

# HASSOCKS AMENITY ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012

1. Present. Margaret Ford (chair) Juliet Strange (taking minutes) Heather West, Bob Kenhard, Peter Gibbons, Judith Poncelet, Fred Maillardet and Catherine Cassidy.
2. Apologies for absence: Jacqui Whatford, Louise Castleton, Janet Slaughter, Frances Guadencio, Dan Donovan, Chris Bere and Diana Goodbourn
3. **Minutes of last meeting and matters arising:**

The minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> February were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

  - a) Bridleway/cycle path.
    - (i) Colin Wilsdon and Leslie Campbell are yet to walk the path between Misty Bridge and The Weald Tennis Club.
    - (ii) Footpath 12A from Lodge Lane to Half Way House and beyond. Margaret reported that West Sussex CC had agreed to assume responsibility for this path as it fell within the National Park.
    - (iii) National England have a fund of £1 Million pounds for 'Paths for the Community.' It was felt it was the role of the Parish or even district Council to apply for a grant from this fund. It was hoped it might be possible to tap the fund for funding for cycle paths in the future.
  - b) Raised beds No further progress had been made in regards to the ownership or responsibility for the upkeep of these beds outside the pet shop and dry cleaners. MF awaited a reply from Gordon Marples.
  - c) Car parking. It is now one year since we raised concerns about the state of car parking in Hassocks and some progress has been made. There is now general agreement at Parish Council level that there is a problem, a view now endorsed by Gordon Marples who represents Hassocks on the District Council. The Parish Council parking group had held a meeting with Sue Rees, MSDC Head of Parking Services and Cabinet member John de Mierre. Unfortunately only Alan Berry and Peter Gibbons were able to be present, though Sue Hatton attended briefly. It was pointed out that it could take up to ten years to put yellow lines on the roads, but hopefully only six months if it were decided to improve the long stay car park by dividing it into long and short stay sections. The next step would be a meeting with West Sussex representatives.
  - d) Turners field. Tom and Rachel Turner have been unable to plant bird seed this Spring because of the wet weather, but are planning to do so in the Autumn. A discussion was held as to the best 'bird identification' signage for the field. It was agreed pupils at Haywards Heath College should be approached to see if they could produce the art work/photographs which could then be covered in plastic by professional printers such as Sussex signs in Burgess Hill.
4. Treasurer's report Dan Donovan has asked to be relieved of this position. Bob Kenhard has kindly agreed to have his name put forward for the role at the forthcoming AGM. We have £4,380 in funds although some of this is earmarked for particular projects. MF agreed to clarify certain figures on the accounts with DD.
5. The Jubilee project: Restoration of Spitalford Bridge – a project outline is recorded with the minutes. Thanks were expressed to Bob Kenhard, his wife Amanda and Frances Guadencio, who had been working hard on this project. Through Peter Bareham, a local retired architect we are lucky to have the services of Pauline Sutton, a local architectural designer and sculptor who has drawn up plans for the restoration of the North side of the bridge. She is not charging for her time at the moment only for expenses such as photocopying. The meeting heartily approved the plans and gave Bob the go ahead to proceed with the venture. It was decided to launch the appeal for funding at the AGM, when it is hoped there may be an artist's impression ready. We do not yet know how much the project will cost. WSCC have agreed to repair and refurbish the parapet on the south side of the bridge. It was agreed to ask whether they could also do the work on the north side with the help of funding in the form of grants, donations and sponsors. It was agreed to try and get an article in Talk About and the June Sussex Living Magazine with a photo of the existing bridge in the hopes of generating interest and funding. It was also agreed to approach local clubs and societies asking for help with this project, pointing out that the original bridge was built by public sponsorship. MF

6. South Downs Farm update: A progress report is recorded with the minutes. The house has been sold, it is understood the new owners have no agricultural intentions. At the time of the meeting it was thought the campsite was open, but there were doubts about this. Jeremy Wakeham has received a reply to his letter to the Lantern Trust Solicitors stating that the Charity would look at any proposal which came with a full financial proposal. There is to be a meeting with Juliet Merrifield and Cindy Newall and BK to discuss the using of the middle section of the site for sustainable living projects by renting the land from the Charity for a peppercorn rent. East and West Sussex County Associations for the blind are meeting with a view to contacting the Charity Commissioners supporting our claims that the Lantern had ceased to provide any services for the blind in the Brighton area.

7. Stand at Downlands Fair – 23<sup>rd</sup> June We are having a stall at this. Please contact Margaret if you can help. This would be a good opportunity to advertise the AGM.

8. Rail Group update. There is no firm start date for the new station. Both the Football club and Southdowns nursery are not prepared to have temporary parking whilst the build is taking place. From 19<sup>th</sup> May there will be two late trains from London Bridge (on Saturday nights only) at 23.43 and 00.12. Catherine C told the meeting that there will now be eight carriage trains at the weekends. Trains are now running through to Bedford following extensive rebuilding of stations on this route. Blackfriars station now has an exit on the South Bank which makes it easier for visits to the Tate etc.

9. Membership Secretary's Report There are now 250 members, as against 286 this time last year. All renewal letters were delivered by hand saving postage. 40 people have increased their standing orders to £10 a year following a carefully written letter by MF and JP There have been some encouraging letters thanking the association for all their work, especially the tree project. Thanks were expressed to Hassocks Hardware who agreed to be the drop off point for subscriptions.

10. Annual General Meeting Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30 p.m. Hassocks Hotel.

a. Margaret has arranged for Fran Southgate to speak. She is Wetlands Officer for Sussex and will be able to tell us about Dr Holmes' work for Natural England and his finding that the Lag spring source is, if not the best, then the most natural example of a chalk spring source in the whole of the UK. As the Lag stream feeds the Herring stream this will be very relevant to our Spitalford Bridge project.

Fred undertook to loan the Oldland Mill screen for Fran's presentation. **FM**

b. Juliet expressed concerns as to the acoustics at the pub in view of the extreme difficulty people had in hearing any of the speakers last year. **JP agreed to asking her son to take control of the PA system both before and during the meeting.**

c. Nominations for officers. Juliet has agreed to stand for secretary, Bob for treasurer and Margaret is prepared to continue as Chairman.

d. Nominations for elected representatives Peter Gibbons, Colin Wilsdon and Lucinda Hawkes are due to retire and are eligible for re-election. Lucinda does not wish to stand again due to other commitments. It was agreed to ask Frances Guadencio to stand on the committee.

11. Any other business

a. First Capital Connect are printing leaflets/posters advertising the extra services. These posters state that the extra trains are a direct result of the intervention of the Hassocks Rail Group.

b. Light Up Hassocks. Catherine asked for a donation for this. It was agreed to give £250, the same as last year. The Light Up Hassocks committee are making a Community calendar and are asking local groups to send in dates for significant events for 2013. These need to be submitted by the end of May.

c. Fred pointed out it was National Mills Week-end this week-end and Oldland Mill would be open on Saturday and Sunday from 2-5.

d. Catherine reported from the HCP meeting that it is hoped to keep the Cycle Hire initiative going again this summer.

12. **Date of next meeting Thursday September 13<sup>th</sup> at Adastra Hall**