**Chignals & Mashbury Community Jubilee Orchard**

**Minutes of the Chignal Parish Council**

**Orchard Sub-Committee Meeting**

**8th February 2018 at “3 Pitt Cottages”, Chignal St James**

**Present:**

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

Co-opted members: Simon Leadbeatter, Barbara Miller, Geoff Pitts, Sarah Scott, Moira Tarrant

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

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| **Agenda items** | **Action points** | **Responsible** |
| **1.Outstanding actions from 7 December 2017 Sub-Committee** | 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”. The Clerk to be requested to ask Cllr Aldridge to confirm land ownership.  Other Sub-Committee actions were picked up on the agenda. | MF |
| **2. Co-option of Committee Member** | It was agreed to co-opt Barbara Miller as a new member of the Orchard Committee. The Chairman welcomed Barbara to the Committee. | BM |
| **3.Orchard events** | The **Wassail event** on 6th January had worked well but it was noted that the number of local residents attending had dropped. For future events, there should be further reminders to Orchard Friends nearer the date. MF and GP were thanked for having cut the grass in front of the gate and shed before the event. The event may be held every other year depending on the availability of the musicians and dancers.  It was agreed to hold a **Spring** **Blossom event** at the end of April (**Sunday 29th**) rather than in May because MT’s orchard records indicate that the trees are more likely to be in flower earlier in the Spring. It is planned to have a Spring themed ‘bring & share’ tea with traditional dancing and music from 3pm – 5pm. The village hall to 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 and tables.  Orchard Friends to be notified of the 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.  Other orchard websites to be monitored for ideas on events and activities. | SS  LB  SS  SS |
| **4.Orchard maintenance** | BM to be provided with a list of the 71 trees and sponsors.  All of the mulch mats had been taken up and weeds removed from around the trees to allow water penetration during the dormant season. The old mats have been stacked up by the fence and should be taken off site once the soil and vegetation attached to them has dried up.  It was agreed that a suitable fertiliser, e.g., Growmore, should be worked into the soil around the drip-line of each tree. Advice needed on the quantity of fertiliser to purchase and the amount required for each tree, (45gm?) so this can be measured out for those applying it. Water will need to be applied at the same time as gently forking in the fertiliser. These jobs will be done on **Monday 12th March at 2pm**.  A sample of very well-rotted horse manure had been provided by Tony Towns and all agreed that it could be used as mulch for the fruit trees. TT to be asked to suggest a date when members of the committee could bag up the mulch to take to the orchard.  Orchard Friends to be informed that mulch spreading will be on **Saturday 24th March at 10.00** and advised to wear gloves and bring trugs, wheelbarrows, spades and forks.  MT was thanked for having pruned all of the apples and pears.  The hedges around the orchard need to be cut back to about 5 foot high. It was agreed to start the pruning at **9.30am on** **Thursday 22 February**. Cut material to be taken to the back of the village hall for burning when dry. Orchard Friends to be informed of the date.  The replacement ‘Pearl’ apple tree had been planted.  Bird scarers using CDs and foil trays would be put on canes between the trees to deter birds from pecking emerging fruit buds in the next 2 weeks. These need to be moved frequently to maintain the element of surprise. | SL  All  MT/BM/LB  MT/BM/LM/ MF/GP/SM  MF  SS  All  SS  MT |
| **5 .Review of the Orchard Budget** | Orchard account balance at 8 February was £1,022.00  Income: £11.76 (Wassail donations).  No new Invoices  Approved new expenditure: fertiliser and tree ties. Cost tbc.  CCC had confirmed that they would not consider waiving the annual rent payments. The Parish Council would receive an invoice for £200 in March. Enquiries are now being made to see whether the City Council would sell the site to the Parish Council.    Expression of Interest forms to be completed for: secure storage facilities; tractor mower and motorised scythe; and possible land purchase by **23 February** for the Community Event on 3 March. | SL  LB  LB  SM/MF/LB |
| **6. Publicity** | Posters to be produced for the Blossom event.  Local schools to be contacted about orchard events.  Article written on the Wassail and an orchard update for inclusion in the February edition of Chignal News. | SM  SS  MT |
| **7. Date of next meeting** | **Tuesday 10th April 2018, 9.30 am at “Bumbys”, Fox Road, Mashbury** | MT |