

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING RECORD
7 MARCH 2023

Attendees

Caroline Underwood CU , Chair	Madeline Fraser MF
Peter Clark PC	Catherine Grigg CG
Melanie Storey MS , Secretary	

Apologies: Richard Salmon **RS**

Item 1 Record of the Last Meeting

- The minutes of the last meeting were approved
- Action review:

No	Action Description	Status/Update
32.1	MF to complete the annual check on footpaths D13, D14, D15 and B5	Completed
32.5	CU to write to the landowners of the area where the proposed new footpath would cross as the next step to progressing the application process	Outstanding
33.2	CU to investigate the issues with the Ouse Valley Way	Completed
33.3	CU to place an item in the Roundabout seeking volunteers to join the Footpath Working Group	Completed
33.4	CU to seek advice from the village nest box expert as to sourcing bird calling boxes and the lead in time for their installation	Completed
33.5	CU to contact a landowner in Stirtloe to see if swift boxes could be erected on their barns	Completed
33.6	CU to ask the author of the Biodiversity Strategy to tell the Group where swifts were nesting when he undertook his survey	Completed
33.7	MS to include an item on the agenda of the next meeting on publicising the content of current leaflets and the creation of additional leaflets	Completed
33.8	CU to instruct HDC to undertake tree and risk surveys for completion during 2023	Completed
33.9	CU to circulate the update from the Slow Ways initiative around members of the Parish Council	Completed
33.10	CU and MF to attend the Slow Ways webinar on 30 January	Completed
33.11	CU to submit the article on hedge cutting for publication in the Roundabout	Completed, published
	Actions to be Monitored	
16.2	MS to distribute Round About Buckden leaflets and to record their take-up	Library, George, Buckden Towers, Drs Surgery restocked
26.1	MS to monitor the impact of the Slow Ways initiative	

Item 2 Green Infrastructure

- Annual footpath check
 - The footpath checks have been completed and when the report is finalised it will be submitted to the Parish Council
- The Slow Ways webinar
 - CU and MF attended the webinar and confirmed that it was focused on encouraging members to take action with regard to their local routes
- The Ouse Valley Way (OVW)
 - Part of the OVW, close to Buckden Marina, is currently impassable
 - It has been confirmed by a resident that a parallel track is being used by people as an alternative route; this is not a public right of way
 - It was noted that National Highways has accepted responsibility for addressing erosion of the OVW under the A14 flyover but what action they intend to take and when is not known

Action 34.1 MF to send the results of the annual footpath check on D13, D14, D15 and B5 to MS so the report can be finalised

Action 34.2 CU to send information about the Slow Ways initiative to our representative on the HDC Council

Action 34.3 CU to send the lead of the Great Ouse Valley Trust the evidence from a resident that the OVW is impassable by Buckden Marina and that people are regularly using a parallel track as an alternative route raising the question as to whether action should be taken to try and formalise the alternative as a public right of way

Action 34.4 CU to raise the issue of erosion of the OVW under the A14 flyover during the meeting with National Highways on 13 March

Item 3 Biodiversity

- Biodiversity Strategy: swift boxes
 - A landowner in Stirtloe has shown an interest in putting swift boxes in place if their presence would not conflict with the regular swallow nesters; it has been confirmed that there would not be an issue
 - The Vicar at St Mary's also has shown an interest in putting swift boxes in place, subject to any permission required from the Church of England
 - 2 residents have expressed an interest in installing swift boxes
 - It was decided that this year current nesting sites should be identified so a plan for the establishment of additional boxes can be made for implementation by Spring 2024
- Talking Trees and Bees
 - It was agreed that, subject to final checks, printing of the leaflets should go ahead
 - It was recognised that the leaflet should be digitised and loaded to the website
 - It was noted that an additional QR plaque will have to be purchased for the Judas tree
- Publicising the content of current leaflets and the creation of additional leaflets
 - It was noted that the Parish Council's Communications Group has been distributing our leaflets around the village
 - It was agreed the possibility of creating a leaflet on water in gardens and around the village, along with another one on flowers should be investigated
- Tree maintenance by HDC
 - HDC has asked the Parish Council to take contractual action to task it with reviewing the trees in Buckden for which the Parish Council is responsible;
 - It was noted the review will take place in April

Action 34.5 CU and MS to undertake the final checks of the Talking Trees and Bees leaflet

Action 34.6 MS to prepare a digitised version of the Talking Trees and Bees leaflet for loading on to the website

Action 34.7 MS to ask the Parish Clerk to order a QR plaque for the Judas Tree

Action 34.8 CU to ask the Parish Council's Communications Group to continue distributing our leaflets around the village

Action 34.9 MS to start drafting a leaflet on water in gardens and around the village

Item 4 Budget

- The budget remains unchanged

Item 5 Parish Council Operational Plan

- **GI&BAG 1** Promote use of paths through liaison with local community groups in particular youth groups and school
 - Achieved: footpath maps produced and placed in public places and online
 - To do: greater engagement with village groups and the School, plus explore the possibility of holding a photographic competition open to all those under 18
- **GI&BAG 2** Support proposals to develop the footpath infrastructure by incorporating paths developed by Aggregate Industries at Paxton Pits site
 - Achieved: attended meetings with Aggregate Industries
 - To do: continue to encourage Aggregate Industries to open the new path
- **GI&BAG 3** Work in partnership with landowners and Little Paxton Pits nature reserve to promote use of paths between villages
 - Achieved: membership of the Slow Ways initiative and attended meetings with Aggregate Industries
 - It was suggested this action be combined with GI&BAG 2
- **GI&BAG 4** Identify paths which are frequently walked but are not currently rights of way and put in processes for claiming a right of way through user-evidence
 - Achieved: request for a new public right of way has been submitted
 - To do: enter into dialogue with the landowner and revisit the Government initiative to reinstate old paths
- **GI&BAG 5** Establish a friends of Buckden footpaths group that will take responsibility for reporting issues and carrying out minor maintenance work
 - Achieved: group has been created and is active
 - To do: encourage more people to join
- **GI&BAG 6** Adopt a landscape assessment strategy, to include wildlife and green spaces, biodiversity improvement to increase flora and fauna in village. From strategy develop action plan for Council to include a review of management policies for the open spaces BPC manages to enhance biodiversity and manage our operating costs, and work with others within the Village to do the same. Use strategy to inform work of handymen
 - Achieved: strategy written and being implemented
 - To do: continue to deliver against the action plan
- **GI&BAG 9** Fund biodiversity improvements in the Churchyard and other areas
 - Achieved: planting completed in Churchyard, Morris Close and the High Street; floating island in the village hall lake funded
 - To do: identify further areas for action to improve biodiversity
- **GI&BAG 10** Continue to support education and communication about the local environment and produce a series of biodiversity leaflets
 - Achieved: a series of biodiversity leaflets has been produced
 - To do: create further leaflets

Action 34.10 MF to draft some ideas in relation to holding a photographic competition, to promote the use of our footpaths, for discussion at the next meeting

Action 34.11 CG to obtain contact details of the photography course leader at Hinchbrook School

Action 34.12 MS to revisit the Government initiative to reinstate old paths

Item 6 AOB

- It was noted that a new long distance path called the Varsity Way is being proposed and that it may offer an opportunity to create a route between Buckden and Grafham Water
- It was noted that a Quarry meeting will be held on 26 April so it is hoped confirmation of an opening date for the new path will be confirmed
- Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 16 May 2023