

TVT Board of Trustees
Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 22nd June 2021 at 1930
The Village Hall, Chard Street, Thorncombe

Present: Kate Cahn (Chair), Mark Agnew (Treasurer), Richard Holt (Secretary), John Whitbread, Neil Croton

1 Apologies: Janet Walker

2 Minutes of last meeting. The minutes of the last meeting on 25th May 2021 were read and approved, and were signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

School project. Contact has been made with Catherine Davies. She said the school was keen to go ahead, and was invited to submit request for grants for any revised items.

Gates for Johnson's wood. Still no word from Dorset Council, so agreed to go ahead and purchase gates. There was a suggestion for a simple steel gate, such as that fitted on Mike Turner's boundary, with a cranked hinge giving a strong closing force. This may well be cheaper and easier to install than a kissing gate, while being equally secure for livestock, and may be considered for future projects.

There was discussion on re-wilding areas in the village. The wildflowers already in the churchyard are left by the mowers until finished flowering, but there may be scope for re-wilding part of the churchyard. The vicar to be consulted – MA to action. The School grounds and the green area at the village Hall are other possible areas.

3 Resumption of Talks in the Village Hall. Discussion took place on the best timing for any talks. A pilot event is to take place in the autumn. The importance of the subject of any talks being of direct local interest was raised. Speakers would be requested to speak without a fee, although if products are involved, these could be promoted. A number of suggestions for likely speakers were made and some of these will be approached to see if they would be willing to participate.

Themed walks would be desirable, and likely to attract interest. The best time for these would be next spring, and the trustees will meet in September to plan both types of event.

Good publicity will be essential to generate interest. Posters will be prepared in good time and announcements made in the parish magazine, together with invitations to suggest subjects for walks and talks.

4 Any Other Business.

Replacement trees. There are gaps in the oak tree avenue below Venn Chapel, and there are areas where there are dead ash trees. The Trust could become involved in replacements.

A survey of plants in the churchyard could be incorporated in village activities with the Trust.

Notices will be posted to invite application for grants from the Trust. This will be in conjunction with information about proposed events.

5 Planning Application in Fore Street

Kate Cahn declared an interest in this item, and withdrew from the meeting.

An application for planning permission has been made at a site off Fore Street in the village. The trustees discussed the detail of this application to consider the implications for the village. In the Design and Access statement there are assertions about the applications that appear to be incorrect. The applicant accepts that the proposal is not in accordance with the Local Development Plan, but that the need for housing generally overrides this. However, the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 11d refers to cases where there are no development plan policies. In this case there is a relevant policy, namely SUS2.

An application has been made for planning permission for a new 3-bedroom dwelling opposite Park View off Fore Street in the village. The village has had 40 new open market houses built in the last 24 years, most of which are 3 or 4 bed properties, and these appear regularly on the open market. These represent a 50% increase in the size of the village envelope over the 80 or so open-market houses beforehand. There does not appear to be a need for a further house of this type.

It is claimed that a bungalow existed on the site, but no evidence is offered for this. The new building would be about nine times the area of the original timber building, and three times the area of both existing buildings.

The applicant claims the local authority and the inspectorate have approved similar applications, whereas in fact they have turned down a number of such applications.

The Local Planning Authority removed Thorncombe's Defined Development Boundary in 2003, indicating they considered further development unsustainable, and this is reflected in the current Local Plan.

In view of Thorncombe's situation in an AONB we consider the application is also contrary to the environmental policy ENV1 in that the property would detract from rather than enhance the landscape character.

Of particular concern is that if approved, this application would set a precedent for allowing development in open countryside and especially Thorncombe.

The trustees voted to submit a letter of objection to the application on a vote of four in favour and two abstentions. The Secretary will therefore submit the objection in the agreed form.

6 Date of Next Meeting: The next planned meeting will be on Tuesday 14th September 2021 at 1930, in the School House. Earlier meetings will be convened as necessary if applications for grants are received.

The meeting closed at 2120.