

WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

Environment and Leisure Working Group

MINUTES

ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE WORKING GROUP

Monday 10th February 2025 at 6pm Village Hall Committee Room

E&L Chair: Cllr Robin Cooke

1. Agree Minute taker: Offer from Cllr Chenery accepted.
2. **Those Present:** Cllr Cooke, Cllr Chenery, Cllr French, Cllr Horsnell, Anne Westover (AW), Sonya Exton. From the public: Pauline Huggins

Apologies: Cllr Creasey

3. **Minutes** of the last meeting of Monday 9th December 24 were accepted as a true record.
4. **Tree work update:**
AW advised that UKPN had carried out pruning to the Holm Oak tree on the Pightle. Also, ESSL has offered to prune some trees next to the Bier House at no cost. Green Gym has carried out several successful work party tasks around the village. AW had attended a hedge laying course. Cllr Chenery confirmed that some £1200 that had been set aside by the Council in 24/25 for tree works had been re-allocated as the list of potential tree works wasn't considered essential at this time.
5. **Mini-orchard proposal on Glebe allotment site:**
AW introduced this idea which has support from the allotment association (AA) in principle on a vacant plot. It wouldn't be open to the community as only allotment holders have access to the site. It was suggested the orchard would be managed by the AA and fruit pickings could be offered at the gate or elsewhere in the village. AW advised she would submit a grant application to ESC for purchase of the trees. Cllr Chenery to raise with WMPC as to whether it would expect rent from this plot.
6. **Tree Safety Inspections:**
AW has supplied the Council with an estimate for her to carry out formal tree safety inspections for the parish owned and overhanging trees and draft a report. The value of this would require 2 further quotes. As an alternative Cllr Chenery proposed that AW carries out a tree safety inspection and report just for the Pightle. The cost of this would negate the need for alternative quotes, allows for an early start of this work and would provide a template for extending this work to other parts of the village. The meeting agreed to this proposal and Cllr Chenery would confirm this by email to AW. The tree wardens would continue monitoring all other trees in the interim.

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7. **Memorial Garden and Village Hall planters**

When queried as to any Council funds to support maintenance Cllr Chenery confirmed that £500 was budgeted for this in 25/26. Requests for funds should be made to the Clerk.

8. **Cemetery Management matters:**

AW reported that work to protect young trees had been completed and more bulbs planted. She confirmed that the barbed wire fence to the paddock should remain to deter deer and dogs.

9. **Walks Leaflet update (Discover Suffolk):**

The Working Group were pleased with the work by AW and others to finalise the updated parish walks leaflet. This can now proceed to printing with 1000 copies that AW will distribute. A £400 invoice for printing would be passed to the Clerk. AW offered to organise some guided walks and mentioned that the Archive Centre intend to unveil a plaque to commemorate the Potsford Gibbet on 14th April which would be ideal for a guided, informative walk. Simon H has reported some missing footpath signs to SCC.

10. **Biodiversity Strategy**

It was agreed that this sits better with the Climate Action Working Group who would be asked for support to finalise the wording of the draft strategy before submitting to WMPC.

11. **Bat survey**

Bats and their roosts are legally protected. In light of the Beech tree in the cemetery being a likely bat roost ESC may offer a grant to carry out a bat survey. AW will investigate further and potentially seek quotes.

12. **Volunteer Management and first aid training:**

Cllr French advised that he expects all the parish council paperwork to be in place by the next or subsequent parish council meeting, to include a suite of risk assessments. The extend of first aid training needs to be agreed and training providers could include RedX, St John's or Red Cross. Cllr Chenery to investigate and liaise with the Clerk.

13. **Spring Lane Defibrillator:**

Cllr Horsnell advised that a volunteer was moving away and we'd prefer to find a replacement. He would advise the Clerk on the tasks involved in inspecting and maintaining the equipment and perhaps the Deputy Clerk could advertise this vacancy. Other Group members would consider anyone suitable to contact Cllr Horsnell.

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14. Terms of Reference of this Working Group:

Cllr Chenery queried the residual remit of this group and its effectiveness. The Group considered there was an ongoing role, evidenced by the variety of items on this meetings agenda. The Group agreed to continue with future scheduled meetings and noted that some amendments to the Terms of Reference listed in the 14 October 24 minutes were yet to be incorporated. Cllr Chenery agreed to update these.

15. Any Other Business:

None.