

Minutes



Westbourne

Parish Council

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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Charity Trustees of Westbourne Parish Allotment for Exercise and Recreation, Charity Commission number 265105, took place on Thursday 19 January 2023 at 7pm.

Present: Cllr Kim Franks, Cllr Jane Gould, Cllr Richard Hitchcock and Cllr Nigel Ricketts.

In attendance: Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Parish Council

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

1. Election of the Chairman: Cllr Ricketts was proposed by Cllr Hitchcock and seconded by Cllr Franks. A vote was carried out and all were in favour. Cllr Ricketts was **ELECTED** as Chairman.

2. Apologies for absence: There were no apologies for absence.

3. Election of the Vice-Chairman: Cllr Franks was proposed by Cllr Ricketts and seconded by Cllr Hitchcock. A vote was carried out and all were in favour. Cllr Franks was **ELECTED** as Vice-Chairman.

4. Declarations of interest in the items on the agenda: There were no declarations of interest.

6. Minutes of the meeting on 31 March 2022: Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true record and they were signed as such by the Chair.

7. Updates or issues from the minutes of 31 March 2022:

Item 7: Cllr Ricketts said he would ask Longmeadows if the herbicide they used was environmentally friendly.

8. Annual report: Members **RECEIVED** the Charity's annual report written by the Clerk, listed in Appendix 1, with no further comments.

9. Charity report: Members **APPROVED** the annual return submission to the Charity Commission.

10. Announcements and items for the next agenda: There were no announcements.

11. Date of next meeting: The next Annual Meeting of the Charity Trustees was scheduled to take place on Thursday 18 January 2024 at 7.00pm.

Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

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Appendix 1

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

1. Annual report 2022

The Clerk to the Trustees has prepared this report to be discussed at the Annual Meeting of the Charity Trustees on Thursday 19 January 2023.

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.

2. Annual meeting of the Charity
Trustees

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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.

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, GM Support, 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. A further tree survey will be required in 2023.

Following the tree surveys, 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.

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The Tree Champions have developed a planting schedule and a total of sixteen new trees have been planted with a grant from Chichester District Council to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the Women's Institute has bought a Sequoiadendron Gigantium tree at a cost of £100 to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee, and the remainder being paid for by the Parish Council.

location	Tree	Common Name
1	Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip Tree
2	Liquidamber styraciflua "Worplesdon"	Sweet Gum
3	Acer freemanii "Autumn Blaze"	Freemans Maple
4	Cedrus atlantica "Glauca"	Blue Atlas cedar
5	Tilia "Petiolaris"	Silver Weeping Lime
6	Cedrus atlantica "Glauca"	Blue Atlas cedar
7	Cedrus libanii	Lebanon cedar
8	Ulmus laevis	European White Elm
9	Platanus orientalis "Digitata"	Oriental plane
10	Sequoiadendron giganteum (WI)	Giant Sequoia
11	Metasequoia glyptostroboides	Dawn redwood
12	Metasequoia glyptostroboides	Dawn redwood
13	Carpinus betulus "Rockhampton Red"	Hornbeam
14	Quercus Rubra	Red Oak
15	Quercus castaneifolia	Chestnut leaved oak
16	Juglans Nigra	Black Walnut

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:

- 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.

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- Replace the wood on the embankment slide steps which Longmeadows will carry out as weather conditions improve.

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.

Unfortunately, New Homes Bonus funding from the District Council has now ended which previously contributed towards new equipment. S106 funding may still be available, depending on new housing development in the Parish. The Clerk will continue to research grants that may be appropriate. The Parish Council also has the ability to raising funding 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 for submission to the Charity Commission.

Written by Clare Kennett
Clerk to the Trustees, 12 January 2023