

CROWBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

To all Members of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee (with copies to all other Members for information).

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee to be held at the Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough on Tuesday 29th November 2011 at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:-

Town Clerk
22nd November 2011

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

AGENDA ITEMS

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES

3.1. Minutes – 27th September 2011

3.2. Matters Outstanding (including reports on updates)

3.2.1 Installation of bollards outside the Post Office (6111)

The replacement bollards were installed by ESCC when Croft Road was resurfaced.

3.2.2 Tidy up of RoW footpath between Fermor School & Beacon Community College

The footpath has been resurfaced and other maintenance work undertaken.

3.2.3 Notice boards

Replacement notice boards for Jarvis Brook and Alderbrook and new notice boards for Whitehill Road and the junction of Ghyll Road/ St John's Road have been received and are due to be installed week commencing 21st November.

No suggestions have been received for information to be displayed in notice boards when not in use. So far this year, there have only been 2 weeks when none of the boards have been in use. A quotation of £21 + Vat has been received for a laminated A1 poster.

3.2.4 Replacement bus shelters (6276)

Meeting held with ESCC re licence for replacement bus shelters at Walshes Road and Aldervale Cottages. Bus shelters have now been ordered with anticipated delivery in January. Groundstaff to remove old shelters.

3.2.5 Street light column no. 1 Palesgate Lane

ESCC has been advised of transfer of ownership of this street light.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Uckfield-Lewes Railway

Report from John Coleman.

5. CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS

5.1 Matters Outstanding on Natural Habitats (including reports on updates)

5.1.1 Waymarkers – Silver Jubilee (6115)

An order has been placed for the waymarkers.

5.1.2 Leaflet – The Ghyll (6116)

No further action will be taken on the proposed leaflet for The Ghyll until January in accordance with the management plan.

5.1.3 Country Park – improvements to car park (6222)

Improvements completed 31st October.

5.1.4 Liaison with Crowborough Conservation

An informal meeting to find out more about the work of Crowborough Conservation and improve communication was held 21st November.

5.2 Boundary management at The Ghyll and Country Park

5.3 Closing times at the car parks at The Ghyll and Country Park

5.4 Interpretation boards for The Ghyll

5.5 Threatened Species Project

5.6 To consider working arrangements with volunteers

5.7 Items from Ranger's Report for noting

6. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

6.1 Planting in flower beds and hanging baskets

7. TRANSPORT and HIGHWAYS

7.1 To consider new items for the next Strengthening Local Relationships meeting with East Sussex County Council

8. LIGHTING

8.1 Replacement light at Limekiln Court, Palesgate Lane

9. FINANCE

9.1 Management Accounts to 30th September 2011 (sent to Councillors 6th October 2011).

9.2 Management Accounts to 31st October 2011 (sent to Councillors 9th November 2011)

10. TO CONSIDER STAFF ISSUES

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE DISCUSSION, THE PRESS AND PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

11. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING and/or INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

RANGER'S REPORT, November 2011

FOR CONSIDERATION

5.2 Boundary management at The Ghyll and Country Park

Letters have been delivered to all residents bordering the Country Park and The Ghyll requesting removal of encroachments and cessation of fly-tipping. A surveyor has provided a quotation for a "line in the sand" boundary survey of both sites costing £4,390 for the Ghyll and £3,148 for the Country Park. This would highlight any current encroachments. In accordance with Financial Regulations, alternative quotes are to be obtained.

Proposed Resolution – To spend up to £8,000 + VAT to commission boundary surveys at The Ghyll and Country Park and to delegate authority to the Clerk to select the contractor.

Spending permitted under the Open Spaces Act 1906 section 19.

5.3 Closing times at the car parks at The Ghyll and Country Park

Members of the public have asked us to move the weekday closing times of car parks at The Ghyll and Country Park from 4pm to 8.30pm in summer (April – September). This can be done using current Ground Staff resources but will require new signs. The existing signs are too small and often missed by drivers so replacement signs at A3 size are proposed.

Proposed Resolution – To change the summer (April – September) car park closing times at The Ghyll and Country Park to 8.30pm and erect new A3 signs beside the entrance gates to display the revised opening times.

5.4 Interpretation boards for The Ghyll

An A1 timber-framed interpretation panel with site map and visitor information is needed at both the Burdett Road and Green Lane entrances to the site. Total cost = £3,600.

- a. Timber Frame x2 - manufacture = £1,800 (Attached quote from High Weald Furniture)
- b. Interpretation Panel x2 – graphic design and manufacture at = £1,800 (Computer generated map only, attached quote from Fitzpatrick Woolmer)

Proposed Resolution – To spend up to £3,600 + VAT to commission two timber-framed A1 interpretation panels to be sited close to car parks at The Ghyll.

Spending permitted under the Local Government Act 1972 section 111.

5.5 Threatened Species Project

A £10,000 lottery grant applied for by the Ranger has been received by Crowborough Conservation from the National Lottery towards a Threatened Species Project. It will train members of the public and facilitate surveys for dormice and amphibians and reptiles that are recommended in the site management plans at the Ghyll and Country Park and Summersales saving CTC over £8,000. A launch event was held in August attended by 150 people and in October volunteers were successful in finding 7 live Dormice at the Ghyll.

The project will need to continue in absence of The Ranger and surveys will be conducted in association with Crowborough Conservation with Ecologists Kate Ryland and Barry Kemp leading the events. The Committee will need to consider the appropriate working arrangements for this project (see also 6.6).

5.6 To consider working arrangements with volunteers

The Committee will need to consider the type of work that is acceptable for volunteers to undertake on Council land and how this will be managed.

5.7 Items from Ranger's Report for noting

Car park at Silver Jubilee/ The Ghyll

The current car park at Silver Jubilee is poorly designed allowing only 3 cars to park before the maintenance access to the site is blocked. There is currently an open access route for unauthorised vehicles onto site. An extension is proposed using Type 1 surfacing and surrounded by post and rail fencing which would also help to address the safety issue posed by an adjacent ditch highlighted in the recent site safety inspection. A site visit for Councillors and Officers is proposed.

Country Park

Budget = £10,000, £4,311 spent, £5,689 remaining

- Practical tasks from the site management plan are on target
- The car park has been resurfaced (6222) It was possible to include repair of the track beside the eroding cliff within the price.
- Dog fouling issue – Temporary posters from the “Keep Britain Tidy” campaign have been installed.
- Volunteers completed Pond Management task.
- Byelaws for Country Park – Natural England have approved the drafted byelaws and we await direction from the Secretary of State. 2 members will need to sign them and they need to be advertised in order for them to become enforceable.

The Ghyll

Budget = £20,000, £2,908 spent, £17,092 remaining

- Practical tasks from the site management plan are on target.
- Picnic benches installed at Silver Jubilee were not what was ordered. A £300 discount was applied to our bill.
- Waymarkers have been ordered (6115).
- Local Nature Reserve status has again been chased with ESCC.
- 3 rustic oak benches have been hand-made by The Ranger and the first of these has been installed at Silver Jubilee Meadows.(6114)
- Volunteers completed bracken clearance task and set up a reptile survey.
- Vehicle access to ghyll – Access for management is still an issue. Quotes for new vehicle bridges within the site have been received but ecological advice prevents extensive track clearance work. Opportunities for vehicular access via alternative routes or using smaller vehicles e.g. quad bike need to be explored.

Bluebell Wood

Budget = £4,500, £420 spent, £4,080 remaining

- Practical tasks from the site management plan are on target
- CTC are now taking over management of Japanese Knotweed from WDC.
- The boundary fence owned by Old Mill Court has been replaced.

General

1. The first survey of trees on CTC land (other than the nature reserves) has been conducted and resultant works have been completed. (5938)
2. Management of nature sites over coming months:

- a. Ranger to supervise Ground staff on management tasks while practical
- b. Ranger to begin to temporarily focus on non-practical aspects of role such as interpretation, site planning and research for fundraising.
- c. Postponement of selected tasks in the site management plans.
- d. David Foot to manage selected tasks according to site management plans.
- e. Ranger could work 10 Keep in touch days to cover essential tasks in 2012 such as tree surveys and management of invasive species. This is to be considered by the Personnel Committee.
- f. Volunteers will be managed by David Foot.