

**Wheathampstead Parish Council
Maintenance Committee
26 September 2016, 19.30h**

Present	Councillors	T Reason G Clark A Dante S Haynes D Johnston P Woodhams	Chairman
		Julia Warren	Clerk
		Press	0
		Public	0

4779-16 Apologies & Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillors E Habib, L Halford and J Shardlow (personal reasons).

4780-16 Public Speaking

None.

4781-16 Specific Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None.

4782-16 Minutes of Maintenance Committee meeting of 18 July 2016

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Dante, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2016 be approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2016 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

4783-16 Report of Maintenance Contractor

It was reported that with exception of the Education Centre (to be done by hand) all areas requiring an autumn cut and lift had been cut and cleared, piles of vegetation heaped would be removed shortly, Ie Meads North, Meads Dell, Bower Heath, Gustard Wood Old 19th Green, Melissa.

It was agreed that the vegetation east north Meads between the young and recently pollarded willows did not need strimming. The willows were growing extremely well, a great example of regeneration.

It was agreed that the ranger be approached for advice on winter work in Marshalls Heath, quotations to be brought to the next meeting.

Rubber crumb had been delivered for the ATP for ongoing maintenance.

The lower limbs of the Brocket View lime tree overhanging the footway had been removed

The seat at Melissa favoured as a roosting point for birds was regularly washed, and the concrete used to limit access prior to installation of the gate was to be removed in the coming week.

A blitz on clearing the Memorial Hall carpark of leaves was imminent

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston and it was agreed that the grass in the Meads Community Orchard, as requested by the ranger, be strimmed. Estimated cost- £60-70.

Graffiti on youth shelter to be painted out as previously

Quotes would be sought for the next meeting or clearance of ELCP of rubbish/ debris and cutting back of vegetation along Meads Lane to improve sight lines including at pedestrian egress point to overflow car park.

Resolved To note the report.

4784-16 Work of rangers and open space management including river works

The Meads Ranger reported that the litter problems continued.

The Rectory Copse ranger reported that a number of ferns had failed possibly as the area was too dry, it was agreed that summer bulbs be planted.

Most of the work in Tithe Barn Yard had been completed, follow up from Hammersmatch regarding the buried power cable was awaited.

Resolved To note the reports.

4785-16 River work report

It was reported that the HMWT and Environment Agency had responded positively to work opening up the river at East Lane Car Park.

Resolved To note the report.

4786-16 Willows on North Meads

Further to Minute 4722-16 a report detailing the success of the pollarding of the goat willows and planting of willow setts a recommendation for their management and for a further plantation of specialist willows had been circulated. This included planting of up to 30 willow sets supplied and chosen from the National Willow Collection at Rothamsted Research with attractive winter stem colours and leaf shapes which were suitable for growth in the pollarded form. Suitable varieties to be chosen late 2016 and the setts stored ready for planting in spring 2017.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that a budget of £300 be approved to include volunteer supplies and equipment

Resolved To approve a budget of £300 to produce and maintain the new willow plantation

4787-16 Tree work and vegetation management

Consideration was given to infilling the tree line gap on the North Meads to screen the houses. It was estimated that perhaps three mature trees would be required.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Dante, and it was agreed, that Rothamsted Research be approached for guidance on suitable varieties, and that these then be costed.

It was noted that the cherry tree overhanging the tennis courts needed pruning, advice to be sought on timing prior to undertaking work.

Further to Minute 4722-16 residents continued to seek that Wheathampstead Parish Council undertake work on trees overhanging their property. Councillors believed that the strategy/ policy was clear, Councillor Johnston proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that a standard letter response be drawn up.

Resolved

- 1 To note the reports.**
- 2 To seek advice from Rothamsted Research on suitable tree varieties to infill the gap between North Meads and housing.**
- 3 That a standard response letter explaining the Tree Strategy be drawn up.**

4788-16 Tree pest guidance

Forestry Commission guidance on tree pests such as Sweet Chestnut Blight had been circulated for information. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that links to Forestry Commission and other appropriate websites be included from the Parish Council website to advise of pests, diseases, notifiable plants etc.

Resolved That links to Forestry Commission and other appropriate websites be included from the Parish Council website to advise of pests, diseases, notifiable plants etc

4789-16 Play Area signage and maintenance

Play area signage was considered and with amendments as discussed the Chairman proposed and it was agreed this be purchased and installed.

Resolved To purchase and install signage as discussed

4790-16 Memorial Hall no exit signage

It was reported that drivers continued to ignore the no exit signs from the carpark onto Marford Road, at times near misses occurred. An additional 'no exit' sign has been purchased and would be installed on the grass bank near the disabled bays.

Resolved That an additional 'No exit' sign be situated on the grass bank opposite the disabled bays parallel to Marford Road.

4791-16 Marford Football Pavilion

Further to Minute 4726-16 it was reported that work to the refurbishment of the Marford Pavilion was progressing

Resolved To note the report.

4792-16 Budget report

The report as circulated was noted

Resolved To note the report

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.50h.

Dated this day of 2016

Chairman