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## **BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

[www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk)



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To All Members of the Council, public and press.

4<sup>th</sup> December 2012

There will be a meeting of the **Estates Committee** on **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012** at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:

1. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**  
Members are requested to declare any interests or lobbying on items in the agenda.
2. **Apologies and absence.**  
To receive apologies for absence.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012.**  
To consider the minutes of the meeting and if in order to sign as a true record (previously circulated).
4. **Matters Arising From Previous Minutes.**
  - 4.1 Minute 2430/6.2 Playground Inspection Course – Course has been undertaken. See report on page 3.
  - 4.2 Minute 2430/6.3 Tree maintenance and boundary treatment to Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard see report page 3.
  - 4.3 Minute 2433/13 Flag pole – This is in hand and will be progressed as time permits.
  - 4.4 Minute 2473/7 Carbon Footprint – To consider further estimates for solar panels at Beechen Hall as requested. See enclosed confidential report.

### **To adjourn the meeting to allow the public or press to comment**

5. **Sandy Lane land issues** - The working group will be meeting in the New Year to progress any identified issues.
6. **Assistant Clerk's Report.**
  - 6.1 Hire fees were received for Oct/Nov with a comparison for the same period in the previous year please see report on page 3
  - 6.2 New Hall Hire – To ratify the Assistant Clerk's decision after consulting with the committee out of meeting to allow Age Concern to hire Beechen Hall on Wednesdays and Fridays as a day centre. See report on pages 3-6.
  - 6.3 Damage to Beechen Hall – Please see report on pages 6-7.
  - 6.4 Wall Mounted boiler – See report on page 7.
7. **Tree Maintenance at Beechen Hall.**  
To decide which quotations to accept and to appoint a company to undertake the work, see enclosed confidential report.
8. **Caretaking at Beechen Hall.**  
To receive the notice of the Relief Caretaker and to receive information on the work and cost of an additional caretaker see report on pages 7.
9. **Beechen Hall Profit and Loss report.**  
To consider information which will be supplied before the meeting.

10. **Boxley Church Yard.**  
To consider the long term responsibility of the closed churchyard, see attached report pages 7-8.  
To consider what action to take on two trees in the closed churchyard: Yew Tree and damage being caused to the listed wall; Beechen Tree at rear of closed churchyard. See attached report page 8.
11. **2013/14 Draft Budget** – Members have an opportunity to submit projects or issues for funding in the draft budget.  
**Hall Budget**  
11.1 New front doors and windows at Beechen Hall – This was reviewed a year ago and is being revisited for consideration to put into 2014/15 budget to allow the office to plan for the work and closure of the hall.  
11.2 Hand dryers for the toilets. Please see confidential enclosure.  
11.3 Hall internal/External decoration. Please see report on page 8.  
11.4 Outside lockable electric socket see confidential enclosure.  
**General Budget**  
11.5 Common Land at Grange Lane – The Parish office has received a response from Land Registry which specifies this land is un-registered, members now have to decide if they wish to consider that the Parish Council should maintain it and if so to what extent.  
11.6 Cllr Ivor Davies has suggested a seat at the north end of Boxley Road on the small area there, see report page 9.  
11.7 Cllr Vic Davies requested a litter bin by the new seat at Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard. He also requested an additional seat up within the actual orchard area. See report on page 9.
12. **Review of Policies and Procedures.**  
12.1 Review of Hall Hire Fees – See Assistant Clerk's report to follow by the end of the week.
13. **Matters for Decision**  
14.1 Deferred from November parish council meeting. Royal visit commemorative plaque at the hall. A request was made for a plaque to be placed at the hall to commemorate this event. Are members in agreement with this request?
14. **Matters for Information**  
None at the time of compiling the agenda.
15. **Date of Next Meeting.**  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, Chatham commencing at 7.30 p.m.

## **Clerk to the Council**

**For information – items to be returned to December agenda Minute 2021/9.2 Tombs in closed churchyard.**

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**Item 4.1 Playground Inspection Course.** *Purpose of item; information.*

The course took place on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October, all participants passed and have been issued with certificates. At present MBC as they still have ownership of the play area inspect it however the Clerk has received the lease from MBC for the transfer of the land to the Parish Council and once it has been checked, signed and sent back the Parish Council will start to inspect the playground. The checklist forms and other documentation are currently being designed by the office.

**Item 4.2 Tree maintenance and boundary treatment to Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard.** *Purpose of item; information and decision.*

Cllr Harwood inspected the boundary and made the following report "I have had a good look at the boundary trees and hedges, especially from the Grove Green Lane perspective. I could not see any major problem with branches growing out into the road. I cut off anything that was projecting and used it to block up the unofficial access to the orchard from Grove Green Lane.

As regards a specification for maintenance I am aware that there has been a change in local opinion since the shopping parade application was submitted (essentially residents want to retain a robust screen). Therefore, I wonder whether any major works at all are required this winter. The only potential safety issue I could see is that there are two or three dying English elm trees within the hedgerow fronting Grove Green Lane which could conceivably be blown in to the highway (though elms usually just disintegrate gradually)."

The original plan when the Orchard was being organised and planted was to manage the boundary to encourage thicker lower growth by cutting back top growth on some trees and shrubs. There is budget in this financial year to do but nothing has been included in the draft budget for such work in 2012/13.

As the committee is about to appoint a contractor to undertake work at the hall it is suggested that the Chairman, Cllr Harwood and the Clerk be allowed to discuss and agree the boundary work with the contractor during a site visit and then to inform members. At the very least the 2/3 dying Elms will be removed.

**Item 6.1 Assistant Clerk's Report . Hire fees for Oct/Nov 2012** *Purpose of item for information*

(Brackets indicate income over same period previous year).

	<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>2011/2012</b>
Casual	£2,393.37	(£1,784.75)
Regular	<u>£4,164.84</u>	<u>(£2,947.75)</u>
Total	£6,558.21	(£4,692.50)
Cumulative figures for		
Casual	£11,016.97	(£ 7,843.14)
Regular	<u>£14,494.26</u>	<u>(£12,331.29)</u>
Total	£25,511.23	(£20,174.43)

**Item 6.2 New Hall Hire .** *Purpose of item; to ratify decision made out of meeting and to inform members that a risk assessment has been carried out to cover this hire. Members are also required to consider a request for kitchen equipment for the hall.*

'To ratify the Assistant Clerk's decision made out of meeting after consultation with member of the committee to allow Age Concern to hire Beechen Hall on Wednesdays and Fridays and a discount of 5% on the hall hire charge'.

By allowing the hall to be used by Age Concern and with the production of meals from this hire, the parish council has taken on a number of responsibilities and it is hoped that the following helps members understand the background issues. This report should also assure members that a system is being put in place to ensure that the hires go well and that actions

have been taken to highlight and then mitigate any 'risks' that may come about due to registration as a Food Business Establishment. Long standing members are reminded that similar work and risk mitigation was undertaken when the Clerk and Cllr Waller became Personal Licence Holders for the hall.

Age Concern will be running a day centre for the two days; with different activities organised during the day and with a hot meal being served. Vulnerable visitors will be picked up by an Age Concern bus whilst other elderly visitors may make their own way or be dropped off by relatives. Local residents can attend for a fee and this will be advertised to parishioners. It is suggested that a small article can be placed in the Downs Mail to advertise this service.

As meals, prepared from scratch, will be produced at the hall on a regular basis Beechen Hall will have to be registered as a food business establishment. The relevant paperwork has been submitted to The Food Safety Team at MBC\* which is responsible for inspecting food businesses to ensure that they are complying with both food safety and health and safety laws, investigate complaints about food and premises, and food poisoning. It also provides food safety training, advice to new business operators and register food businesses.

*\*From MBC website.*

### **"Food safety - inspections**

*The council carries out regular checks on all food premises to ensure the public is protected and that high standards are maintained.*

*Visits to premises are carried out, as far as possible, without prior notification and are priority programmed according to the degree of potential risk. This ensures that higher risk premises are visited more frequently than those in lower risk categories.*

*During an inspection, Officers will want to reassure themselves that potential food safety risks have been identified by the business, and that there are adequate controls in place to prevent any problems. They will also look at the training of managers and food handlers to ensure that it is suitable, and they will check that the condition of the premises and equipment is satisfactory.*

*Where practices or conditions are not satisfactory, every attempt will be made to resolve the situation by informal means, but where poor conditions persist, or where there is a risk to public health it may be necessary to resort to formal action. This could involve either the service of legal notice, prosecution, or in extreme cases closure of the business."*

Age Concern Malling operates day centres in Maidstone Borough and in particular Malling and so are known to MBC already. From conversations with an MBC officer it appears that Age Concern has a good reputation.

Age Concern will supply all staff and the Chef has the required food hygiene certificate and Age Concern will also be responsible for applying for the 'scores on the doors' certificate. Copies of the relevant certificates will be obtained by the parish office.

Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB). Since 1 January 2006 all food businesses must have a fully documented food safety management system based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP); Age Concern will be asked to provide this or their equivalent document.

Age Concern will be like any other hirer in that they will be required to leave the kitchen clean and tidy after their use. Age Concern has visited the hall and they were happy with the general facilities. The parish office has used common sense in reviewing the facilities and cannot see any issues regarding the kitchen layout and work tops; but will be advised by MBC if there are any concerns.

There are a number of issues that will affect the parish office/council.

- Kitchen cleanliness before and after the hires. The caretaker and office staff will monitoring the situation; in the early days of use this will be quite frequent but it is envisaged that this will tail off once everyone settles in. There will however always need to be some additional checking as ultimately the parish council will be awarded the Food Business Establishment registration. Additional cleaning of the fridge and oven may be required.
- MBC will undertake 'regular' inspections of the premises; the regularity depends on the establishment and who runs the service. For the hall it may only be once a year.

- Hall maintenance and cleaning. With nearly all the days now full this is being reviewed with safe working practices being put in place so that cleaning can take place during some hall hires. A separate risk assessment will be produced for the Estates Committee.
- Age Concern has to maintain a 'food preparation' folder for MBC visits in which they log checks and issues relating to food preparation and health and safety etc. Thus the onus on producing food to a safe level/standard is the responsibility of Age Concern.
- The installation of the water heater will have to be worked around the hires. Members having agreed that it can be done.
- On a Wednesday and Friday morning the mop, buckets and sweeping equipment will be moved out of the kitchen into the store room area, which Age Concern will have access to. It will be moved back to the kitchen after the hire so that it is available to casual users.
- Condensation. A review of this should be undertaken once the hires are underway as it is likely that condensation will become a problem when regular and major cooking starts. The previous condensation issue was caused by poor ventilation when the water urn was in use. A simple action that might get implemented to control condensation is to have a screen placed in front of the outside kitchen door so that, during cooking, the door can be kept open (it has a hook on the outside to secure it to the wall) but the kitchen still secured from flies etc. Members' will be kept informed of the situation. This expenditure could be covered by the extractor fan budget.

Storage. Age Concern has requested some storage space in the locked store room and this is being arranged. Dry stores, in adequate containers might be allowed to be retained in the storage area but no food will be allowed to be kept in the fridge between hires. Age Concern will be notified of this and the parish office will agree the items that can be kept in the store room. Age Concern will be required to insure all its own equipment that is kept in the store area.

Kitchen equipment. Pots, pans, ladles and spatulas etc. Age Concern does not own any of these, as each of the halls they use, are fully equipped. Would members consider purchasing the following equipment for the hall?

- Salt and pepper pots x 8 = £12.98
- Coloured chopping boards to conform with food hygiene requirements (Complete set of 6) = £27.50
- Baking trays x 3 = £29.99
- Roasting tray x 2 = £32.99
- Cook Knives (6 piece set) = £59.99
- Temperature probe = £12.99
- Mixing bowls x3 (Various sizes) = £19.99
- Vegetable peeler – £5.49
- Selection of kitchen utensils, ladel, spoons, potato masher, serving spoons etc = £70
- Saucepans = (Basic set of 3) £99.99

Total = £371.91

The equipment will be in the ownership of the hall and will be available to other hires.

- Microwave. The kitchen does not have a microwave and Age Concern asked about this. Initial thoughts are that there is insufficient space within the kitchen to be able to safely accommodate a microwave and yet still retain the flexibility that is needed for other hires; especially for outside bars. If needed this will be investigated further but in the meantime the office microwave will be made available for the odd occasions.
- Plates etc. Age Concern will be using the hall's plates and if there are any accidents then these will have to be replaced which will be an additional cost but balanced by the increased hire income.

- Refuse. The hall has two refuse bins but only pays for each 'lift'; thus if one bin is used it pays once if two bins are used it pays for two 'lifts'. It is not clear how much rubbish will be produced by the additional hires but it is likely that on busy weeks two refuse bins will be used. Discussions will be held with Age Concern about how they dispose of their rubbish and they will be encouraged to recycle as much as possible. The current refuse collection is for general non-hazardous waste from a community hall and parish office. It is considered that the main issue is how Age Concern will 'bag' their waste as we need to keep the rubbish compound as clean as possible.

The parish office does not envisage that there will need to be major work done to the kitchen to allow the hire to commence. Under Standing orders the Clerk can spend up to £500 to allow the day to day running of the parish council and will use this to cover small costs. The Chairman and committee will be notified of any non-housekeeping type expenditure. There will be additional expenditure on sundries: cleaning materials; replacing broken plates and general wear and tear however this would happen under any additional casual hire and is not unexpected.

**Item 6.3 Damage to Beechen Hall.** *Purpose of item; for information and to agree the Assistant Clerk's recommendations.*

Members are informed that there have been some challenging hires at Beechen Hall recently and members' are being informed of the action that has and is being taken to manage possible future situations. Members are notified that in this area many halls refuse 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> birthday parties.

It should be noted that in the many years the hall has accepted such hires there have been few problems and rather than a knee jerk reaction to ban 16<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> birthday parties a considered approach should be applied first. It should also be noted that after research on previous events trouble appears to only occur when there is free alcohol. No outside bar is allowed for 16<sup>th</sup> birthday parties and the misguided hirers who mention that they will be supplying some alcohol are firmly told it is illegal and if possible their hire is declined.

The first event was an 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday/Family Party and whilst there was no damage, the hall was left in a condition that meant extra cleaning for the caretaker. Although this event had the presence of an adult throughout the evening it became evident that there was no control over the behaviour nor the intake of alcohol of the hirers guests. An after event clean was charged and subsequently paid for by hirer. At this event there was a 'free bar'.

The second event the following week was for 16<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party, this was supervised by at least two adults (the parents of the birthday child) and we are led to believe 2 bouncers were on the door. There was no alcohol available in the hall, however many of the guests brought their own and hid it in the car park. The result was, one smashed urinal, one broken mirror in the gents toilet and empty bottles of drink and broken glass outside the hall and in the car park. The hirer was subsequently charged for damage and time totalling £254.00 and this was paid.

We are now looking at how we protect the hall and caretaking staff from these types of incidents. Over the past year the hall has taken bookings for two 16<sup>th</sup> Birthdays, five 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday's and two 21<sup>st</sup> Birthdays. 9 hires out of a possible 50 hires.

**Assistant Clerk's recommendations:**

- A separate hire condition form is drawn up by the office and sent to hirers of these types of events outlining what is/what is not permitted. Gentle but authoritative advice will be supplied and the form will make clear that any damage or additional work caused by the event will need to be paid for. The hirer will be asked to sign that they have received this additional paperwork. The majority of advice being given will be common-sense and form a checklist for hirers to consider what 'management' they need to have in place.
- The hire rate for these events is increased to £200.75 (currently £165.50) for the evening slot which is 6 -11.30pm, and an increase of the damage waiver deposit to £250.00 which will be cashed upon receipt and returned at the next available date after the hire if there

has been no damage to the hall.

Members' will be kept informed of the situation and should the above recommendations not appear to be working then the issue of whether to allow 16<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> birthday parties will be returned to members.

**Item 6.4 Wall mounted boiler.** *Purpose of item; to ratify the Assistant Clerk's decision after consultation with the committee to bring forward the installation of this equipment.*

Water heater:

To supply and install a new Zip Hydroboil Instant Boiling Water Heater.

The 5 litre unit will be wall mounted and is capable of producing 140 cups of boiler water per hour.

A fused spur will be installed to power and the water heater and the plumbing work will be run in copper with a suitable check valve installed to comply with the Water Regulations.

Total price including all parts and labour £750.00+vat.

The location is to be on the outside wall so that it can easily be plumbed in etc. Some minor additional expenditure may be needed to; take down the cupboard and make good the wall; purchase a couple of lidded box to take some excess crockery; the possible purchase of 2 thermos jugs. All of this expenditure can be covered by the extractor fan budget.

**Item 8. Caretaking.** *Purpose of item; for information, consideration and to agree to the appointment a third caretaker.*

At October's meeting members provisionally agreed to consider employing an additional caretaker to help cover the cleaning of the hall, created by an increase of hires. Since the October meeting the hall has taken on a further hire bringing the hall near to its maximum hire capacity (apart from the committee room), thus making it necessary for a third person. This was subject to discussions between the office staff and caretakers. From these discussions a cleaning schedule has been devised to show when cleaning can be carried out in the hall either on a restricted or unrestricted basis (see enclosure). A cleaning rota has been created to show how the additional caretakers would fit in with Maggie's cleaning rota (see enclosure). Unfortunately John Read our relief Caretaker has handed in his notice, therefore we are now looking for two people, each covering 6 hours. This will enable them to work one week on week off or two weeks on two weeks off and will alleviate the pressure of covering holidays. An advert will be written for these positions (to follow) and will be, in the first instance, placed on the website and on the local noticeboards. An interview panel will be required and should include the Assistant Clerk plus two councillors.

It was also necessary to compile a new risk assessment for cleaning whilst the hall is in use. (see enclosure).

**Item 10 Boxley Churchyard.** *Purpose of item; information and for decisions or recommendations to be made.*

**Long term responsibility of the closed churchyard.**

If a church closes its churchyard to burials then it can pass responsibility (ground maintenance and health and safety responsibility) for the closed burial area onto the parish council (Local Government Act 1972 s215). The parish council has a three month period to react and it can:

- refuse to take responsibility for the closed churchyard, in which case it passes directly to the borough or district council;
- it can take on responsibility.

After the three month period if a parish council has not taken a decision it legally becomes responsible. After this three month period the borough or district council can volunteer to take on the closed churchyard but it cannot be forced to do so.

The closed churchyard land remains in the ownership of the church; the headstones remain in ownership of the families. In the case of St Mary and All Saints Church the wall and the Lych Gate are deemed part of the closed churchyard.

Many years ago Boxley Parish Council choose to take on the closed churchyard. MBC has recently indicated that it would consider taking over responsibility of closed churchyards and so members views are being sought on whether they wish to recommend to the Finance Committee that MBC be approached to do so.

### **Yew Tree and damage being caused to the listed wall.**

At the November parish council meeting the issue of the Yew tree was deferred to the Estates Committee. The following is the minute of the item "Lengthy discussion took place: on how to retain the tree but mitigate future damage to the wall and what guidance needed to be given to the Clerk. Cllr Harwood proposed seconded by Cllr Perry that **"the council obtains cost of root pruning in order to retain the tree". Agreed** (8 for, 1 against and 6 abstentions). It was **agreed** that the issue would be considered by the Estates Committee. **Action: Estates Committee."**

The Church was informed of the parish council's discussion and their views were sought. The following was received in response

"The Yew tree is, however, cause for much greater concern. The tree referred to is the one in the south-west corner of the churchyard, immediately behind the war memorial and within a few feet of the top of the retaining wall between the churchyard and the drive to Court Lodge Farm.

The tree is becoming very large, the root growth must be considerable and is likely to have caused two considerable cracks and some lesser fissures, which have appeared in the wall during the summer and exhibit signs of ongoing movement, giving worry as to a blockage of the drive and the safety of those using it in the event of collapse. The branch growth now stretches over the drive towards the Court Lodge house and should the tree fall or lean, damage to the house could occur, a matter which the new owner has already brought to our attention. This gives rise to concern about insurance implications should no action be taken in the light of his observations.

There is photographic evidence that the Yew tree is only C60 years old, has a multi-trunk, and as such may not be listed.

A suggestion has been made that the tree branches be cut back and the roots pruned to reduce its size. The tree is within the churchyard and the roots will have grown into areas where interment has taken place. If root pruning takes place it will cause the disturbance of graves and may therefore require Ministry of Justice exhumation permission and/or a Chancellor's faculty – both timely and costly. Root pruning will also cause overall instability to the tree in it's precarious position at the top of the retained bank.

The Parochial Church Council concurs with our personal concerns on the present situation and have expressed the preference, in the light of the precarious position of the Yew tree and safety implications, that the tree be removed at the earliest opportunity.

Francis Coomber,  
Churchyard Coordinator

Dennis Hollands,  
Churchwarden"

### **Beech Tree at rear of closed churchyard.**

On the boundary of the closed churchyard and the open churchyard is a particularly large and beautiful Beech Tree. The Church had previously discussed dead wooden branches (not unusual on a tree of this age) with the parish office and members agreed to pay for a tree survey. Unfortunately the tree is diseased and advice was sought from the MBC Landscape Officer who replied;

"The presence of the Ganoderma brackets is something to monitor but not necessarily an indication that the tree should be immediately felled. Ganoderma spp causes white rot within the buttress area of trees but the decayed wood often retains tensile strength for many years and often the tree produces compensatory growth of surrounding wood. However, this would only apply on a tree that has limited brackets present and shows no visual indication of physiological decline. Based on my last inspection of the Beech it revealed no indications that the fungus has or is causing any decline in its health although given its position next to a public path and open graves I would consider it expedient to undertake the sonic picus/thermal test as recommended in Arbour Tree Surgery's report. This test will then determine exactly what appropriate works should be undertaken. From memory the last picus test I was involved with cost around £350, which I consider reasonable if it will help retain such a large prominent tree."

The Clerk is recommending the survey is booked and welcomes members' comments.

<b>Item 11. Budget</b> <i>Purpose of items; for consideration and to agree if they should be included in the draft budget.</i>
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### **Hall Budget**

11.3 Internal/External decoration – A breakdown of costs to follow.



## **General Budget**

### **11.6 Seat at the north end of Boxley Road.**

Clerk's report: The land probably belongs to KCC Highway and Transportation department. Permission must be sought from KCCH&T for any installation and the parish council is required (Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act) to undertake a review of any anti-social issues that might arise from the installation of a bench. Due to the proximity to residential buildings and also because this is on the school children route a risk assessment will be undertaken. The location must also take into account the type of tree coverage there may be and this might require a metal bench rather than a wooden one. A likely cost would be in the region of £450.00 plus £200 installation with an on-going, but likely to be fairly minor, cost of insurance and maintenance.

### **11.7 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard.**

Cllr Vic Davies has requested a litter bin by the new seat at Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard.

**Clerk's report:** A litter bin would probably not be an issue and would cost in the region of £255.00 Litter bins are generally not insured by the parish council which has a £100 excess on its insurance cover.

Cllr Vic Davies has requested an additional seat up within the actual orchard area.

Currently there are two seats at the site: one in the play area; the other adjacent to the path. The maintenance programme is for the lower area to be generally close mown with the higher left more natural with a circular mown path. The vision for the orchard was to have the top managed for wildlife with a back to nature feel. The lower area was to be managed for humans. It is expected that families would venture into the top area to explore and there is nothing to stop them having picnics etc. by putting down some form of cover to sit on. Some natural play is expected in the top area.

At the early stages of designing the orchard seating and play equipment was considered within the top area but this was decided against. A new seat, with a wheelchair 'platform', was included to the side of the new path in a location that was risk assessed. The new path although grass surfaced has a firm base so is considered wheelchair friendly.

In installing any seat the parish council would have to consider any anti-social behaviour that might be attracted to the area. In the past there has been evidence of a 'meeting place' within the trees at the rear of the site with empty alcohol bottles left there. When designing the orchard this issue was recognised and part of the 'control mechanism' for any problems was to leave the grass long in most of the top area.

The orchard's design probably has insufficient space, between the trees and their future spread, for the additional seat and the concrete plinth that would be required. The maintenance schedule would also need to be adjusted to provide a cleared path to the seat. The parish council might not need to put in a wheelchair friendly path but this would need investigating. As any seat in the top area would be out of sight of the tarmacked footpath and concealed within the trees it is probable that it would attract some anti-social behaviour at some point. With such behaviour it is also probable that there be damage to the trees. A more in-depth survey can be undertaken if required.