

## **BARBY TOWNLANDS AND EDUCATIONAL CHARITY**

**Minutes of a meeting of the trustees held on Tuesday 12th January 2016 at Hopthorpe Farm, 18 Kilsby Road, Barby at 7.30pm.**

Present - Sally Robbins (Chairman), Richard Camp, Derek Middleton, Peter Owen, Rob Wilson and Carol Hamp.

1. Apologies - were received from Graham Sloper.
2. Declarations of interest - none.
3. Minutes of the Meeting on Wednesday 30th September were agreed as a correct record and signed.
4. Matters arising from the Minutes - there were none.
5. Land Management

### Allotments

- a) Richard reported the work on the plum trees had been done and the invoice passed to Carol for payment. It was agreed to inform the allotment holders near the plum trees that they can trim off any suckers that grow or any low branches.
- b) Sally had written a letter to Mr Thompson authorising him to weed kill the paths, thanking him for his offer and asking him to give a bill for his expenses to Carol.
- c) Sally stated that the allotment renewal letters were due to go out soon, Sally to update the form with the new details and Richard will photocopy them. It was agreed that the rent will go up to £21.

### Millenium Orchard

- a) Richard has propped up the trees where needed.
- b) It is too wet to top up the granite chippings and weed kill the pétanque area, it was agreed to postpone till it was drier.
- c) The gate still needs fixing - to be organised.
- d) A letter of complaint has been received from Mr Sandy Tocher about the broken gate and the hedge leading up to the Orchard. It was agreed that we should ask Steve Hartwell to add the hedge trimming on to his mowing the Orchard contract. Sally to reply to Mr Tocher.
- e) Apple Day - numbers attending were slightly less but it was agreed it was successful, leftover food was used at the cubs bonfire night. Apple Day 2016 will be held on Sunday 2nd October.
- f) Garage - no issues.
- g) Tennis Court - no issues.
- h) Pasture Land - Richard reported that 420 trees were due to be delivered soon. Village help will be needed to plant them. Carol will publicise in village Newsletter asking for volunteers and then coordinate when trees arrive and a date is agreed.
- i) Arable Land - Mr Evans has agreed to do the fencing work as soon as the weather is drier.

### 6. Leases

Graham has been dealing with the leases and as unable to attend this meeting has given a report which Sally read out -

- a) Tennis Courts, Play Area and Sports Fields - these leases are now complete and files have been drawn up for each which include copies of the lease.
- b) Garage

This 25 year lease is very nearly complete. At the last minute there has been a query from Graham Lightfoot concerning the boundary at the entrance which was drawn a few feet in from the line of the hedge. GL asked if this could be changed as, for insurance purposes, he is being required to fit a gate or chain across the entry (will only be closed at night and weekends he told Graham). This has been agreed to and the drawing is being amended.

In order to ensure that there is vehicular access to the tennis courts a clause will be added to the lease stating that this is a condition. Normal access to the court for players will be through the gate in the hedge as at present.

After discussion with GL and his son the lease includes a capped rent review every 5 years. The cap is set at 15% in any 5 year period.

c) Arable Land let to Mr Evans

Graham has signed the document that gives the Charity the small area of this field. Mr Evans has been asked to do the fencing and he has agreed to this. However, because of the extremely wet weather he has not done it yet. However he has said if we want to go ahead with the tree planting he has no objection to this although, again because of the weather this may not yet be feasible.

d) Pasture Land let to Mr Carter

Notice of a rent review was served last year. Jennifer Whitton from Howkins has provided the following advice about rent.....

Having looked over the file, but without having discussed at all with Mr Carter yet she would propose a rent increase to no less than £100 per acre.

Mr Carter is currently paying £82.25 per acre which is well below the current levels which can be up to £120 per acre for pasture land.

Jennifer stated that the fields are in a good location and would attract a number of bids if re-let on the open market so she sees no reason why Mr Carter should not be paying a higher rent for the land. The fact that has the biggest impact is the current agricultural climate - with continuously bad weather and poor meat prices many farmers are struggling - however, there are plenty that aren't and she thinks this should be taken into consideration when discussing the rent.

It was agreed to ask Graham to ask Jennifer to put the rent up to £100 per acre, saying that she has advised to charge £120 but the trustees are keen not to raise his rent by too much, since he is a good steady tenant, and so have set the level at £100, but that this is not negotiable. Sally to contact Graham.

There was also a discussion about the trees along Longdown Lane. We were thinking to have them surveyed, because of the risk that they may topple over, possibly onto the road, but we are not sure if that is our responsibility. Can Graham ask Alistair Frew about this please? The question is - are we responsible for the safety of the trees on the boundaries of our land which is leased to others? Sally to contact Graham.

The trustees are extremely grateful to Graham for all his work on the leases and hope he will continue overseeing the leases.

7. Accounts

£14,174 in the Current Account. COIF Account £24,500.

8. Correspondence

A letter has been received from Barby Cricket Club thanking the Trustees for the grant towards the cost of refurbishment at the Sports Pavillion.

9. Grants - none received.

## 10. Secretarial Vacancy

Closing date for applications is 15th January. There has only been one application so far. It was agreed Sally, Richard and Rob will meet as soon as possible after the 15th to discuss requirements and interview the candidate.

Having resigned from her post as Secretary, Catherine Camp sent a report to the meeting in which she informed the trustees that she has taken all the valuable and ancient paperwork pertaining to Barby Townlands and Educational Charity to the Records Office in Northampton for safe keeping. All other paperwork and on line documents to be handed over to her successor at a convenient date. The trustees asked Richard to pass on our thanks and asked her to bill us for any time and expenses she has incurred or will incur during the handover.

Catherine also sent a to do list which has been dealt with and minuted during this meeting.

## 11. Leaving Gift for Catherine

It was agreed to purchase a day course at Coton Manor Gardens. Sally to organise.

## 12. Any Other Business

a) Money from Church Charity Funds, this needs to be followed up when new Secretary in place.

Date of next meeting - Wednesday 13th April at 7.30pm at Hophorne Farm, 18 Kilsby Road.