

Thorncombe Village Trust
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on
Thursday 12th May 2016 at 1930 at
Thorncombe Village Hall

Trustees Present: John Higgs (chair), Sally Welford (vice-chair), Mary Marsh (treasurer), Richard Holt (Secretary), Mark Agnew, Kate Cahn.

1 Apologies: Janet Walker, John Whitbread.

2 Election of Trustees. In accordance with the Constitution, all trustees are required to resign at the AGM, and may then put themselves forward for re-election. There were no new applicants to become trustees, and all trustees were re-elected. The officers of the Trust remain the same for the coming year. There was some discussion about how the election of trustees should proceed each year. It was agreed that an invitation should be made before the AGM in future years for individuals to become trustees. Trustees should be elected up to a maximum of eight, and the Trustees will then elect the Officers of the Trust from their number afterwards.

3 Minutes of last meeting. The minutes of the inaugural Annual General Meeting on 25th June 2015 were read and approved, and were signed by the Chairman

4 Chairman's Report. The Trustees had received four applications for grants in the past year that had been considered, and had proceeded with steps to manage the trees planted in Johnson's Wood. More details on this would be covered in later items on the Agenda. A request had been received in recent weeks from the parish church for the Trust to contribute to the cost of felling and managing trees in the churchyard that has recently been done.

5 Treasurer's Report. The balance in the current account at 31 March 2016 was £7626.54 plus £67.42 in petty cash. At the date of the AGM the balance in the current account is £7575.54, and there is £65.77 in petty cash.

The small shareholding in Santander has presented considerable problems in resolving. There are 2 shares with current value of between £6.77 and about £10.00. At the last trustees' meeting, it was agreed to ask Santander to donate these few shares to charitable causes, given the small sum involved and the difficulty of changing ownership to the new trustees. The Dorset Wildlife Trust will be informed of the donation and will be encouraged to apply for the funds.

A cheque that had been sent to a speaker under the previous Trust arrangements had been returned since the talk was never given. This appears in the accounts.

A grant was made to Rachael Whitbread during the year for work to digitise the WI scrapbook, so as to make it available to a wider audience. The full cost had been paid by the Trust, but the WI had indicated that they will contribute half the cost. This has not yet been received, but is expected in due course.

A vote of thanks to the Treasurer was proposed and approved.

6 Secretary's report. No correspondence has been received, and there is nothing further to report. Richard Holt and Sally Welford exchanged posts in March.

7 Applications for Grants. Four applications for grants were received last year. These concerned a sum towards refurbishing roadside finger posts in the Parish, Improvements to the footpath between High Street and Gribb View, and Digitising the WI Scrapbook, all of which were approved. An application for funds towards refurbishing the Playground was deferred pending more information.

8 Constitution Amendments. The new Constitution drawn up and adopted in 2015 has been reviewed by Dick Arnold. He submitted amendments to the Trustees, none of which made significant changes to the content, but rather clarified clauses and made the meaning of some clauses more precise.

Section 7 of the Constitution deals with trustees having a pecuniary interest in an application. Discussion on this took place and it was agreed to expand the wording to cover a situation where a trustee might have a connection to an application through another organisation in the parish, rather than a pecuniary interest.

The Trustees expressed their thanks to Dick Arnold for carrying out this work.

9 Johnson's Wood. The TVT was closely involved in the planning and planting of this stretch of woodland between the village and Dungeon Wood. The Trustees had sought advice on the management of this attractive spot and two representatives of the Axe Vale and District Conservation Society very kindly came to assess what needed to be done. Their expertise was in entomology and tree management. They advised that no trees needed to be removed by hand, but rather left to survive or die back naturally. Trees that died should be left as a refuge for wildlife and not cleared away. An infilling of hazel on the field side of the trees could be added. The small patch of trees and brambles in the open area below the planted trees should be cleared in the autumn, and the very many new shoots of blackthorn invading from the northern side should be cut and treated to preserve the open meadow. Since there is no longer any grazing by livestock in the enclosure, consideration should be given to cutting the grass back and removing the cuttings to promote wild flowers. Bluebell seeds from the nearby plants could be collected in summer and spread near the trees to encourage their spread. Mr. Johnson has been approached and has agreed to adding a new pedestrian access to the wood at the village end to encourage walkers to enjoy the area. It has been suggested that the stiles on the footpath be replaced by gates to improve access for People of Restricted Mobility. This will be considered by the Trustees. It was noted that the Dorset AONB may provide grants for improved access for limited mobility.

8 Any Other Business.

- The request for the Trust to contribute to the cost of managing the Trees in the Churchyard was discussed. It was suggested that the Dorset Wildlife Trust has a scheme to promote wildlife in churchyards, and might be able to help.
- The Thorncombe Thorn at the crossroads has gone. It was suggested that the Trust might look into replacing it and managing the verge in that area.

- The TVT has paid an annual membership subscription of £36.00 to the Dorset Wildlife Trust. The Village Trust has a long association with this body and it was agreed to continue the subscription until further notice.
- The Johnson's Wood work could include the provision of a table and bench to encourage people to use the area. Any equipment installed would need to be robust. It was suggested that recycled plastic furniture is robust and attractive and low maintenance.
- The Sports and Social Club has a "Jubilee Tree" that was planted on a line between the Changing rooms and the pitch, and is now an obstruction. The Club are looking to move the tree and hope that the Trust could assist.

9 Date of Next Meeting: The Trustee's next meeting will be held on Monday 27th June 2016 at 1930 at the School House.

The meeting closed at 2100.