**Chignals & Mashbury Community Jubilee Orchard**

**Minutes of the Chignal Parish Council**

**Orchard Sub-Committee Meeting**

**4th March 2019 at “Bumbys”, Mashbury**

**Present:**

Parish Cllrs: Malcolm Feltwell (Committee Chairman), Lynn Ballard (Committee Secretary)

Co-opted members: Simon Leadbeatter, Steve Middleditch, Geoff Pitts, Moira Tarrant

Apologies: Barbara Miller, Sarah Scott

**The following matters and actions were discussed and agreed.**

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| **Agenda items** | **Action points** | **Responsible** |
| **1.Outstanding actions from 9 Jan 2019 Sub-Committee** | Ask Cllr Aldridge for an update on request made at 11 Jan PC meeting about land ownership of the former lay-by at Howletts corner.  Damaged benches to be taken to village hall bonfire site.  Risk Assessment for mower use to be drafted and put up in the shed.  Chase up removal of the old orchard shed.  Other Sub-Committee actions were picked up on the agenda. | MF  MF  LB  LB |
| **2.Orchard events, activities and marketing** | The **Hedge Cutting Social** on **Tuesday** **12th** **February** had been successful. 8 people helped to cut the hedges and all of the cut material was removed off-site. MF was thanked for providing hot drinks for volunteers.  Arrangements for the **Spring Blossom** event on **Sunday 14th April from 3pm – 5pm** are unchanged from the details agreed at the January meeting. MF has secured agreement to use the Village Hall marquee. This will be erected on Sat 13 April.  SM will circulate a poster (A4 and A3) for comments. They will be posted two weeks before the event.  Orchard Friends to be sent a reminder about the event and erecting the marquee, two weeks before.  The **Mid-Summer Picnic on Sunday 23 June** could focus on celebrating and identifying the wild flowers growing in the orchard. Other ideas discussed included a plant sale and competition for children to draw one of their parents holding an apple. Research to be undertaken on British Mid-Summer traditions.  **Marketing**: article to be drafted for the May edition of Chignal News highlighting the orchard wildflowers and publicising the Mid-Summer Picnic.  The Village Hall Committee has offered a stand for the orchard at the Fete on Saturday 1st June. Content of the display and activities to be discussed at the next Orchard Sub-Committee meeting. Consider attractions for children, using rubber ducks.  Orchard Friends email account to be monitored on a regular basis by SL and other members of the Committee to be alerted if action required. LB to draft and send out Orchard Friends emails.  Any orchard items for the Chignal website to be emailed to Kate Middleditch.  Brief round-up of activities involving Orchard Friends to be presented at the Chignal Annual Parish Meeting on 11th March at 8pm. | All  SM  LB  MT  LB  SM  MT  MF/SM  SL/LB  All  MF |
| **3.Orchard maintenance** | **Tree health**: the lack of rain in Jan and Feb was a concern but rain is expected in March. 4 new trees have been planted and all trees have been fertilised and weeded.  **Mulch:** MF to liaise with suppliers about delivery options of the 50 bags of Strulch. MT to provide LB with recommendations from a “Which” report on different mulches to justify the choice of Strulch for the orchard. Parish Clerk to be asked to order the mulch once delivery arrangements agreed.    **Tree protection:** a working party to be arranged on **Monday 15th April at 9.30am** to remove wooden stakes from the trees which no longer require support. They will be re-used to support the tree protection mesh by cutting back and re-shaping. Wire required to re-attach plaques to tree protection mesh.  **Bug hotel renovation:** MT has been in contact with Duke of Edinburgh student to arrange a work programme.  **Training for Volunteers:** LB is in contact with CCC Parks and Open Spaces service about health and safety issues and risk assessments. SM to contact Writtle University College about training for carrying out maintenance on the orchard safely.  **Grass cutting:** first cut of paths planned in April before the Spring Blossom event. The instructions for using the mower to be copied and given to everyone authorised to use it. A copy to be displayed in the shed. MF to provide training on how to use the mower. Fuel for the mower to be purchased and reclaimed through the PC. No fuel to be stored in the shed. Spoil from molehills to be spread before mowing takes place and care taken mowing over anthills.  **Hedge Cuttings:** heap near the entrance gate to be removed before Spring. MF to ask to borrow a trailer to transport cut material to the Village Hall bonfire site.  **Oak benches:** two additional quotes sourced by the Parish Clerk. PC approval to order the oak benches on agenda for 11th March meeting. Grant applications already approved for the 2 benches, mulch, new trees and irrigation tubes.  **Shed:** roof shingles damaged by strong winds have been replaced and glued and nailed down. Wood needed to attach plastic sheeting along the sides of the shed. Drain pipes have been fitted to prevent water from dripping onto the concrete surround. A board needs to be attached to the outside of the shed to display notices. This will be done once the exterior of the shed has been painted with preservative. Alarm to be purchased and fitted.  **Information Panel:** MT/SL to provide SM with information on the trees to update the orchard planting plan. Additional money may be required for access to appropriate software to prepare the artwork. Photos to be updated and text reviewed. SM to circulate draft to committee members for approval. The new panel should be stuck to the backing plate rather than screwed to stop water ruining the artwork. Grant application form for the 11th March PC meeting.  **Ladder for pruning**: preferred tripod safety ladder from [www.niwaki.com](http://www.niwaki.com). 8 foot size is suitable for tree pruning in the orchard. Grant application form needs to be drafted for the PC meeting on 11th March.  **Marquee:** a marquee of the robust type borrowed from the Village Hall Committee would be suitable for orchard events such as the Spring Blossom, Mid-Summer Picnic and Autumn Fruit Celebration. A smaller size would be preferable as it would be easier to erect and store in the orchard shed. If owned by the PC, the new marquee could also be made available for other community functions. Draft a grant application for the 13th May PC meeting.  **Mole hills:** MT provided an information sheet on deterring moles. | MT/LB  MF/LB  MF/SM/GP  MF  MT  LB/SM  MF/GP/SM  MF  LB  MF  MT/SL  SM  LB  LB  SM/MF  LB  MT |
| **4 .Review of the Orchard Budget** | Invoices: none. Income: sale of surplus quinces, £20.00  Approved new expenditure: agreed to submit a bid for CIL funding for a new Orchard Information Board, up to £230 and a ladder, up to £250. New income: none  SL kindly agreed to arrange the re-sponsoring of the orchard trees, due for renewal every 3 years in May. SL will update the tree sponsor list and contact all of the sponsors to find out if they would like to renew: £5 to renew and £10.00 for new sponsors. LB to check with the Clerk about the payment arrangements. LB to send an email to Orchard Friends informing them of the renewal process. SL to monitor Orchard Friends account to deal with responses. | LB  SL  LB |
| **5. Orchard Committee on 13th May** | LB agreed to circulate the agenda and list of presenters from the Orchard Committee meeting held in May 2018 for review at the next meeting. | LB |
| **6. Essex Orchards Group** | The networking and contacts made with other orchard organisations had been useful but it was not considered necessary to attend every 2 months. | All |
| **7. Date of next meeting** | **Wednesday 8th May 2019, 9.30 am at “Warwicks”, Mashbury Road, Chignal St James** | SM |