

**ECONET Annual General Meeting
12th September 2012
Parks Department Offices, Prospect Park 7:30pm**

Present:

David Booth
Kit Brownlee
Christine Cliburn
Oonagh Kelleher
David Kenny
Anne Latto
John Lerpiniere
Tricia Marcouse
Judith Oliver
Alan Stevens

Apologies:

Steve Ayers

Matters Arising

None

Election of Officers

The current officers were re-elected:

Chair – Kit Brownlee
Treasurer – Alan Stevens

News and Updates

CROW (Conserve Reading on Wednesdays)

Good attendance averaging around ten volunteers per task. Programme almost full until end of April, see website for details.

Friends of Clayfield Copse

Much litter is deposited around the car park and is attracting rats hence litter-picking has become distasteful for volunteers. It was felt that removal of rats would have no lasting effect and so other options were discussed.

Dave Booth will report this as a litter problem to RBC with the expectation that larger litter bins will be provided and regularly emptied. In addition the suggestion of signage to warn public of the health hazards of litter will be put to RBC.

ACTION – Dave B

Any volunteers working in the area should be reminded of the risks and of the precautions which should be taken, i.e. wear gloves, use litter pickers and wash hands after a task.

ACTION – task leaders

The problem of dog fouling at Clayfield has been raised in local press. This problem is dealt with by a small council team who should be informed of the issue.

ACTION – Dave B

Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields

No tasks over summer, programme will resume in autumn.

Friends of Mcllroy Park

Volunteer tasks are not well supported currently.

A local organisation '*nature nurture*' is organising a family nature day at the site on the 29th September. *The Conservation Volunteers* and Econet will be participating and we hope to use the opportunity to recruit new volunteers for FoMP.

Friends of Waterloo Meadows

No news.

RUWG

Continue to review planning applications.

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)

Previously known as BTCV.

The group is encouraging tree planting as over 6,000 whips are to be made available. Suggestions for sites to plant are requested, this is trees not hedges.

ACTION – All

Proposals for the management of Reading Old Cemetery have raised considerable interest, particularly from local residents, and TCV will take the lead in conservation activity. Tasks are being arranged for 10th and possibly 22nd November and good local support seems likely.

ACTION - Oonagh K

RBC

Wildflower margins have been planted at ten sites across Reading and more will follow. Some are annuals and others perennials but they need management, namely weeding, and Econet has been asked if it can help. The project is in conjunction with Reading University and the University plans to monitor the sites to assess numbers of pollinating invertebrates using the margins.

Health and Safety

No issues were raised.

Treasurer's Report

At 31st March funds totalled £3,400, down slightly on last year with £840 in task charges outstanding (now paid).

Since April, Bean Pole Day raised over £300 and £100 has been received for willow, approximately £180 has been spent on refreshments and transport and £110 on tools. Currently funds total £4,360.

Last year over £1,600 was raised in task charges. With a number of the chargeable tasks now complete income from this source for the current year is predicted to be

around £900, however Dave B indicated that there may be funding for the hedgelaying at Bugs Bottom.

Expenditure for remainder of year estimated to be £1,600, this includes £520 insurance, £100 signage, £300 tools and £400 training. The latter was primarily for hedgelaying training however the low level of interest means this is likely to be curtailed.

Funds at the end of the year expected to be at the same level as last year.

Publicity and Events

The new logo for Econet has been finalised and the purchase of banners for the Christmas Tree Sale and Bean Pole Day can now proceed.

ACTION - Judith O

Bean Pole Day 2012

This year Econet was responsible for the running of the event which a variety of local groups and organisations attended and which overall was considered a success.

Over £300 was raised from bean pole sales and donations.

Vehicle access to Caversham Court was a problem attracting complaints, and improvements were discussed and suggested.

ACTION – Dave B

It was considered that better use could be made of the Caversham Court courtyard.

ACTION – Judith O

Regarding renovation of the courtyard sheds – no further news.

Numbers of visitors at any one time is an insurance concern and needs clarifying.
[TCV insurance cover is restricted to events with no more than 500 attendees but the question was raised whether this refers to total attendees or attendees at any one time. It is not thought that any event in which we are currently involved and need our own insurance cover, falls outside this limit.]

ACTION - Oonagh K

Christmas Tree Sale

Saturday 8th December Caversham Court.

Wishmoor once again has good trees but permission has not yet been granted to harvest them.

ACTION – Tricia M

Permission will be sought to display the appropriate banner at Caversham Court for the week preceding the sale.

ACTION – Judith O

TCV will endeavour to provide some transport for Christmas tree cutting.

ACTION – Oonagh K

Tools

Are repaired and replaced as and when needed. There is a small current turnover.

AOB

No points raised.

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 7th March 2013

RBC Response to Points Raised

Received from Dave Booth, 12th October 2012

"I am chasing up a larger replacement or additional bin at Clayfield.

I have requested signage regarding dog fouling for Clayfield and requested inclusion as a hotspot in work being carried out for the dog fouling initiative.

Four trees have died in the orchard at Mapledurham. Funding is not available to replace the trees. I will look at options for funding replacement trees.

The side entrance can be used for the next Beanpole Day, the gardener has a key for the chain.

The garages at Caversham Court will not be repaired because there are plans to convert them into meeting rooms. This is subject to planning permission and will not cause an issue with any usage this year."