

Minutes of the National Trust/Lode liaison meeting

30th October 2018

Present Charlie Platten, Polly Ingham-Watts, Jack Watson, Chris Hammond, Brian and Maggie Camps, Charlie Rickard, Peter Wells, David Trigg and Fran Platten

Apologies. Jenny Scarff, who is covering for Emily Tydeman who is on maternity leave

Matters arising. Harvey's Drove hedge was cut back

Richard Todd's house is now occupied and will be used in the future for interns and volunteers

Cycle path. CR gave a short account of the planting that was done with wild flower seed and snowdrops, and PIW was briefed over the 1km. stretch of NT land used to build the Path. JW says that families are cycling out from Cambridge to the Abbey. We are waiting for the interactive sign to warn drivers to slow down before the entrance to the path.

The fence behind the bus stop in the High Street has been renewed, and thanks were given to the NT as it is a very stylish one!

More wood chippings will be needed for the path from the tennis court to the Mill. JW will see to it, and volunteers will spread them

The plans for a secondary catering unit near the tennis court were rejected by ECDC and not welcomed by those residents of Mill Road who were the nearest to it. PIW says they have decided not to appeal against the decision.

ET says that the triangle of land near to Rose Walk does not belong to the NT so it must be Highways.

Fassage Green update CP

The land is 4 acres between the cemetery and the Fassage recreation ground. It is alienable land which is owned by the NT who are selling it to the Lode with Longmeadow Village trust [LLVT] and Lode Parish Council. The PC is paying £8000 and the rest £37K being paid for by the Charity. However the PC will maintain the land. It will be kept as an amenity area with wild parts, orchard, paths but no housing. This area was not deemed suitable for housing and a covenant will be put on the land so it is maintained in perpetuity. Jenny Scarff will be dealing with it. BC asked if there is to be an overage clause, but this will not be necessary as the covenant will be in place. Contracts will be signed shortly and the deal finalised in Jan/Feb 2019

CP says that the recent consultation showed the top priority was accessible paths, followed by a picnic area and wild flower planting. At the moment there are many volunteers but this is not always the case, and the PC have discussed the cost implication for doing the absolute minimum, and this would be in the region of £1000 per annum.

JW says he has many volunteers on his books, unlike some other NT properties. If he knows a month in advance they could come to help on the land even if the NT did not still own it. This was a marvellous piece of news.

MC asked what would happen if the cemetery became full, and CP says that land has to be released for this, so in the future some could be used. CR says that he looked into this when he was on the PC and thinks this will not be needed for decades

CR asked if Anglesey Abbey will get the money from the sale of the land or will it go to the central NT pot. Polly did not know the answer to this, as all properties are different depending on what the original owner specified.

Report from Anglesey Abbey PIW

Polly told us it had been a tough financial year for the Abbey because Easter was so wet and the summer so hot that visitor numbers had dropped dramatically so less money is available for projects. Usually they have around £1.2 million but this year only about £600K. The Winter Lights is helpful of course and they are about to release the remaining tickets for sale. There was some discussion about free tickets for some Lode residents, and PIW says she will sort this out. They are adding an extra night which will be Thursday in the middle week of the 3 weeks. Altogether it will be for 10 days instead of 9. JW says that the last entries are at 7.30 and most people have gone by 9.30. CH said that although there was music in the BBQ area, it was not very intrusive and he did not think it was a problem

There was some discussion about security, including a break in to the catering caravan in Hoe Fen which yielded nothing as it was empty, but generally security was reasonable, now that the gates had been installed to stop large vehicles getting in.

PIW says that there will be strategic marketing for certain times of the year, particularly in June where numbers were often low

She says that the 10 year plan will still be looked at but more slowly. They will be looking at the spatial arrangements, and there will be a need for more building in the future, but we will be kept informed

The Water source heat pump This has been a huge success, with only the library and dining room not being so warm as they are both large rooms. Heating the Abbey is now entirely from the heat pump and although it is expensive to run, it is cheaper than oil, and it should pay for itself in 20 years.

Walks around Lode

Dogs are not allowed in to the Abbey Grounds, so on the NT website, dog walking is suggested around Lode. However, there is concern over dog walkers parking down Mill Road, which is very narrow and already crowded with residents' cars. We would prefer that the website recommend that parking is in the Abbey car park where it is a short walk to Mill Road. PIW and JW said they thought this could be done. Together with this is the problem of the overflowing dog bin at the end of Mill Road near the Mill. The bags are left all around the base and a local resident says the smell is horrible in the summer. Another

bin is required and CH suggested that both bins be installed just over the bridge away from the houses, on the NT land. If the NT is willing to allow this, I am sure the PC will pay for a new bin and CH is happy to move the old one. Hopefully this will sort out the problem, and we will inform ECDC, so they are emptied each week.

AOB

JW says the NT do not own the Sportsman's pit which is a pond down the Fen. He thinks it is privately owned.

Maggie Camps says that she and Brian are standing down from the committee as they think there are enough people representing the Fen. She suggested that we try and recruit someone from Fairhaven Close as there is no one from there at the moment. They were thanked for all their involvement these last few years and we will take up her suggestion that we advertise in the Lode Star for someone to fill their place

Robert Stevens has also stood down as he is very busy being Chair of the PC and we can still ask him for suggestions for the agenda and thanks also go to him for the work he has done in this group.

Date of next meeting Tuesday March 12th at 1.30 at the Abbey