in the agenda

None

5.10/20 Heath and Green's Maintenance

- (i) Bird signs – all taken down save for 2 which are to be located and removed.
- (ii) Draft sign Church Hill – awaiting additional text/images.
- (iii) Sacrifier – Lack of sheep grazing is affecting the sward. A scarifier could perform the same role over the land previously grazed - and other land - but was an expensive item and could also require additional costs eg maintenance/hire of tractor to pull scarifier. Conservators needed to balance the merit in seeking funding for a purchase (and bearing ongoing insurance/storage costs) against finding and paying someone with the experience and kit to do the work. Conservators advised that they needed to keep on top of this and the winter months were the time for this activity. Previous hire costs had been in the thousands (but risk free) whilst the cost of purchase was in the tens of thousands. Further investigation was required.

- (iv) Volunteers: More volunteers are needed and more sessions should be arranged. However Conservators were reminded that work on the heath must be overseen by someone experienced in ecology and conservation. Longer term monies from the Green Recovery Fund (to which an application had been made) could pay for such expertise full time but for now Conservators would look to build upon current FOTH relationships whilst seeking additional interested parties.
- (v) Litter. The bin in the lower car park (purchased by McDonalds) was no longer being emptied by their staff. It was felt that this should be removed. Currently it was just attracting vermin and this was leading to complaints and a possible health and safety risk.
- (vi) Chalk : BH would make contact with Redrow about the chalk that they were removing from their site as Conservators needed chalk for the paths. There was some chalk still to be used up which could be used in main car park although it was agreed this was a short-term fix.
- (vii) Kelly/Virgin Media : Volunteer agreed to walk down and check current condition of verges and to ensure that all material had been removed.

6.10/20

(i) **Finance**

Discussed. Accounts due to be filed by 31 October 2020.

(ii) **Management Plan**

Conservators agreed to meet in order to formalise the winter plan of activities. The plan/permissions may be extensive as there was no penalty in not completing the work as long as a permission had been sought.

(iii) **Hay Green “Rookery”**

A meeting had been held. Owner requested HM Land Registry map which Conservators could provide. Conservators would continue to liaise with owner and remind owner of procedure and costs for his project. Conservators had no objection, but this had to be owner led and them bearing all costs.

(iv) **Hay Green “Grange”**

A meeting had been held. The old position would be proceeded with. This had been ongoing for nearly 10 years (off and on) and the old papers and agreements had been located. Again, to get to a conclusion, whilst Conservators had no objection, this had to be owner led and with them bearing all costs.

(v) **Stakepiece Road**

There remained items on the Heath from earlier fly-tipping. Conservators would seek to get these items removed. May need co-operation of local residents in order to park trailer and move items by shortest route. Contact would be made by letter.

(vi) Sun Hill

Those already assisting the group or otherwise involved in local groups abstained from being their representative and it was agreed which Conservator was to be their contact. Introductions would be made.

7.10/20

- (i) Record decision made regarding the Cadets.
- (ii) Orienteering event (21 November 2020). This can proceed. Clerk to advise organiser on marshalling in car park; need to reduce car use where possible; to give notice to JAC members; Conservators to add to Facebook page etc.
- (iii) JAC meeting on 5th November 2020 – Clerk to inform JAC members and invite discussion items
- (iv) Xmas Trees : no comments – Clerk asked about barrier key and would follow up.
- (v) Golf Cam : very positive ; this could be a great facility.
- (vi) Insurance : Clerk has obtained quote and will circulate details of quotation.
- (vii) Café building works: meeting held and the need for consents explained. When ready build/refurb team will come back to Conservators.
- (viii) Water Board : A meeting was held with members of Affinity Water land agent team regarding the vulnerability and damage to the pumping station. Although discussions had taken place before Affinity Water may now be obliged to take action and secure this site which would require a legal process to be followed as the land is common land. Conservators will review earlier discussions and will need to see what is being offered but any solution to the problem will be for Affinity Water to achieve and drive.
- (ix) Noted that earlier fair enquiry has found an alternative site.
- (x) Discussed correspondence received. The Conservators are not interested in engaging with the building company regarding common land which is managed by them; the offer in their letter is rejected.
- (xi) Beth Moorley bench: no objections on location but Clerk should check location/style and installation.
- (xii) Raised with Conservators email regarding 4x4.

8.10.20

Actions

Nothing further

9.10/20

AOB

Nothing

10.10/20

Next meeting 26 November 2020 7-9 by Zoom .