**Chignals & Mashbury Community Jubilee Orchard**

**Minutes of the Chignal Parish Council**

**Orchard Sub-Committee Meeting**

**2nd July 2024, 3 Pitt Cottages**

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

Co-opted members: Sandra Bailey (Chignals & Mashbury Community Group)

**Apologies:** Moira Tarrant, Maggie Mills, Sarah Scott,

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Agenda items** | **Action points** | **Responsible** |
| **1. Actions from 6th March 2024** | Outstanding items were picked up on the agenda. |  |
| **2.Orchard events, activities and marketing** | Orchard events and activities in 2024  **Coffee in the Orchard.** 15 people attended on 8th May and 5 on 12 June. As these events attracted some first time visitors to the orchard, it was agreed to run them again next year on similar dates.  **Village Fete 1st June.** A joint stand with the Gardening Club had worked well with a display stand and list of orchard events. Some Orchard Friends provided plants for the stall. Repeat next year but with new orchard display material and a leaflet featuring a map of the trees, list of sponsors and orchard events. Investigate using a graphic designer to produce this promotional material.  **Mid-Summer Wildflower Picnic, 22 June.** 30 people attended**.** The Community Group paid £250 for the musician who was very well received. £90 was raised through donations on the day to be used to offset the cost of the musician. Most people joined the wildflower walk and were interested to know more about them. It was agreed to hold a similar event next mid-summer and to investigate other entertainers. Local resident singer, Deborah Rivers to be approached. .  **Hay Raking Social.** Bring your own lunch, in early September. Dates to be advised after scything completed.  **Autumn Fruit Celebration**, **2.30pm Sat 26th October** in the village hall. Hall booked from 1pm.Community Group to be asked to make and serve afternoon tea. Cost to be covered from the Orchard budget and donations on the day**.** Consider having ancillary attractions such as mandala making.  **Carol Singing**, December by the local Salvation Army Choir with mulled wine. To be considered again at the September meeting.  **Orchard Friends**: continue to use the existing orchard email address to promote upcoming events to Orchard Friends.  Suggestion to produce an annual Christmas card with information about local clubs, events and the new website which could be delivered to each household. Add to Parish Council agenda on 9th September.  **New Website**: need to keep orchard pages up to date and add missing information. | SB  LB/SB  SB  LB/SB  AS/JL/LB  SB  LB  MM  LB  LB/JL  JL |
| **3.Orchard maintenance** | **Fruit trees:** George Cave apple trees thinned 14 June. Other fruit trees to be thinned, as appropriate, on Monday 8th July at 2.30pm. Volunteers to be invited to help. Inspect plums and George Cave apples during July/August, and use Moira’s fruit harvesting timetable to guide other picking times. Invite Orchard Friends to help with picking of selected trees. Order storage boxes and fruit display stand. CIL grant application approved in January 2024: £120.00 for 10 x fruit storage boxes; £60.00 for 1 x 3 tier stacking display stand for fruit.  Agreed to apply for funding, (up to £200) from the Village Fete committee for the purchase of fruit picking equipment: 2 x Darlac fruit grabber £52.99 [Darlac Telescopic Fruit Grabber DP116 | Darlac Garden Tools](https://darlac.com/product/dp116-telescopic-fruit-grabber/) 2 x Pluko Picking Bag £56.99 [Pluko Picking Bag | Orchard and Harvesting Work | Fruit (vigopresses.co.uk)](https://vigopresses.co.uk/pluko-picking-bag/) Mower and trailer to be used to transport fruit to the shed.  **Orchard estate**: continue to cut paths as required. Set a date for scything towards the end of August.  **Pedestrian access improvements.** Consider options for installing a moveable handrail and posts to improve the safety of the entrance.  **Wild plants, insects and animals**: wide range of wildflowers, including bee and pyramidal orchids. Oxeye daisy and yellow rattle prolific. Large numbers of solitary bee nests in the bug hotel.  **Orchard Information Board**: JL was thanked for producing new artwork for the information board. The existing oak posts could be re-used to support two waterproof aluminium and plastic boards with a matt finish. Cost estimated to be £70 plus VAT for each board. Order to be confirmed at the Parish Council meeting on 8th July. Original CIL grant approved in March 2019 was for £230 including VAT. | All  LB  LB  JL  LB  AS/JL  AS  JL  JL |
| **4. Orchard Committee Budget** | Orchard Committee current budget balance: £1,180.80 at 2nd July 2024  Planned Expenditure: £20 hall hire for 26 October Fruit Celebration.  Other items: storage boxes, fruit display stand, information board and harvesting equipment to be covered by CIL and Village Fete Committee grants.  Expected income: donations at the Fruit Celebration.  Consider 3 year tree sponsorship renewal for Spring 2025 at the September meeting. | Clerk  SS |
| **5. Essex Orchards Group** | Continue to monitor events and news from the group. No update from the City Council on the re-establishment of the Tree Warden Network. | LB |
| **6. Date of next meeting** | **Tuesday 3rd September at 2.30pm at 3 Pitt Cottages** | LB |