

# BLAXHALL COMMONS and OPEN SPACES CHARITABLE TRUST

## MINUTES OF TRUSTEES' MEETING

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 4:00pm

At Vine Cottage

*Attendance:* Andrew Derrick - Trustee

Karen Baker - Trustee

Eve Rossor - Trustee

Mark Oakley - Trustee

Rosy Thornton - Trustee

Joy Shaw - Blaxhall Tree Warden

*Apologies:* None received.

### 1. *Minutes of previous meetings*

The minutes of the meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were approved, and the draft minutes of the AGM of 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were agreed as correct. Both will be put on the website.

### 2. *Matters arising*

There were none not otherwise on the agenda.

### 3. *Blaxhall Festival and Fete*

Joy reported that Miranda Barclay had asked for help with the Blaxhall Festival, to be held on the weekend of 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June. Miranda would be grateful for help setting up at the churchyard on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, and had asked specifically whether BCOST could provide refreshments in the Village Hall on the Saturday and Sunday afternoons, from 2:00 to 4:00pm on each day. It was agreed that BCOST would provide tea, coffee and biscuits. Charging for refreshments was discussed, but it was agreed this was inappropriate as the Festival is fundraising for the church; instead it was

agreed to ask for voluntary contributions to BCOST. It was agreed that BCOST will have information display boards in the Village Hall during the Festival, to be set up either on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June or on the Saturday morning.

**Action:** – Eve to organise a rota by email circulation of who will serve refreshments on each afternoon of the Festival, and who will bring what provisions.

- Rosy to extract materials from the website to include in the display and send these to Mark to print out in A3 or A4 as appropriate.

- Andrew and Eve to set up the display on the Friday or Saturday morning.

- All to investigate money boxes suitable for fundraising events.

It was also agreed that BCOST will have a display at the Blaxhall Village Fete on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August.

#### *4. Jasper's Pightle*

Rosy and Eve reported that they have mulched much of the newly planted hedge with the bracken raked up in past years. They suggested that the remaining hedging would benefit from mulching and it was agreed that a work party should be organised.

**Action:** Work party at Jasper's Pightle to be held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June at 4:00pm.

It was noted that the bracken is now growing strongly in parts of the Pightle, especially those areas which have had fewer years' cutting. It was agreed that SWT should be contacted to arrange for the bracken to be cut at the end of July, or in August depending whether ground nesting birds are still present.

**Action:** Eve to contact Ben Calvesbert about carrying out the cut.

It was noted that the Management Plan for Jasper's Pightle schedules the cutting back of old gorse for this autumn. It was agreed to have this as an agenda item at the next Trustees' meeting.

Karen reminded the Trustees of the decision to put a sign up at the Pightle, similar to those at Stone Common indicating Prevost's Path. It was agreed

that the sign should simply read 'Jasper's Pightle', and that it should be placed on the northern path, possibly near the bench.

**Action:** Eve to order the sign.

## *5. Stone Common*

The Trustees discussed the state of the allotments. It was noted that the part of allotment number 29 which had been cleared by Karen over the winter and early spring, and which had been offered to a Stone Common resident on an informal basis, was becoming overgrown again.

**Action:** Andrew to contact Stone Common resident to ascertain whether he still wishes to work the allotment, as informally agreed.

Joy reported that she, together with BCOST Trustees and other supporters, had cut back the Alexanders from along the pathways and elsewhere at Stone Common to try to prevent their setting seed, but that some areas have now regrown. Eve and Rosy volunteered to clear the regrowth.

**Action:** Eve to liaise with Rosy about further cutting of Alexanders.

Joy also reported that the acid grassland to the left of Prevost's Path is growing quite well. It was agreed that twice yearly bracken cutting should continue in line with the Management Plan, to encourage wild flower growth. Joy will be contacting the Kerr family about further hedge planting along the track from Church Road, and will mention the need for bracken cutting at Stone Common and ask whether the Kerr farm staff and machinery might be available to help with this.

**Action:** Joy to contact the Kerrs.

## *6. Electricity installations: wayleave or easement?*

The Trustees discussed again the advantages and disadvantages of both options and agreed to continue with the Wayleave, as forfeiting ongoing annual payments in favour of the one-off capital sum gained from granting an easement could only be justified if the capital was likely to bring in for the foreseeable future an annual income greater than that arising from the Wayleave, or alternatively if the Trust had a major project requiring such

capital. It was agreed that this decision could be reviewed at a future date if this was thought appropriate.

## *7. Insurance costs*

The Trustees discussed again the increase in its insurance premium resulting from the inclusion of employer's liability for participants in work parties. Eve noted that that the litter picking in particular, taking place on the highway, seemed to be the main reason for the increase in premium. It was suggested that the Parish Council, which already has employer's liability insurance, might in future take responsibility for litter picks (as used to happen in the past, Mark noted) and for hedge-planting along public highways, with BCOST organising this work for the Parish Council and providing volunteers.

**Action:** – Eve to check with NFU whether the current higher premium would be reduced if BCOST no longer ran litter picks.

– Mark to bring the subject to the July meeting of the Parish Council.

– Eve to send Mark a note of the insurance premium pre and post adding the employer's liability.

## *8. Finance*

In Mike's absence there was no finance report.

## *9. AOB*

There was no other business.

## *10. Date of next meeting*

The next meeting be held on Saturday 19th August at 4:00pm at Vine Cottage.