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**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**COMMUNITY ORCHARD COMMITTEE MEETING**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 7.30pm  
The meeting was held remotely via Zoom

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**Present:** Dr. Benjamin, Mr Hadder, Mr Proctor, and Mr Smith

**Clerk:** Ms Gilbert

No members of the public joined the meeting.

Mr Greaves had problems joining the meeting and being seen and heard so in his absence it was proposed and agreed that Mr Proctor would chair the meeting.

**CO21 17 APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received from Mr. Hoare

Mr. Greaves had problems being seen and heard so had to be considered absent.

**CO21 18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No requests to participate.

**CO21 19 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2020 were AGREED as a true record. Mr. Proctor will sign them after the meeting.

**CO21 20 FINANCES**

(i) The balance on the account of £1,656.72 was noted.

Mr Proctor had purchased a new first aid kit and some posts to repair the fruit bush trellis and will be reimbursed from the reserve account there is therefore £50.58 to deduct. **SG**

(ii) Budget for future expenditure. Still to price are:

Bicycle lock for wheel barrow **DP**

Plaque to HBF grant acknowledgement **DG**

New noticeboard near to welcome board **DG**

Consider buying a marquee / pop up gazebo. Research costs **DP**

No pressing need for more tools.

**CO21 21 ORCHARD DESIGN**

Outstanding from previous discussions was the possible purchase of 2 new fruit trees, a mulberry and a warden pear. Circumstances over the last year have meant there hasn't been a chance to do this yet.

The new trees could be planted in early spring but would need watering. The Warden Pear is would need to come from a specialist nursery which will need to be identified **GS** will research. It may not be possible to update the information board with the new trees but tree plaques would be easy to arrange.

Planting a new tree could be made into an occasion to celebrate the orchard. Possibly Abbeyfield could sponsor the tree as they are keen to get involved. Need to decide if we need to do some more fund raising, in advance or as part of the planting event. **GS**

Could a raised bed be built for limited mobility volunteers to help tend? This would require pathway improvements too to allow wheelchair access, and it is important for the path to be level, in particular the access at Mallards Cross gate would need to be leveled. The material for the path would ideally be natural in appearance, possibly grass matting, or hogging. It may be possible to reuse some of the newer grass matting from the play area when it is installed **SG** will investigate.

Graham Taylor will be asked if he can quote for the raised beds **DP**

## **CO21 22 ORCHARD MAINTENANCE**

(i) A new volunteer(s) to carry out regular orchard inspections is still needed.

Ask Bill Piers – **DP**

Ideally the weekly inspections could be done by 4 people on a monthly rota, so only needing to do one a month.

Recent issues that have been raised:

The path has become very muddy in the recent heavy rain, **DP** was thanked for getting 2 tons of wood chip from a tree surgeon who was working locally, so this has greatly improved.

There have been reports of cyclists cycling through, which may be churning up the path, also a horse riding through. Should signs be put up to ask cyclists to dismount? On balance the preference was not to put up signs. It was agreed to put something out on Facebook and share with Haddenham.net, to ask people not to ride bikes in the orchard and Snakemoor where there has also been this problem **SG**. It was decided to monitor to see if the horse riding through was a one off or regular problem.

(ii) Maintenance carried out by the Parish Council's contractor.

All good for now, nothing needs doing. The main paths will need to be cut once a fortnight as last year once the grass starts growing in the spring.

(iii) Volunteer maintenance arrangements during COVID-19 restrictions.

The arrangements to have 2 person visits to carry out some maintenance tasks and a mowing rota will need to be set up again this year until restrictions are lifted to allow larger working parties.

(iv) Review of last year's maintenance and changes for next year.

The restrictions meant that maintenance was a bit mixed, however the mowing rota for the small paths and a few 2 person party tidying sessions did keep things going. The weeds and grass in the tree circles have been a bit neglected and will need attention soon.

(v) Work parties for the coming year

2 people will be needed to do early tasks end of February **DP / CH (check with DG)**

Need to trim and weed around tree circles.

The trees could do with another check, there may be some minor pruning for crossing branches needed, early spring probably best time to do this but will need to confirm when is

the right time as it will depend on species. **DP**

The corner post on the fruit trellis will need to be replaced, and wires can then be tightened. The next lockdown review will happen at the start of March, but are still likely to be some restrictions, so unlikely full working parties can restart. It will be important to get weeding done before April, so some smaller working groups will be needed..

DP has a new contact who may be able to help in the orchard, with quite a lot of knowledge, but is currently shielding so not able to help yet..

### **CO21 23 EVENTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Abbeyfield – GS did an online presentation to the residents as the start of an active aging collaboration. The presentation was well received and enjoyed by the residents. All agreed it would be good to foster that relationship.

Possible tree planting event (see above plans for painting).

Thanks to Sylvie and Mark for the lovely Christmas light display, which came 4<sup>th</sup> in the village competition.

Sculpture Trail – recycled / natural materials – could be done socially distanced within the regulations so could go ahead during lockdown. It could tie in with the Scarecrow Festival / Bucks Art week possibly. Schools would need quite a lot of notice to join in, and currently may not be something they could take on, but we could sound them out.

No update from the Handlebards about their July booking, but it is probably too early to make a decision yet.

### **CO21 24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

### **CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

The meeting closed at 21.10

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021