

Minutes



Westbourne

Parish Council

PO Box 143
Emsworth
PO10 9DX

07775654483
clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk

To the Trustees of the Charity: Westbourne Parish Allotment for Exercise and Recreation. Charity Commission number: 265105

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Charity Trustees which took place on Thursday 31 March 2022 at 8pm.

Present: Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Kim Franks, Cllr Jane Gould, Cllr Richard Hitchcock, Cllr David Mack, Cllr Mike Magill and Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Parish Council

Meeting chaired by Cllr Franks. No members of the public were present.

1. Election of the Chair: Members nominated Cllr Ricketts (all in favour). The Clerk agreed to ask Cllr Ricketts if he was happy to act in this role.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr Nigel Ricketts.

3. Election of the Vice-Chair: Cllr Hitchcock proposed Cllr Franks, who was seconded by Cllr Mack. All in favour. Cllr Franks was elected Vice-Chair and chaired the rest of the meeting.

4. Declarations of interest in the items on the agenda: None.

5. Minutes of the meeting on 21 January 2021: The minutes were agreed to be a true record and were signed as such by the Chair.

4. Updates or issues from the minutes of 21 January 2021: None.

5. Annual report: Members received the Charity's annual report which is available in Appendix 1. Cllr Hitchcock asked if Longmeadows rake the play bark at the playground at each visit and if using herbicide was environmentally friendly. It was agreed to discuss these issues at the next Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

6. Announcements and items for the next agenda: None.

7. Date of next meeting: The next Annual Meeting of the Charity Trustees is scheduled to be held on Thursday 20 January 2023 at 7.00pm.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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Appendix 1: Westbourne Parish Allotment for Exercise and Recreation Charity Commission number: 265105

1. Annual report 2021

The Clerk to the Trustees has prepared this report to be discussed at the Annual Meeting of the Charity Trustees on Thursday 31 March 2022.

(Please note: The Trustees normally meet in January each year but the meeting was postponed due to the Clerk's other work commitments relating to the Joint Burial Committee).

2. Background

In 1948, Westbourne Parish Council purchased the land at Monk's Hill, now the recreation ground and play area, for £40.00. In 1969, the Parish Council registered the land as a Village Green and in 1974, the Parish Council registered the land with the Charity Commission as Westbourne Parish Allotment for Exercise and Recreation, number 265105.

The Parish Council has no records as to why the decision was made to register the land as a village green and charity. It is thought that the registrations were put in place to protect the land from future development.

As a result of the charitable status, the Parish Council is the sole managing trustee and parish councillors are the charity trustees during their term of office. In January 2020, the Parish Council agreed to set up a S297 agreement, which was drafted with support from Surrey Hills Solicitors, which enables the Parish Council to administer all activities on behalf of the Charity.

The conveyance signed by the Parish Council on 3 May 1948 states:

"All that piece or parcel of land in the Parish of Westbourne in the County of Sussex numbered 16 on the Inclosure Map of 1858 and containing four acres little more or less as the same was by the Westbourne Common Inclosure Award of 1859 allotted and awarded unto the Testator subject to the obligation of preserving the surface thereof in good condition and of permitting such land to be at all times used as a place for exercise and recreation by the inhabitants of the Parish and neighbourhood and subject also to the direction contained in the said award as to the repairing and maintenance of the fences on the north, east and west sides thereof by and at the expense of the owner for the time being and subject also to the direction that the said piece of land should be depastured with sheep only."

3. Schedule of activities

The Recreation, Leisure and Amenities (R,L&A) Committee is delegated to oversee the maintenance and development of the recreation ground and play area on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Charity's Governing Document, agreed by the Council in January 2020, sets out a schedule of activities. Updates for each are provided below.

3.1 Maintain and develop the recreation ground to ensure it is fit-for-purpose, safe, and pleasant for the exercise and recreation of the inhabitants of the Parish of Westbourne and neighbourhood.

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The Parish Council has maintained the land, working with its grounds maintenance contractor Longmeadows Landscaping, to carry out the following works:

- Grass outfields cut twice per month (if not wet, winter months)
- Grass in playgrounds and play areas cut twice per month (if not wet, winter months)
- Grass around car park area and frontage to main road including fencing cut once per month
- Entire grounds including fields and playground litter picked twice per month
- Bark chippings within play area raked and levelled on each visit
- Herbicide weed control to all boundaries in March, May and Sept
- Hedgerows to all sides and rear of outfields trimmed in May.

Since November 2020, a grass strip around the edge of the recreation ground has been left to grow to support wildlife and insects, with a cut once a year in the autumn.

3.2 Maintains the playground and adult exercise equipment, with weekly operational equipment checks during British summertime and fortnightly during the winter to ensure it is in good working order and state of repair. This includes operational and annual inspection as required by the insurance provider at least every six months.

The Parish Council has a contract with Mr Stewart Cormack to inspect the recreation ground and play areas once a week during British summertime and once a fortnight during the winter. The Parish Council has a contract with Kompan to carry out an annual inspection and three operational inspections as required by the insurance provider.

A report is provided to the Clerk following each inspection with urgent matters being dealt with immediately and low to medium risk matters discussed at R,L&A Committee meetings.

3.3 To survey the trees on the boundary of the recreation ground every 18-24 months and to carry out maintenance to the trees as required.

The Parish Council carried out a second survey of all its trees in January 2021 (the first being in January 2018). All trees are tagged and marked on a report with details of the species, location and condition of each tree.

Following the tree survey, Michael Reed Ltd carried out the recommended tree surgery, including the felling of all the ash trees as they had varying levels of ash die back. The Tree Champions have developed a replanting schedule and five new trees have been planted with a grant from Chichester District Council to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (as detailed below). The Women's Institute has also bought a Sequoiadendron Gigantium tree at a cost of £100 to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and has been planted at Monk's Hill.

No	Qty	Species	Size	£/each	£/total
1.	2	Cedrus atlantica glauca, Atlas cedar (conifer)	1.5/1.8m 10L	48.00	96.00
2	2	Metasequoia glyptostroboides, Dawn redwood (conifer)	1.75/2m 10L	48.00	96.00

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3	1	Ulmus laevis, European white elm (broad leafed)	6/8m	48.00	48.00
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3.4 Seeks to provide excellent facilities that encourages as many residents as possible to benefit from the recreation ground space.

In the summer of 2021, the following was installed using New Homes Bonus Funding from the District Council:

- A new picnic table
- A bench in the playground
- A bench near the wooden fitness equipment
- An information board which gives history of the Common and details of local plants and wildlife.
- A new safety surface around the embankment slide.
- Drainage works to the playground and verge near the highway.

The R,L&A Committee plans to further enhance the Common with the following:

- To plant additional trees, as per the plan written by the Tree Champions.
- Incorporate a circuit exercise system around the perimeter of the recreation ground
- To possibly relocate some of the usable equipment from Mill Road playground when work is done to renovate this area.
- Improve the treads on the steps leading up to the embankment slide.

3.5 Looks for opportunities to further develop the range of facilities available at the recreation ground to enhance opportunities for exercise and recreation, including applying for grants for funding.

The Parish Council has successfully applied for New Homes Bonus funding for the recreation ground and has used its S106 funding to further develop facilities. The Clerk will continue to apply for grants as appropriate. The Parish Council meets any deficit by raising income through its precept.

4.0 Financial report

The Parish Council is audited by an internal auditor (Mulberry & Co) and an external auditor (Moore) on an annual basis and the Charity's accounts are considered as part of this process.

The Clerk has submitted a nil financial return to the Charity Commission, as advised by the auditor.

5.0 Recommendations

The Trustees to the Charity are asked to approve the Annual Report and Accounts for submission to the Charity Commission.

Report written by Clare Kennet, Clerk to the Parish Council.