

Harrietsham Parish Council
Environmental Committee
Minutes of meeting held on Monday 18th March 2024

1. **Present:** Cllrs Brown (Chair), Dayes, Stanley, Luck and M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)
2. **Apologies:** Mrs S Amos **Members of the public:** None
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (22nd January 2024) were signed (without amendment) at the following Council meeting, another copy was signed for our records.
4. **Disclosures:** None
5. **New Burial Ground:** MC reported that the NBG maintenance is going well, with the field looking good. He also updated the committee on the findings from the recent archaeological geo-physics survey conducted as part of the preparation for the planning permission application. In essence, a probable iron-kiln had been located in one corner, with other disturbances found, but which were probably explained by causes such as tree planting and metal fences. We are waiting for the comments from the County Archaeologist before we can proceed further.
6. **Garden of Remembrance:** Also looking well cared for. MC made a general comment about the hedging in this area, which has been cut, and looks very neat.
7. **Glebe Field:** Again, from the maintenance point of view, all appears to be going well. SB then summarised where he had got to with regards to the entrance matting (needed to prevent the access point becoming too muddy) and resolving the reported difficulties with unlocking/locking the posts in position. Various quotes had been received for matting, but the most advantageous one was felt to be that from the incumbent contractor. It was therefore agreed to **Recommend to Council** that JB's quote for the laying of entrance matting be accepted (£2,545 in October last year) (Prop Cllr Brown, sec Cllr Luck, all in favour). Discussion then turned to the posts, and it was felt that we should replace the two existing sockets, retaining the current posts, in order to try to prevent the entry of mud and water. It was therefore agreed to **Recommend to Council** that we purchase two new sockets at a cost of £300, (Prop Cllr Brown, sec Cllr Luck, all in favour). We have had one quote for installing them, but MC said he would try to get JB L/scape to do this while laying the matting. This may incur an extra charge, as might the fact that the quote for the matting is now almost six months old, and may need reviewing. If this can't be arranged, the contractor who did quote will be asked to do the work. It was noted that, to accommodate the new sockets, the metal anti-tamper guards will need to be removed, at least initially.
8. **Play Area:** SB had looked into producing signs for the play area, and had identified a supplier who already had suitable ones available. He will check what size(s) they can do, and check on whether we can make amendments to the current wording. We will also need to check with the Clerk as to whether we have artwork for the village sign available.
9. **Medical Centre & Church Road:** As with the other areas under maintenance, these appear well attended to.
10. **Woodlands Walk:** MC reported that here too maintenance seemed effective. He also reported that the two aerators (one owned by us, and the other by Mrs Dean) had both been fixed and Mrs Dean reported that they were working well – possibly better than the originals. The lake had received its anti-algae treatment at the same time.
11. **Benches:** So far as MC is aware, all benches under contract are in good shape.
12. **War Memorial:** This area is also looking well maintained, but MC noted that Tommy, whom he had earlier noticed had escaped from his fixings and was leaning against a bush, has now travelled and is leaning against the war memorial itself. The incumbent contractor had tried to re-fix him, but couldn't find a suitable way of doing so. MC will talk to the Clerk to see if she has a contact at the RBLI who we can ask if we can get another fixing kit.
13. **A20 Verges:** These were looking ok, although it was noted that the grass, which has yet to grow much, is probably about to start!
14. **Saxon Place Amenity Land:** MC reported that the area was looking ok, and that Brogdale had visited to prune and check the community orchard. We are waiting to hear back from them, but it was noted that the orchard is now in its third or fourth year, so hopefully is now well established.

- 15. Teers Meadow:** MC had received several reports that one of the benches had been vandalised. On inspection, the concrete block sunk into the ground, to which it had been chained, had been pulled from the ground, the bench overturned, and one of the seats damaged. He noted that it was quite an achievement. He had contacted the contractor who installed it, and asked for a price to repair and re-fix it. At the same time, MC had inspected the fence, (now showing signs of cow damage and installed by the same contractor), and had also asked for a price to repair it as necessary and to run an extra straining wire to help prevent a repetition. As an aside, MC had also asked if laying a concrete base for the benches might make them more secure, and for a price to do so. We wait to hear.
- 16. Percy's Board:** MC reported that the board has now been replaced, and showed a photo of the new sign in place. Identical to the original, all agreed that it was a great improvement to the old, faded version.
- 17. Date of the next meeting:** Monday 13th May 2024 at 7:30pm in the parish office.

Meeting closed at 8:40 pm.