

Present: Sue Ashwell, VMAG Chair
Village Volunteer Group Members Betty Millard
Clerk Ramune Mimiene
Assistant Clerk Jessica Thomson (Group Secretary)

On Zoom – Cllr Emily Lankfer, Cllr Caroline Underwood, Cllr Madeline Fraser and Cllr Anne Howell-Jones

No	Agenda Item	Who	Action/Status/Update
1.	VMAG Notes April 2024	ALL	There were no matters of accuracy from April 2024
2.	New Bin – Buckden High Street	JT	Following the removal of the bin outside of One Stop, there was concern that there may be an increase in littering on the High Street and we spoke to the businesses on the High Street to garner their thoughts. One Stop informed us that the reason they removed the bin was because it was regularly getting filled with glasses and bottles that was becoming dangerous when emptying and that cars would stop and just empty all their rubbish in it. They had provided the bin for use of customers and this was regularly being abused. They were of the opinion that if we added another bin on the high street that the same would happen and it would encourage littering as it would fill it up so quickly. The Vine provide bins in their outside area to the rear of the pub, they fill up daily and they were of the same opinion that unless we emptied it daily it would cause more littering. The butchers provide a small bin outside for their takeaway customers and this is taken inside at close. They supported the thoughts of the other outlets. Taking this in to account we have decided not to provide a new bin on the High Street – but we will monitor the situation and the handymen will continue with their regular litter picking. The litter bin near the war memorial on the high street (near seats) will remain in place. This is provided by BPC and emptied weekly by HDC (under contract for BPC).
3.	Cemetery Regs for residents / non-resident fees	JT	We have been asked to consider changing our rules around resident / non-resident cemetery fees and whether they should be more lenient towards people who have lived in the village for very many years and left before purchasing a plot. CONTINUED

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			The group spoke at length around how it was hard to implement flexible or discretionary rules around this and that it could be difficult to justify different treatment for different circumstances when someone wanting to buy a plot in the Cemetery fell outside the parameters that were set in the current Cemetery Regulations for resident price for a plot. VMAG decided that the regulations on charging will stay the same. NOTE: We do not restrict the right to be buried in Buckden Cemetery, but the price is lower if a plot is purchased by a resident. It was agreed there needs to be further communication /information piece around this so that people are reminded that if they wish to be buried in the cemetery <u>and</u> they wish to pay residents' rates for the plot(s), then they must buy a plot before they move out of the village. It was agreed that this rule will <u>not</u> be variable at the discretion of the Clerks or VMAG members; this will ensure consistency and clarity. JT to draw up some communication confirming the position that resident's rates are only applicable when purchased by a person, or on behalf of a person, who is <u>currently living</u> within the Parish of Buckden & Diddington (including Stirtloe and Hardwick). The article will be shared with the village through the Roundabout magazine and Newsletter. Draft to be considered by VMAG members and the agreed wording submitted to the Councillor managing BPC Roundabout content.
4.	Blister Pack	SA / JT	A villager asked if the Parish Council could provide and fund facilities to collect and recycle blister tablets. We advised that Buckden Parish Council is unable to set up a collection for these items. The ability of any Parish Council is controlled by legislation (multiple Acts and Regulations) and because of that BPC cannot lawfully organise or fund a collection scheme for blister packs. We are only able to deal with "Litter" and packaging of this type collected in bulk would not meet that definition. We also advised that the NHS pays for the collection of returned medication via pharmacies and GP dispensaries and that the enquirer could contact the ICB Chief Pharmacist to discuss this further.
5.	Playground	JT/RM	RM and JT have had three companies come in to consider and quote potential future replacement equipment for the

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			children’s playground and will present the quotes to VMAG, for discussion, once received. VMAG will then put forward proposal(s) for consideration by Council. Noted that through Community Action Plan that equipment for young people in the village has already been prioritised for use of CIL/grant applications in partnership with BVHT; the VMAG proposal for replacing the now old equipment for younger children (in the fenced playground) will be considered by Council for future funding. It is acknowledged that VMAG’s proposal are unlikely to be deliverable by BPC within 2024-25
6.	Renovation of the Gardeners Shed	JT	The Shed is now very close to being finished, with just a couple of snagging items outstanding. ACTION JT – to chase the electrical inspection documents ■ Update – NICEIC documents now received for electrical work within scope of Gardeners Shed refurbishment.
7.	Contract for Employment Law and HR support – Worknest	SA	A formal proposal has been submitted to Council (14May24) to implement a contract with Worknest for this support to review policies, provide guidance on dealing appropriately with changes in law relating to employment and to provide 1-2-1 support as required for HR questions/issues. This proposal was submitted by the AG Chairman as staffing is within the ToR of VMAG. Council to consider this after VMAG; ACTION RM - Report to VMAG on outcome of Council discussion The report with two VMAG proposals (in a VMAG Report) were shared with all VMAG members.
8.	Bin adjacent to lay-by on A1 south of Shell garage	SA/RM	Following a request to add a bin in the layby, we were originally informed by HDC that this layby was earmarked for closure. We have now been informed by National Highways that although this ‘at grade’ layby type is not ideal for modern HGV’s they have no plans to close it. The VMAG paper to Council (14May2024) included a request for Council to reconsider their decision to fund a sign not a bin (as first proposed) following an appeal from a resident A copy of the May 2024 VMAG report is available on the BPC website. Council to consider this after VMAG; ACTION RM - Report to VMAG on outcome of Council discussion
9.	VMAG Information	ALL	As noted in a previous meeting of VMAG, our achievements in 2023-24 and our 3 key priorities for 2024-25 were shared and agreed at the Council’s 2024 Strategy meeting. These

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	for Annual Assembly		will now be reported at the Annual Assembly and in the Roundabout Magazine.
10	Ride-on-Lawn mower	SA RM	It would be helpful at times be able to drive the ride on lawn mower on the roads. The legal position on this for the current mower has been investigated is not straight forward. The previous ride-on mower had a number plate and BPC continues to pay insurance for this item (based on it being used on the road). As an interim measure the mower will be moved from place to place using the trailer ACTION RM – to follow up and report back to VMAG
11	BPC insurance renewal	RM/SA	A number of matters in relation to insurance have been reviewed in detail; value of fences and gates are to be updated prior to renewal of our policy on 31 May 2024 ACTION RM – to follow up with brokers for insurers to clarify points about the policy and implementation in case of reason to claim raised by SA.
12.	Powers and Duties of Parish Councils	ALL	Members of the group were asked to make themselves familiar the summary document provided. This is because many of the things that VMAG can and cannot do are determined by these legal powers and duties of local councils (including Parish Councils) set out in statute.
13.	Next Meeting	ALL	Weds 19th June 1pm BVH and on Zoom