

Wootton Park Association – Annual General Meeting

31st March 2020

This meeting was held by way of the committee participating via email due to the Coronavirus lockdown measures.

MINUTES

The following sent comments via email, David Price, Diana Gotts, John Marrow, Sarah Crome, Bridget Nurse, John Marshall-Grint, Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds, Tracey Cornwell, Claire Harper. Roy Williamson agreed the re-election of officers via telephone.

1. To elect the following;

Chair – Will Border – Unanimously agreed by the committee

Vice Chair – Diana Gotts – Unanimously agreed by the committee

Treasurer – Tracey Cornwall – Unanimously agreed by the committee

Secretary – Rachel Curtis – Unanimously agreed by the committee

Tracey Cornwell commented – the efforts of the Chairman are second to none, the amount of time he spends on the Park both manually and organising others such as the community payback team is tremendous. Without all this time and effort the Park and the Committee would not be in the position it is. Thank you Will.

Elizabeth Nockolds commented – an excellent organised Committee looking after a large piece of green open space – well done.

Diana Gotts commented – thanks to all for their hard work in maintaining this lovely area.

David Price commented – well done everyone, particularly, Will, Rachel and Tracey.

Claire Harper commented – thanks for everything you all do, the park is a space I'm grateful to enjoy especially now.

2. Chairpersons Report

This year has proved to be no different to other years for Wootton Park and came with its own set of challenges for the year. All of which I will talk about in the next few paragraphs. However, firstly due to the current conditions with Covid-19 Pandemic, a lot of the plans going forward are rather on hold, and will depend on how long the government restrictions stay in place. It is however good to see that a lot of people are using the park for their daily exercise and are practicing social distancing.

Picking up from last years report, we did take up the offer from KL Construction for them to repair the basketball hoop and replace it back in the ground! This was greatly used over the summer and hopefully will be enjoyed for a few more years to come. And we are very grateful for their time and generosity for this. The year has again seen its share of the vandalism that we see throughout the summer months, ranging from smashing up the down pipes on the pavilion, chipping chunks out of the wall to various attempts of arson in and around the park. The worst case of this was the picnic bench nearest the pond that was total razed to the ground by fire one weekend in September. All of these events are reported to the police and given a crime number, which helps keep the statistics real for anti-social behavior in the Park. Unfortunately, we have not had a beat officer assigned to the Woottons for the last 6 months. This has just been rectified and we now have PC David Allcock, he has had a walk around the park and surrounding area to be shown the potential hot spots. However I cannot stress enough that we need all parishioners to be on the look out for potential antisocial behavior and to report it to the police either by ringing 101 or reporting online at – www.norfolk.police.uk/contact-us/report-something/report-crime

This year's major project was to complete the footpath from the car park to the pavilion.

This has proved to be a great asset for the park and for everyone who uses it. It really has made a vast difference to the notoriously wet area under the trees. Some of the other projects that have been done over the year have included:

1. A new bridge was put in to replace one that finally gave up after the heavy rains.
2. Put one new bench on the park. This one has been donated by funds from Wootton Park 200.
3. Done a tree survey of the whole park – which highlighted a few critical trees that have been dealt with.
4. Put security lighting around the pavilion.
5. We have also moved or replaced dog bins, crash matting and done a lot of painting inside the pavilion.

Unfortunately we did lose a goat willow tree in Storm Ciara, this now in the process of being taken away, we are just waiting for the ground to dry out enough so we can drive machinery onto the field without ruining the football pitches.

The wild flower strips on the North & South strips were a great success again, We plan to do it again this year and my thanks goes to Nolan Mills for keeping an eye on this project throughout the year.

The WPA 200 Club is now in its fourth year, this is another way of raising much needed funds for the park, this currently has 119 members with a top monthly prize of £47.60 from this we have managed to give away over £1200 in prizes, and we will be putting another £1000 into the Wootton park account. We will carry on encouraging people to join with the aim of both increasing the prize money and the benefits for the park. My dream is to have 200 members with a waiting list for one of the numbers

Last year we also joined the West Norfolk Wins Lottery as one of the charities that can be nominated for the 50% of the ticket value. However due to the lack of uptake by anyone except myself! We decided to withdraw from this lottery. It was a little disappointing as other local charities are benefitting from this extra income.

I am pleased to report that the club finances are as solid as they were last year. The breakdown for the rest of the accounts will be covered at greater length in the treasures report. I would just like to thank Tracey for holding the roll as treasurer and keeping an eye on the expenditure on Wootton Park, both parish councils can rest assure it is in safe hands.

The services of the community payback team continue to be of benefit to the park with various jobs being tackled over the year. This has ranged from general pruning in the park, dyke maintenance and the repainting of the cycle restrictors. As the park does not have a dedicated team of helpers I find the community payback input once a month, of great benefit to achieve some of the more manual tasks.

As a committee I feel we have a few issues that we will need to be address in the future and one that may become more pressing is the general state of the field during the wetter months. Is the old drainage system beginning to fail? The pond is a very good indicator of the level of the underlying water table! I have not seen it this full for a few years.

I would lastly just wish to extend my thanks to everyone on this committee for their continued support and encouragement. I look forward to another year on the park and hope that the weather this summer is as good as it was last summer.

3. Treasurers Report

I am pleased to report that the Wootton Park finances remain solid. We started the year with £10,859.58 in the account and after the payment for the new Trod we end it with £3759.47. This includes the transfer of £1,000 into the account from the Wootton Park 200 Club and a grant from Norfolk Community Foundation for £500 towards the proposed new Bug Hotel. A resident has mentioned how much he and his wife enjoy the new seat, paid for from the 200 Club Funds, once we have enough in the account more seating might be a nice idea.

I am due to send out the Invoice to the Woottons Football Club for the share of Utility costs, this will be sent this week. We have received funds from the Kings Lynn Soccer School, at present totaling £ 290.00.

The WPA 200 Club has 119 members and as mentioned above has injected the Wootton Park Account with £1000. Hopefully over the year to come, we can encourage more residents to join.

The budget spend on behalf of the two Parish Councils was very slightly higher this year than last to a figure of £12,335. With overspends under the Grass/Hedge Maintenance, Pavilion Maintenance, Tree Surgery and Equipment Repairs and Maintenance, the actual amount spent is £16,014.42. (All items within this overspend were authorized by both Parish Councils and many were one off items). The Parish Councils have looked at our proposals for this coming year 2020/21 and have kept the budget the same at £12,335.

We feel that this will still allow valuable works and improvements to continue. We will carry on using their money wisely and will always consult prior to any unexpected expenditure.

4. Football Club Report – no report

5. To approve the minutes of the last meeting – 28th January 2020

- These were agreed unanimously via email response.

6. Matters Arising - None

7. Correspondence - None

8. Finance

The Wootton Park Account Running Costs Account shows a spend of £16,014.42 against a budget of 12,335.

The Wootton Park Association Account shows a closing balance of £3,759.47.

The 200 Club account has a closing balance of £3,028.10.

9. 200 Club

Currently 119 members, February and March draws will be held at a later date when numbers can be verified.

10. Pavilion and Park

Nothing to report, bug hotel cancelled until further notice.

Claire Harper commented – she would like to volunteer to help with the Bug Hotel and her husband is happy to volunteer too.

11. Community Pay Back

Cancelled until further notice.

12. Green Gym/Time Credits

Cancelled until further notice.

13. Specific Requests for Tree Pruning on the Park

None received.

14. Fundraising Events

Picnic in the Park is cancelled.

15. Any other business

Stay safe everyone.

John Marrow commented – the local press are keen to fill their pages with uplifting stories about the local park and community, if anyone is aware of anything then please contact John.

16. Date of Next Meetings

26th May 2020 – cancelled

28th July 2020 – potentially save the date

29th September 2020

24th November 2020

..... Chairman Date