

**St Catherine's Hill & Town Common Management Plan Steering Group
Minutes of Meeting, 29 January 2013 – 2:00pm
Mayors Parlour, Christchurch High Street**

Present:

Paul Atwell (UHP) – PA	Amanda Collins (SBW) – AC
Chris Gordon (WCRA) – CG	Cllr Sue Spittle (CBC) – SS
Robin Harley (CBC) – RH	Peter Holloway (CBC) – PH
Becky Johnson (CBC)	Nick Squirrell (NE) – NS
Gary Powell (ARC) – GP	
Cllr Margaret Phipps (CBC) – MP (items 7 – 10)	

1. Welcome and Introduction

1.1 SS welcomed the group.

2. Apologies

2.1 Apologies were received from Yvette Greatrex (HPC). Dick Preston (FC) was not requested to attend.

2.2 It was noted that Dick Preston leaves his post at the end of March; his successor starts on 11 February. The group agreed to invite Dick and his successor to the next meeting.

3. Minutes of meeting on 22 November 2012

3.1 GP gave an update from Malmesbury Estate who have agreed in principle with the management plan. A change in personnel may have caused delay, but negotiations over a 10 year lease agreement are now on going.

3.2 CG asked to change “CG suggested” in section 8.7 to “CG requested”.

3.3 The group requested action points to be highlighted in future minutes and PH stressed the importance of minuting any actions that had been agreed by the group.

3.4 The group agreed that, subject to the one amendment, the previous minutes were true record.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 None.

5. Terms of Reference and Steering Group Membership

5.1 SS noted the absence of a county councillor in the membership but the group agreed to keep it this way with the option to amend in the future.

5.2 NS requested the tense be changed in the second paragraph of “Background” to read “it was agreed”. The group agreed this would not require re-signing of forms.

5.3 The group agreed that subject to the amendment noted the terms of reference were acceptable, and signed copies of the membership form were collected.

6. Dipwell Update

- 6.1 RH reported 10 dipwells were installed by Dorset Drilling Services on 19 December. All are 2m in depth except for the two on the plateau at 5m depth. Five were found to be dry, five wet. The water levels have been logged and the information has been forwarded to Ron Allen. A location map was circulated.
- 6.2 RH confirmed £552 remained in the facilitator budget of which £92 was spent on 10 padlocks and £152 was spent on a dip meter. £308 now remains in the budget.
- 6.3 RH circulated the dipwell log form and explained it to the group, including the need to check for surface water. NS suggested, in the interest of longevity, adding depth of water to the form as well as the context of a weather report detailing the prevailing conditions. Information could perhaps be taken from the Bournemouth Airport weather station. **ACTION** – RH to establish if this is an option.
- 6.4 CG noted having never seen the hill as wet as it is at present.

7. Felling Proposals Update and Revised Maps Following Site Visit

- 7.1 AC reported SBW will wait to commence operational tree felling around the reservoir and, despite not requiring a felling licence, will treat the area as all other felling blocks will be treated. This will minimise public concern.
- 7.2 RH explained that following the previous site meeting, where Dick Preston noted concern with the prevailing wind, the shape of two of the felling blocks, blocks 19 and E had been amended. Maps were circulated to the group. The change in shape will allow the NE wind to curve around the edges of the trees. Both blocks have reduced slightly in size and the group agreed to the suggested changes.
- 7.3 RH confirmed the next stage is for CBC and ARC to employ a contractor to calculate the precise timber volume required for the first stage of the felling licence. Then the group will need to go back on site to identify trees for felling. The group agreed it would be helpful to have the contractor present at this meeting. The earliest any felling could start is September 2013.
- 7.4 GP expressed his preference in selecting a recommended contractor. **ACTION** – GP to consult with Helen Russell who has worked on felling licences for ARC previously.
- 7.5 SS and MP raised concern with burning of felled timber. RH confirmed there is a option for chipping but gaining access to remove chippings from the site can be problematic and some areas are completely inaccessible to vehicles. There is no need to make any decision at this stage and it can be discussed once works have been agreed. Chipping and burning both give different options again, including using an incinerator. GP noted that every block will be treated differently.

8. Site Signage

- 8.1 The group agreed signage is needed at the entrance to St Catherine's Hill Lane in replace of signage that was damaged and removed many years ago. RH has contacted Mark Adams (DCC) and his advice was the lane is a public highway and

signage would require a Traffic Regulation Order. CG disagreed and suggested the route is a restricted bridleway which is designated on OS maps.

- 8.2 MP suggested speaking with Julie Wharton (CBC) and installing dragon's teeth. RH confirmed the land belongs to Malmesbury Estate and installing dragon's teeth would require their permission. NS suggested talking to the fire department regarding emergency access and GP noted a police presence is needed on site. SS suggested increasing the amount of parking by the entrance.
- 8.3 RH confirmed signage is also needed at Sandy Lane and suggested funding through FSCH. This would not be highways signage but could state 'no parking beyond this point'. **ACTION** – RH to contact Julie Wharton and Mark Adams.
- 8.4 RH explained CBC will be installing routed ladderboard entrance signs around the entrance points, subject to Steering Group approval. **ACTION** – RH and PH to draw up signage design and bring to the next meeting. CG suggested the WCRA may be happy to help fund the signage.

9. Any Other Business

- 9.1 AC explained SBW are waiting to deal with the reservoir graffiti until a decision is made by the company in line with the Steering Group about the appropriate signage on site. **ACTION** – RH to put an item on the next meeting agenda.
- 9.2 GP reported funding had been received from English Heritage and work has commenced on interpretation at the end of the site. There will be a low key volunteer task in March to clear the scrub, in line with the management plan.
- 9.3 RH reported site damage due to the snow. ARC are also looking at tree damage.

10. Date of next meeting

- 10.1 Thursday 21st March, on site, at 10:30am. **ACTION** – RH to confirm in due course.

The meeting closed at 3:30pm.