

## **OXBOROUGH DOORSTEP GREEN ACTION GROUP (ODGAG)**

### **Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2003, 7.30pm Venue: The Old Hall (Barbara's home)**

Present: Charles Ashley, Chris Heatley, Susan Hernandez, Chris Mathews, Alan McGee, Barbara Pritchard, John Voaden. Henry Lambert was unable to attend.

- 1) Alan informed the group that as he now has a job which involves working nights it would be more difficult for him to attend future meetings; this was accepted but everyone agreed that Alan's help would be welcomed as and when he has time.
- 2) Charles said that the District Valuer had prepared a report on the Green stating that 'the current open market value for the freehold interest in the site...is in the sum of £12,500', which is very good news as this was the figure put forward by Ian Monson. The bill is estimated to be approximately £300-£350. Ian should be informed of this development.
- 3) The two mature beech trees both have Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and Allison (Countryside Agency) has suggested three possible consultants:
  - (a) Eastern tree surgery 01223-292110 (Cost £195)
  - (b) Broadland tree services 01953-607715 (Cost £120 + vat)
  - (c) Aylmer Addison Assoc. 01362-858458 (not taking on any new business)

There are a number of issues(in no particular order): (a) It is in our interest to have any necessary work carried out on the trees, while the grant can be used for such a purpose!

(b) As the trees are very old and one has already received some 'surgery' it might be that the tree report will show that the trees should be taken down, to belay any future accidents.

(c) It would be a poor start to the project if the trees were taken down without due cause, as they are key features to the Green. So the decision to remove them should not be taken lightly

(d) Once the report has been made and the trees are to stand, what about the long-term costs of insurance and maintenance.

(e) So it must be determined whether finding out about the implications of the TPO is advisory or obligatory.

(f) Chris H. will ask Ian when (or if) was the last inspection he made on the trees and also the cost of maintaining them.

- 4) Planning permission for change of use will need to be made: Charles will speak to Nick Moys, the Planning Officer at Breckland Council whose name appeared on the Grant Application form and ask his opinion on whether there is a need to obtain 'conservation area consent'. It was thought that planting trees, bushes and plants and placing benches around would not require planning permission, so hopefully this application would not take much time. A copy of the TPO report (when it has been made) should be sent to Breckland Council at the same time. The cost will be between £200 and £300: *however, if Oxborough Parish Council submit the planning application on behalf of ODGAG this would reduce by 50%.*
- 5) Allison said that we should prepare a draft questionnaire (of course we have the option of appointing a professional community consultant) which must be sent to her for rubber-stamping, from which the final questionnaire could be agreed on, duplicated and issued to all villagers. Alastair Rhind (Rural Projects Officer, Community Development Section at Breckland Council) has volunteered to help again. Action: *Meeting next Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February at John's house 7pm with just Christ H., Susan, John and Alastair.*

- 6) Fundraising; As the first phase is covered by Oxborough Parish Council, there remains a need to raise £1500 for the second phase: John expressed his view that this would not be easy! Suggestions included approaching British Sugar and Marham Airbase as possible sponsors. Chris H. said he would write to Shanks & McEwan re. land-fill money, although there is also Cleanaway and Antiwaste. It was suggested that the Icen Partnership might be able to help with funding and Susan will write them about ODGAG. Hewars Trust was mentioned and although the opinion was that they only support people in need and not projects, it might be worth approaching them to help fund some benches.
- 7) The constitution was originally signed in its draft form by the whole committee. However, the final version of the constitution has not yet been agreed with the Countryside Agency. Allison says it is not a priority at the moment.
- 8) No claim for payment of grant will be accepted after 10 June so the group must be prepared to follow a fairly tight timetable. (Allison has worked out a timetable –copy attached)
- 9) The consultation of the village must be very comprehensive, concentrating on a general plan that will enhance safety and provide a visual amenity pleasing to the majority (with the scope to add new features in the years ahead). A clear idea of the financial commitment in future years should be included, as well as showing how ideas need money spent on them in the present: how would individuals feel about helping with fundraising or paying a higher precept? Bearing in mind that at the Parish Council meeting held 22/10/02 when the 10 members of the public present were asked if they would support changing the appearance of the Green a great deal, slightly or not at all, the majority of hands went to not at all, it was considered important to keep the proposed plan of developing the Green as simple as possible.
- 10) The next committee meeting will be Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February starting 7.30pm at West Wing Chantry House (Charles's home)