**Chignals & Mashbury Community Jubilee Orchard**

**Minutes of the Chignal Parish Council**

**On-line Orchard Sub-Committee Meeting**

**27th November 2020**

**Present:** Parish Cllrs: Lynn Ballard (Committee Chairman and Secretary); Jon Lewis

Co-opted members: Steve Middleditch, 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 21 August 2020 Sub-Committee** | **Orchard entrance.** The edge of the grass ramp leading from the road to the entrance gate has been heavily eroded by vehicles making it difficult to drive into the orchard. The City Council as landlord to be approached about providing suitable kerbing.  **Shed** - alarm to be sourced.  Other Sub-Committee actions were picked up on the agenda. | LB  SM/BM |
| **2. Resignations and Election of Chairman** | Notice of resignations were received from Malcolm Feltwell (Committee Chairman) and Barbara Miller. Both were thanked for their services to the orchard.  Lynn Ballard was elected as Committee Chairman, (proposed by Moira Tarrant and seconded by Steve Middleditch). |  |
| **3.Orchard events, activities and marketing** | **Harvest Thanksgiving, St Nicholas churchyard 11 October**  Due to COVID restrictions, the usual Fruit Celebration in the orchard was cancelled. Instead a report was given on the orchard harvest at the Harvest Thanksgiving service and quinces were displayed. Rev. Janet Nicholls has been booked for the Harvest Festival and Orchard Fruit Celebration on **Sunday 17th October 2021.**  **Marketing**: Chignal News article to be drafted for December edition including photos of the Harvest Thanksgiving and information on the orchard fruit harvested this year.  **Orchard Friends:** SM offered to draft email communications for LB to distribute to Orchard Friends and parish contacts.  **Tree sponsorship:** SS has been invited to take responsibility for organising this scheme.  **Website:** the Clerk was asked when the free service offered on the new website [www.e-voice.org.uk/Chignal-Parish](http://www.e-voice.org.uk/Chignal-Parish) is likely to be withdrawn. The Clerk will post Orchard committee minutes on the website plus fruit tree information. | LB  SM/MT  SM/LB  SS  Clerk |
| **4.Orchard maintenance** | **Fruit trees.** Fruit harvest information to be provided for the Dec edition of Chignal News: this varies from year to year**.** Messages should be written on the white board inviting visitors to try fruit put out in trays on the picnic table.  Tree health will be monitored when the apples and pears are pruned during the Christmas period. Mystery ‘Johnny Mount’ pear to be renamed as ‘Improved Fertility’. MT to confirm name change with SM and SS to alter the orchard fruit tree plan, the name plaque and tree sponsor list.  Fertiliser and mulch to be applied in February. More Growmore to be purchased if necessary. Email photos of the extensive mulching around fruit trees at Hyde Hall.  Some of the old posts to be retained to support wobbly trees such as Apple ‘Chelmsford Wonder’.Remainder of the posts to be repurposed.  MT to check and take note of plaques when tree pruning and re-fix with covered wire. SM has the engineering block, letter stamps and some aluminium blanks if changes need to be made.  **Maintenance tasks**  **Grass cutting.** JL, SM and Andy Scheidegger authorised to use the mower. AS to instruct JL on mower use. Record book to be put in the shed to note date, name and duration of each mowing session. Costs to be sought for servicing the mower.  **Hedge cutting.** Date to be canvassed in February. Only hedge trimmers, pruning saws and loppers to be used. Orchard Friends to be asked to help clear up the hedge cuttings when date confirmed.  **Wildlife monitoring:** the wildlife camera captured images of a squirrel interested in the air monitoring station and a fox by the composted grass.  **Picnic table:** work to sand it and treat with the preservative used on the shed to be assessed.  **Installing the new bench**: review fixing methods in the Spring.  **Shed:** MT was thanked forpainting with preservative and for putting in hooks to hang up the ladder.  Slabs for the water butts to sit on to be investigated as some vulnerable trees still need to be watered.  Information on fruit trees to be laminated and pinned on the front of the shed.  **Orchard Information Panel:** marine ply would be more in keeping than analuminium weather proof backing board for the new Orchard Information Panel. A wooden panel would need to be preserved on a regular basis. SM to investigate with a view to erecting the board in the spring.  **Car park.** A pull down bollard will be installed at the entrance to the playing field car park to control unauthorised use. The car park is valued by orchard users. | MT  MT/SM/SS  LB  LB/SM  SM/JL  MT  SM  JL/AS  SM  JL  JL/AS/LB/SM  SM  JL  JL  JL  JL  MT  SM |
| **5 .Review of the Orchard Committee Budget** | Balance (at Nov 2020): £557.50  Income: none  Approved new expenditure:  Growmore fertiliser tbc  Mower servicing tbc. | LB  JL |
| **6. ESORG** | Essex Orchards Group (ESORG) meetings have been put on hold during COVID-19 but access to a network of local fruit growers is useful to exchange ideas and experiences. | LB/MT |
| **7. Date of next meeting** | **On-line meeting on Friday 19th February 2021 at 9.30am** | LB/Clerk |