

Minutes of the 7th Staveley Nature Reserve Liaison Group (SNR-LG) meeting held in Staveley and Copgrove Village Hall on November 5th 2013 at 7.00pm.

1. Group members present:

Ken Barker
Dorothy Griffin (Chairman)
Jenny Hayward (YWT)
Bill Kirkpatrick
Margaret Stringer
John Thornton

Apology: Lynne Manby (Parish Council)

2. 1 observer present (village resident)

Should any resident wish to contact the Liaison Group please email:
snr-lg@staveley-yorks.org.uk

3. Minutes of the last meeting – July 23rd 2013

These were accepted.

4. Registration of interest.

There were no additional registrations of interest.

5. Matters arising from previous meeting:

a. Dogs: The signs relating to the control of dogs in the Reserve are now in place.

Dog waste bins have not been placed yet. JH to contact HBC re this.

Action: JH

b. Churchyard: The more permanent signs have now been erected. As far as is known people crossing the wall and churchyard has not been a problem recently. There was concern that the churchyard route had been taken to avoid the difficult muddy conditions of the path and stile in winter and that these could arise again soon.

c. Footpath access at church end of village: JH has again been in contact with NYCC. They are willing to make the changes and to put in the infrastructure (fencing and surfacing) but are awaiting a “land-owner’s” reply. Also the maps needed for final consultation have not yet been put up by NYCC. There was a feeling that the process had been stalled somehow but it was not known where or why. It was agreed that the group would ask for support from the PC and the PCC.

It was agreed that: DG would write to her contact at NYCC (Aidan...)

BK would ask the PCC to write to NYCC and DG would write asking them for their support too.

MS would ask the PC to write to NYCC similarly.

Action: DG, BK and MS

d. Minskip Road Reserve signs: JH said that YWT would not be able to move these signs without re-applying for planning permission and would be unlikely to do this. It was suggested that cutting the hedge back before the entrance could improve visibility.

e. Reserve car park signs: There was considerable discussion around the difficulty some visitors had in finding the reserve and its car park. YWT is looking into the possibility of 2 “brown signs” being put up but these may be prohibitively expensive (£150 for planning application, £400 each to make and erect..). Few reserves in Yorkshire have them. The PC has agreed in principle to a sign on the village green provided they approve the design, but again this could cost £1000 to be done properly and planning permission might be needed. JH suggested she could make an A3 or A4 laminated sign for the village notice board – giving people directions to the reserve and car park. MS to ask the PC if they would accommodate this on their board. In relation to this JH said that donations to the YWT can be “ring-fenced” for particular projects – such as signing.

Action: MS

f. Wildflower project for schoolchildren: Plans were discussed about collecting seed from the reserve and growing on plants from this before planting out, by schoolchildren possibly. DG has been in contact with a nursery – lady, Pandora, from York Stock (a nursery near Boston Spa) who has offered help with this. DG also offered seed from her meadow. JH spoke of a project involving the expansion of areas of black medick – a host plant for common blue butterflies (caterpillars feed on this). Bernadette Lobo, a wild flower specialist living in the village, has shown interest in helping with flower projects and KB agreed to contact her again about this.

Action: KB

6. YWT report.

East Field wetland area. JH said that 2 days work remained to be completed in making scrapes here and the area is “wetting-up” nicely. An MSc project carried out over a year recommended removing 10cm of topsoil which has been done. The area will be seeded with 6 types of grass and yellow rattle next spring.

Hay meadow. This area has been sprayed and reseeded with perennials. Weed control measures will continue. (Soil test samples showed no need to remove topsoil from this area.)

There is a small amount of fencing to be completed. Otherwise much of the plan has now been implemented.

7. Chairman’s report on Parish feedback and other issues.

Nothing to report.

8. YWT report on future plans

JH spoke of the general maintenance plans for the Reserve. The water level of the lakes can now be controlled - the levels will be higher in winter and slowly lowered in summer to provide mud and suitable sites for nesting waders. There have been sightings of avocet, little ringed plover and bitterns again this year. The reed beds will be managed on a 15-20 year rotation giving different ages of vegetation. There about 50 ponds now and these are maintained on a 5 year rotation – a 5th being maintained every year. The creation of new ponds is now slowing. There is a 5 year management plan in place for the maintenance (cutting and laying) of the hedgerows. The Reserve is in Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship Scheme which issues grants for managing different environments and imposes legal obligations on the Trust to do this work.

9. Future events in area

None noted.

10. Communication with the Parish

MS to discuss notice with PC. (see 5e above)

11. New Year's Day

Concern was expressed about the blocking of the village roads when the hunt congregates at the pub on New Year's Day. YWT would be willing to allow their reserve car park to be opened for that day if this would be helpful (?) and it was agreed that if JT or another similarly responsible person would open and supervise the car-park during the time it was open, YWT would be happy to allow this. Horses and horse boxes would not be allowed on the Reserve.

12. Meetings:

The number of meetings per annum was discussed. The PC had originally specified 4 meetings a year of the Group. This will continue for next year but will be reviewed annually.

13. A.O.B. – None

14. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on January 28th at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.