

BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk



Clerk – Mrs Pauline Bowdery
Assistant Clerk – Mrs Melanie Fooks
Tel – 01634 861237

E-mail – Clerk@boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk

Beechen Hall
Wildfell Close
Walderslade
Chatham
Kent ME5 9RU

To All Members of the Council, public and press.

7 April, 2104

There will be a meeting of the Estates Committee on **Tuesday 15 April 2014** 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 required to declare any interests, requests for dispensation, lobbying or changes to the Register of Interests.

2. Apologies and absence.

To receive apologies for absence.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting 11 February, 2014.

To consider the minutes of the meeting and if in order to sign as a true record (previously circulated).

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

4. Matters Arising From Previous Minutes

4.1 Minute 2623/4.1 Yew Tree at St Mary and All Saints Church – MBC has removed the condition and J Hood will fell the tree on Monday 14 April, 2014. Local residents and the Vicar have been notified.

4.2 Minute 2623/4.4 Village Signs – The new post for the damaged Grove Green sign will be installed w/c 7 April, 2014.

4.3 Minute 2624/8. MBC Play Area Strategy – To receive a verbal report from Cllrs Vic Davies and Pat Sullivan on their views for the Parish Council to maintain this play area if MBC decide to close it in favour of a new play area close to Weaving Village Hall.

5. Dove Hill Allotments–

5.1 To receive an update from Cllr Bob Hinder- see report on (page 3).

5.2 To receive a report on the Access road to the site a report will follow prior to meeting.

6. Interpretation Board – Impton Lane

To consider a project put forward by Cllr Smith please see report on (page 3).

7. Earmarked Reserves.

To receive a briefing on Earmarked Reserves and the role they play in budgeting and forward planning. See report on (page 4).

8. Boxley Village Green.

To consider the Clerk's report (page 4-5).

9. Matters for Information

9.1 Boxley Burial Ground – The Parish Clerk has refused a request for an internment. More details will be supplied at the meeting.

9.2 North Wall Boxley Green see report (page 5).

Ten minute comfort break (if wanted).

10. Assistant Clerk's Report.

10.1 To receive hire fees for Feb/Mar with a comparison for the same period in the previous year please see report on (page 5).

10.2 To receive Income and Expenditure report enclosure to follow.

10.3 Review of Hall hire fees see enclosure.

10.4 Review Discount for Children's Clubs and clubs see report on (page 5).

11. **Beechen Hall Extension** – To consider ideas for extending the premises see report on (page 6).

12. **Additional Storage at Beechen Hall.**

A request from WWG for additional storage will be considered see report (page 6).

13. **Matters for Decision**

14. **Date of Next Meeting.** Tuesday 10 June, 2014 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, Chatham commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 1st June, 2013.

Clerk to the Council

REPORTS AND ITEMS RELATING TO THE ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING 15 APRIL, 2014.

Item 5.1 Dove Hill Allotments – To receive an update from Cllr Bob Hinder *Purpose of item for information.*

Allotment Report April 2014

Nearly all plots are now let and “tenants” appear to be very pleased.

We were donated some more trees by Steve Wright and most have been planted along the edge of the road – planting has halted temporarily until we have more tubes and canes.

Holes under the fence at the turning circle have been blocked off with some large lengths of timber.

Most of the back filling along the fence boundary has been completed – all should be finished within the coming week. A bolt has been fitted to the toilet door – requested by one of the tenants.

The clerk had a site visit last week and found everything satisfactory apart from one shed being positioned incorrectly – the tenant is being requested to move it.

A site visit was held on Wednesday April 2nd – in attendance were the members of the Allotment Working group, Cllr Pat Sullivan, the Clerk and a rep. from Gallaghers to discuss the issues still causing concern at the entrance. A number of solutions were put forward by Gallaghers and quotations and work specifications have been promised before the next Estate’s meeting on the 15th.

On Friday I met with SE Water on site at 8.30 to investigate whether the water present was coming from a leak in the water system. After excavation it was determined that there is no leak in the system – the water is coming from the inside of the conduit that the water pipe runs in up to the site – in other words it is the residue of the recent heavy rains. Whilst they were there the rep. from Gallaghers arrived with two other gentlemen to look again at their proposals for the entrance. They were pleased to note the findings of the water company which concurred with the proposed plans they are putting forward. These will possibly include tarmacking a section of the road above, past and below the entrance (3 hours work) lifting and re-setting the gate posts on our side to enable a concrete platform to be laid, and a pipe laid from south to north across the entrance that is filled with shingle to enable rain water seepage to run away and not come to the surface in the entrance. All work he anticipated could be completed in one day. We would naturally give advance warning to the neighbours including the Scouts. Bob Hinder

Item 5.2 Dove Hill Allotments – To receive a report on the identified issues of the access road and consider and agree the remedial action. *Purpose of item for information and decision.*

Report to follow if received in time this will be circulated prior to the meeting, otherwise it will be brought to the meeting.

Item 6. Interpretation Board at Impton Lane –To consider a project put forward by Cllr Smith for the installation of an interpretation board. *Purpose of item for information and decision.*

Cllr Smith has indicated that an interpretation board depicting local native trees would be beneficial to the local community whilst walking in the local area and through the woodlands. It is suggested that it should be situated on the verge (side of footway) close to the open space and would be similar to the interpretation boards at WDJO. Members are advised that there is no budget set aside for this project and if members agreed for it to proceed a request should be made to the F& GP committee.

Item 7. Earmarked Reserves – To receive a briefing on Earmarked Reserves and the role they play in budgeting and forward planning. *Purpose of item for information.*

The Estates committee has control of the HSBC bank account and it is within this that it has its reserves. Currently it earns nil interest but also has no bank charges. At some point it would be sensible to put some of its reserves into an account which attracts interest and this will be subject to a separate discussion.

The estates committee is building up its reserves as it wishes the hall to become self-sufficient and part of effective and efficient hall management is forward planning for future improvements and this includes financial planning. In building its reserves the committee can choose to ear mark its funds e.g. there is a need to refurbish the toilets at an approx. cost of £7,000 per toilet. The committee may choose to put away £1000.00 per year into an earmarked fund for this. By doing this the refurbishment costs can be built up to an agreed level whereby planning may start (including looking for grants) to organise the work. It is important to note that earmarked reserves can be 'un-earmarked'.

At its meeting on 11 March FG & P committee agreed that the earmarked reserve for wear and tear of hall equipment should be transferred to the Estates committee. This amount will start the earmarked reserves and members will be encouraged to consider identifying long term plans for which sums can be set aside.

It is suggested that at the next draft budget (October) that members consider whether to include a 'contingency fund' code with a sum drawn from their un-earmarked reserves.

Item 8. Boxley Village Green. *Purpose of item: a decision or guidance on action is sought.*

Report of site meeting at Boxley Village Green with the owner of Parsonage Farm. 2nd April 2014.

Present Resident and Clerk.

The resident asked to meet to discuss the south verge and the ivy on the wall of his property Parsonage Farm, his e-mail produced below explains the situation.

"I fear the wet and windy weather has accelerated the problems with the boundary wall on the south side of the green. It looks like the ivy has well and truly established itself into the wall and now great sheets of stone have been pulled down. For the most part, my side of the wall is OK but clearly it is only a matter of time before the ivy destroys that as well.

From our previous conversations I am aware that in the Councils' opinion, ivy should not be removed from ragstone walls. However, I think it would be useful to agree a plan to arrest this decay as a matter of urgency.

I am sure you will recall that the council promised that the ornamental cherry that was removed many years ago would be replaced like for like. However, the replacement tree that was eventually planted is a standard cherry which is outgrowing it's space and in no way compensates for the beautiful specimen that was untimely removed. Please can this be rectified?

As the trees are about to bloom, perhaps now would be a good time to arrange a site visit to show you the problems above and discuss a schedule of works for the longer term".

Clerk's note. Office records do not show when or why the cherry tree was removed (The resident has previously identified it as a Coronation Cherry) but as it is part of the conservation area permission must have been sought from MBC and this would generally only have been given if the tree was diseased or dangerous. The current tree is 'crowded' but appears healthy. The resident has accepted that the ornamental cherry will remain.

Recent maintenance history.

In 2010 the overgrown area was cut back and an area around the Indian Bean Tree cleared. The wall ivy was cut back by 50%. All of this was approved by MBC.

Site visit.

At the site visit the resident requested that the self-seeded Holly, Ivy, Elder, Cherry saplings etc. be completely removed from the overgrown area to the east of his driveway. Within the overgrown area is a well-established Cherry that is growing adjacent to Parsonage Farm wall.

Clerk's note: If removed and grassed this side of the verge would mirror the opposite side and would not therefore 'unbalance' the look of the green. A mowing regime would then stop any self-seeding and future issues. The overgrown area has gone 'wild' in 3 years and it would be financially sensible to consider removing as much of it as possible. If members wish to consider the removal of the large established Cherry tree within the area would need MBC permission and so arrangements will be made to pay for the landscape officer to visit.

The resident asked that all the ivy is removed and future maintenance undertaken to ensure it doesn't return. *Clerk's note: Viewing the wall ivy from the green does not give you a true picture of its relationship to the wall, although you can clearly see the damage that The resident refers to in his e-mail. Viewing the wall from the garden side clearly shows that the ivy has grown far higher than the wall (photographs will be supplied by The resident).*

Three shrubs have been planted beyond the steps going down to the edge of Parsonage Farm. It is suggested that these are removed.

Item 9. Matters for information. Purpose of item for information.

9.2 North Wall Boxley Green. On a recent inspection the Clerk noted that another stone had been taken. MBC has been contacted in an attempt to raise the issue of the long term future maintenance of the wall. Members will be kept updated as the matter progresses.

Item 9.1 Hall Hire Fees for February/March and a comparison on previous year. – Purpose of item for information

(Brackets indicate income over same period previous year).

	2013/2014	2012/2013
Casual	£2,246.67	(£1,869.00)
Regular	<u>£5,407.80</u>	<u>(£5,413.53)</u>
Total	£7,654.47	(£7,282.53)
Cumulative figures for		
Casual	£12,445.71	(£14,934.72)
Regular	<u>£33,100.56</u>	<u>(£23,231.92)</u>
Total	£45,546.27	(£38,166.64)

Item 9.2 Income and Expenditure Report. Purpose of item for information.

Report to follow separately.

Item 9.3 Review of Hall Hire Fees. Purpose of item for information, consideration and decision.

Please see enclosure.

Item 9.4 Review of Discounts for Children's Clubs and Clubs. *Purpose of item for information and decision.*

The current policy is 25% discount for children's clubs. This incentive was introduced many years ago when the hall trying to attract regular children's clubs to the Hall. As the hall is now at its capacity for Regular Hirers and there is a demand for slots that members may wish to consider either abolishing this discount or reduce it for any future children's clubs. It is advised that the current clubs should still receive this discount.

Item 11. Beechen Hall Extension – To consider ideas for extending the premises - *Purpose of item for information.*

A budget has been put aside for a company to advise on options relating to an extension or change to the outside area adjacent to the front door and committee room – members are invited to identify or submit to the parish office any views or ideas on the improvements. Once received these will be drawn together by the office who can incorporate additional information to enable member to make an informed decision.

The parish office, in order to help members start the process, have identified the following issues

- Need for additional storage.
- Impact on smoking area if outside area is enclosed, another smoking areas would have to be provided.
- Utilities. The electrical supply to the hall runs adjacent to the front entrance.
- Extension to meeting room to make it more attractive to hirers.
- With adequate soundproofing open up meeting room to expand hall floor space. This could be via bi-fold doors however sound proofing would be
- Exterior fascias and guttering to be completed at the same time.

Item 12 Additional Storage at Beechen Hall – To gain members' views on the request.

An impromptu site meeting occurred with members of the Walderslade Woods Group and the Clerk on Friday 4 April and the group indicated that due to imminent purchases of equipment they needed more space for storage. The group had come up with an idea of a 'lean to' against the current unit on the side adjacent to Wildfell Close. The group has been asked to send in a sketch plan and explanation of their need but this did not arrive in time for inclusion with the agenda. If it arrives before the meeting then details will be sent on to members. If this happens members are asked to consider the design, anchoring suggestions, materials and security.