

# Ash Meadow Community Interest Company Annual General Meeting

7.30pm Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022, Ashprington Village Hall

## Attendees

Ian Bentlett, Pat Bentlett, Mary Broek, William Carlyon, Simon Carr, Jill Davies, Barry Lunt, Lyn Paterson, Nigel Paterson, Sophie Paterson, Mike Read, Matt Redwood, Katherine Weare

## Apologies

Chris Leigh, John Broek, Simon Roberts

## Election of members of the Ash Meadow Committee

### Brought forward in agenda due to change in Secretary position

Thanks were recorded for all the work to date of Secretary Matt Redwood, now stepping down from the position. A nomination of Sophie Paterson as Secretary was made and unanimously accepted by the Committee, operating from this meeting forward.

Ian Bentlett was nominated to stand once again as Chair and this was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

The Chair reported that Chris Leigh was willing to stand again as Treasurer and this was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

New Committee member Simon Carr was welcomed and all other Committee members confirmed their intention to remain as part of the Committee.

## Overview of formal CIC structure

The Chair reported that the Community Interest Company (CIC) structure is formally in place under the auspices of Ashprington Parish Council and has benefitted in £1,250 funding as a result of the change in bank accounts. Former Ash Meadow Committee Chair Barry Lunt continues to chair the CIC as a Director, alongside fellow Directors Mike Read, Lydia Stocks and Pamela Thompson. Ian Bentlett, as current Chair of the Ash Meadow Committee, agreed at the last CIC meeting to undertake the role of Secretary of the CIC this year. The day-to-day operations of Ash Meadow itself are delegated by the CIC Directors to the Ash Meadow Committee.

## **Minutes of 2021 AGM**

The minutes of the 2021 AGM were shared in advance and available to review. No comments were received. The Committee unanimously agreed that the minutes represented a true record. There were no matters arising.

### **Review of CIC accounts**

The Chair thanked both Treasurer Chris Leigh and auditor Mary Broek for their work in compiling and checking the CIC accounts for the year ending 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Copies were made available to the Committee for review.

The year started with a balance of £2,881.63 and ended with a balance of £7,745.69. Income included £1,250 for the transfer of the bank account to the Co-operative Bank upon creation of the CIC and £4,232.05 from South Hams District Council against compost claims.

£570 was spent on grass cutting and grass cutter hire, which it was agreed represented very good value for money. The Bonfire Night event in November 2021 cost £324, with income received of £568.80, resulting in the first profitable event for Ash Meadow totalling £244.80.

### **Treasurer's Report and 2022-2023 outlook**

The year started with a balance of £7,745.69.

A grant of £750 has been received from the Devon County Council Locality Budget. A grant of £2,250 is due from the South Hams District Council Community Wellbeing Fund.

An income of approximately £3,000 is anticipated from composting claims. Total routine outgoings will likely total £1,300, leaving a balance of approximately £12,000. From this £500 constitutes a Devon Air Ambulance sinking fund and £1,500 remains in reserve, leaving a healthy balance available in the region of £10,000.

No comments were made as regards the financial reporting or forecasting.

### **Chair's Report**

The Chair noted the significant challenges of both the pausing of green waste removal services and the Ash Dieback situation over the past year. Thanks were relayed to all Committee members and volunteers who assisted throughout to ensure the smooth running of Ash Meadow for the benefit of the wider community.

### **Tree planting**

Over 60 trees were planted at a dedicated work party in February 2022, with thanks due to Lyn and Nigel Paterson for their work in organising this and monitoring and maintaining the health of the trees since.

## **Composting and green waste services**

There were two changes in personnel at South Hams District Council as regards the composting shredding work. The new team members have proven to be very helpful, which has been welcome in light of the increased volume of green waste being taken to Ash Meadow as a result of disruption to green waste removal services. Clarification is pending as to whether further disruption is anticipated, with only a patchy collection service ongoing. Thanks were recorded to Robert Rogers and a team of volunteers who ensured parish-wide collections of green waste, which was then able to be sieved and processed at Ash Meadow.

Thanks were also due to William Carlyon for his role in liaising with South Hams District Council regarding the composting claim payments. Whilst always a risk, there is no change anticipated regarding the income from the community composting scheme at present.

## **Events**

A number of successful community events were held in the past year, including Bonfire Night with special thanks to Simon Robert, a traditional Wassail (albeit curtailed by the poor weather) with special thanks to Jill Davies, and a Jubilee Fun Day with games, for which the barbecue element will be rescheduled as a result of rainy weather earlier that day. Thanks go to all involved in organising and running the events and more are looked forward to in the coming year.

## **Work parties**

Work parties have continued to run throughout the year, albeit with a switch to the second Saturday of each month during the summer, in order to accommodate clashes on the part of a number of volunteers. Thanks were recorded to all who have taken part, with special thanks to Lyn and Nigel Paterson for their care of the trees.

No comments were received on the Chair's Report.

## **Submissions from Parish residents**

No comments were submitted for discussion by local residents in the parish.

## **Ash Meadow Five Year Plan summary**

Summary documents were available for consultation, as well as being circulated to Committee members in advance. The Chair reminded the Committee that the plan is flexible. As such, it can be changed and adapted in future but provides a good framework moving forward. The content has been largely agreed by the Committee thus far and thanks were recorded to Barry Lunt, Lyn and Nigel Paterson for their work on the mapping elements in particular.

Various suggestions for additions will be included such as creating a permanent barbecue facility, a boules pitch, and a dedicated picnic area with new benches.

On the subject of benches, the Chair noted that a new oak bench is due to be installed near the children's play area in Ash Meadow, donated by local resident Bill Bailly in memory of his late wife Shirley.

The following items contained within the Ash Meadow Five Year Plan were then discussed in further detail.

## **New equipment**

Quotations from a number of companies have been sought as regards replacement of the main children's play equipment, in particular the climbing frame element. Various opinions concerning the different benefits, drawbacks and cost of different material types were discussed, with hardwood (over and above tanalised timber) being largely viewed as preferable aesthetically and creatively, although the lower cost and maintenance demands and increased longevity of metal were also recognised. Mike Read recalled a similar debate around material choices as regards a noticeboard at Bow Bridge. A suggestion was made by Lyn and Nigel Paterson that consultation be undertaken with young people in the parish to inform any final decision.

Local resident Nigel Dickin has offered a quantity of soil which may be useful if creating a separate slide for the play area. This will need to be checked for suitability and there may be a cost involved in transportation.

Jill Davies expressed a hope that the works might aim to be completed by Easter 2023, although this is subject to securing sufficient funding.

## **Funding**

It will be necessary to apply for further funding in order to renew the children's play equipment, with match funding likely to be required. Whilst it might be possible to build a new slide from current funds available, this would deplete the available pot to match fund the rest of the equipment.

The Chair suggested that it may be sensible to approach everything together – possibly including the children's play hut which will also soon be in need of replacement – in order to create the most compelling case for funding.

William Carlyon has a contact with good knowledge of National Lottery funding in particular, who has emphasised the need to demonstrate sustained and active engagement with young people as a route to hopeful success. They may be open to being approached for further advice. Sophie Paterson and Ian Bentlett also have experience of fundraising and Mike Read will liaise with them regarding opportunities he becomes aware of in his role as Parish Council Clerk.

## **Activities**

The Committee made numerous suggestions as to potential new activities, including for young people, that could be considered in future.

An offer has been made by colleagues at The Sharpham Trust and Ambios for shared use of an apple presser on loan from OrchardLink that could enable an Apple Day at Ash Meadow to be revived. Simon Carr noted that similar events have proven popular in other villages, often using shared pasteurisation equipment and linking to local cider festivals. Time may be too short to organise this for 2022 but this could be planned for 2023, on the understanding that the particular press in question is large and can be operated by adults only, as well as requiring lots of apples. The Chair recommended that this be added to the Five Year Plan accordingly.

Following the Jubilee Queencrow competition, there has been a suggestion that a themed scarecrow competition run as an annual event. Other suggestions for activities included dedicated nature walks (linking with colleagues at The Sharpham Trust and Ambios) and Forest School type activities for children.

## **Formal adoption of the Ash Meadow Five Year Plan**

Barry Lunt proposed the adoption of the Five Year Plan, as seconded by Nigel Paterson. The Committee voted unanimously to adopt it, on the understanding that it be reviewed each year.

## **Any Other Business**

### **Mowing boundaries**

Barry Lunt raised the question as to whether the margins at the edge of the playing field were sufficiently clear, as recent grass cutting by South Hams District Council colleagues was at risk of infringing on the agreed 3 metre line from the copses.

It was agreed that a line be sprayed prior to the next mowing session as a guide, which could be reviewed moving forward should it not prove effective. The Chair will liaise accordingly with colleagues at South Hams District Council.

### **Cycle track**

Jill Davies queried the demarcation of the cycle track being used by numerous local children, with the suggestion that the remaining Ash deadwood and stumps be used for this purpose. It was noted by Lyn Paterson that the children are requesting screening planting for the track area going forward. It was agreed that any developments regarding the track be carefully and collaboratively managed in consultation with the families of the children concerned, in order to ensure maximum clarity and benefit moving forward.

### **Plastic buckets**

The farm-related plastic buckets left at the composting site have in fact been used by those collecting compost. Jill Davies has spoken to the farm in question regarding the buckets not being left at the site in future.

## **Parish website**

In the absence of its own dedicated page, unlike other committees in the parish, the Chair has been liaising with Sophie Paterson in her capacity as a volunteer with the Ashprington and Tuckenhay parish website to ensure that an [Ash Meadow webpage](#) is now live and able to be promoted by both the Ash Meadow and Parish Facebook pages.

## **Sustainable Ashprington and Tuckenhay group**

Katherine Weare shared news of a new Sustainable Ashprington and Tuckenhay group establishing in the parish as part of the wider Sustainable South Hams Network. A launch event will be held on the evening of Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, celebrating the many sustainable activities already ongoing in the parish, including those involving Ash Meadow.

## **Dates of next AGM and Ash Meadow Committee meetings**

The Chair proposed that the next AGM be held in July 2023, likely on a Wednesday evening, with the exact date to be confirmed. The next meeting of the Ash Meadow Committee will take place in September 2022, with the date as yet to be confirmed.

The Chair recorded a final round of thanks to the Committee members for their time and contributions.

*The meeting closed at 8.45pm.*