**Chignals & Mashbury Community Jubilee Orchard**

**Minutes of the Chignal Parish Council**

**Orchard Sub-Committee Meeting**

**3rd February 2017 at “The Saddlery”, Mashbury Road**

**Present:**

Parish Cllrs: Steve Middleditch, Lynn Ballard (Committee Secretary and Meeting Chair)

Co-opted members: Sandra Bailey, Simon Leadbeatter, Geoff Pitts, Moira Tarrant

**Apologies:** Malcolm Feltwell (Committee Chairman)

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

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| **Agenda items** | **Action points** | **Responsible** |
| 1.Outstanding actions from 7 Oct 2016 Committee | Information and images on wildlife and plants in the Orchard to be put on the Chignal parish website: on-going.  The Orchard Sub-Committee is exploring joint working on community events and activities with the Village Hall Committee. Examples include, Village Hall marquee lent to orchard for events and the offer to burn orchard hedge arisings on the Village Hall bonfire site.  The picnic table and bench to be treated with preservative this summer. The lower parts of the wooden entrance gate posts also need to be treated.  Further research needed on sourcing soft rubber mats that could be put down at the orchard entrance for events in wet weather: on-going.  A grass cutter and storage pavilion have been put forward as potential bids from Community Infrastructure Levy monies. The storage building proposal needs to be worked up in conjunction with the Village Hall Committee and Parish Council: on-going.  Following several vehicle collisions and other incidents at Howletts Corner, the PC asked ECC to address road safety concerns, for example, by re-instating the lay-by that had been sited outside “Howletts”: on-going.    Other Oct Sub-Committee actions were picked up on the agenda. | Simon Tarrant  LB  SL  SM  MF/LB/SM  MF |
| 2.Orchard events | It was agreed to hold a May Day celebration to celebrate the freshness of Spring and blossom on the trees. This Spring event will have a themed ‘bring & share’ tea, traditional dancing and music to coincide with tree blossom time on **Sunday 7 May from 3-5pm**. The village hall would be hired to provide access to facilities and car parking plus car parking in the playing field. The Village Hall Committee also to be asked about hiring the marquee.  The Culture in Essex Small Grant Scheme had been considered as a potential source of funding for this event but rejected because the orchard spring event would not attract sufficient visitors.  Orchard Friends to be notified of the May event and asked to bring spring/blossom themed cakes and savouries and to enter a competition for the best decorated half hoop to use in traditional country dances at the event.  St Nicholas Church flower arrangers to be asked to help with decorating the marquee.  Tony Towns to be asked to lend some straw bales to use as seating at the event.  The 3 Elms pub to be asked to suggest potential musicians to play at the event and if this is not appropriate, investigate using taped music with power supply from Ivy Cottage. Investigations to be made into potential leaders for the dancing.  Tea making from a van on site to be investigated.  Possibilities for a human ‘maypole’ to be investigated and ribbons purchased.  Risk Assessment to be produced before the event. | LB  LB  SB  SB  LB  SM/GP  MT/LB  MF  SM/SB  LB |
| 3.Orchard maintenance | The apple, pear and quince tree pruning was carried out during January. Thanks were given to MT and her husband for doing this job and for pruning some of the new hedgerow shrubs.  A quote for £250.00 had been received from a tree contractor to cut back approx. 35 yards of the orchard hedge adjacent to Ivy Cottages to keep it clear of electricity and phone wires. This was for cutting the hedge and a further £100 would be charged for chipping the arisings. Several members of the sub-committee plus Martyn Towns had assessed the hedge and concluded that it could be cut to 5 foot high using loppers and saws by volunteers with the arisings being burnt at the village hall. It was agreed that this work should be done as soon as possible before bird nesting starts and two potential dates were suggested to carry out this work: **22 or 23 February.** Volunteers to be sought.  CCC has indicated that they will cut the hedges along the road side of the orchard this winter season. Hedge maintenance needs to be included as a regular item on the Orchard sub-committee agenda.  The dates for Orchard Friends to help with grass cutting etc were agreed as follows: Saturdays at 10.00 on **18th March, 22nd April, 20th May, 17th June, 15th July, 19th August and the 16th September.**  Several tags appeared to be missing from the fruit trees. An audit of tree tags needs to be carried out and the missing ones attached/replaced. Certificates also need to be produced for new tree sponsors.  MT reported that last year the plum trees suffered damage from birds early in the season pecking the developing buds. It was decided to ask Orchard Friends to make some bird scarers and leave them on the picnic table to be hung on the trees. This will have to be done in the next few weeks. The scarers will be removed by the time of the 7th May Blossom time event.  MT also noted that it was unlikely that orchids would appear this year because the grass sward was too long. | MT  MF/LB/SM/GP/MT/SL  LB  SB/MF  MF  SM  SB/MT |
| 4 .Review of the Orchard Budget | SL produced an updated balance for the Orchard budget: £1,041.  Income: £56.57 was collected at the Fruit Celebration. £100 had been donated by Three Elms from their Community Quiz Night. £10 had been received for the last tree sponsor. A total of £30 was held by SL as petty cash (including the recent £10 tree sponsor fee).  Invoices to be paid: none.  Approved new expenditure: hire of village hall for the 7th May event and purchase of sundry items for the event such as ribbon, tea, coffee, milk and soft drinks etc. It was noted that expenditure on toner cartridges of approx. £18 had already been approved and these items would be purchased as required. Tree tags: 50 - £47.75; 25 - £24.75 (P&P £3.95).  SL was thanked for producing a very helpful 3 year financial projection, (attached to these minutes) which indicated that there was sufficient provision in the orchard budget to cover the expected £200 annual rent payment that would start from 2018. It also showed that the income from tree sponsorship was a significant income stream. It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with CCC early in 2018 to discuss the matter of the rent bearing in mind the contribution made by the orchard to community life and biodiversity. | SL  SL  Janet Mills/SL  SM  SL  LB/MF/SM |
| 5. Any other business | It was agreed that the next annual Orchard Committee meeting will be held on **Monday 8th May at 7pm** at the village hall just before the Parish Council meeting. Orchard Friends to be notified of the date and the agenda to be agreed at the next sub-committee meeting. | LB/SB |
| 6. Date of next meeting | **Friday 21st April 2017, 9.30am at “Bumbys”, Fox Road, Mashbury** | MT |