

Notes of the first meeting of the Clifton upon Dunsmore Parish Council Conservation Group  
Thursday 22 September 2016  
Townsend Memorial Hall, Clifton upon Dunsmore.

Present:

Councillor Lesley Edwards (LE) Councillor Marion Nash, Pete Nash, David Glover, David and Polly Duffy, Andy and Sue Moore, Pete Dignan, Lynn Jones and Christine Lord.

LE opened the meeting by providing introduction and an outline of the proposed Agenda for the meeting.

She related the reasons behind the formation of the group, reminding the meeting that the Parish Council had been hoping to form it for some time, but that a resident had suggested at a Parish Council meeting that the enthusiasm shown by residents at the Spring litter pick could be used to improve the environment of the whole village.

She outlined the draft aims of the group are:

- To protect the biodiversity of the parish both now and in the future.
- To encourage local people to get involved with 'hands on' work parties and activities on the sites
- To provide and improve access to the sites for the general public, especially local people.
- To participate in local and national surveys in order to provide a record of the biodiversity in the parish, where appropriate.
- To provide opportunities for education through local involvement with schools, youth and other community groups

LE listed a number of projects which were already in the pipeline and suggested that some could act as quick wins to demonstrate what a difference could be made by people working together. The projects are:

- Newton Road – a potential wild flower bank by the Glebe Allotments
- Funeral Bier Restoration
- St Mary's Churchyard – Fence Restoration
- Pocket park – clearance of ivy and brambles (in consultation with Orbit Housing)
- Church Street and Lions Path - clearing back of footpaths
- Half yearly litter pick – November 2016
- Planting 600 Crocus bulbs – donated by Rugby Rotary Club

Other suggestions from the group were:

- the repair of stiles on public footpaths (with the permission of the landowner)
- restoring bat and bird boxes in the Pocket Park and Churchyard

LE suggested that a good basis for the group to use would be the criteria issued by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) Best Kept Village award which are:

- Absence of litter and unsightly refuse dumps on verges
- Condition of village greens, playing fields, school yards, public seats, and noticeboards
- Condition of public and private buildings, gardens, and allotments
- Condition of public halls, sports facilities, and car parks
- Condition of churchyards, cemeteries, and war memorials

- State of footpaths, stiles, field gates, signposting, ponds, and streams

Nb.

*The CPRE makes it clear that the 'Best Kept Village' criteria is not about finding "the most beautiful village, nor the most ancient, nor the most picturesque, just the one that is best cared for" and "its aim is to involve everyone in the village, encouraging them to take greater pride in their surroundings*

LE explained that the work of the group would be in line and contribute to the Parish Council priorities in its new 5-year plan which are:

- **Creating a sense of community** - Involve residents in community work
- **Ensuring the village is well cared for** - All parish council owned land is to be maintained to a high standard
- **Safeguarding the well-being of all residents**
- **Providing leisure and recreational facilities adequate to meet identified needs**
- **Managing Resources**
- **Creating/developing partnerships**

LE reiterated that it was important to establish a sub-group to develop a constitution. This would be necessary when applying for grant funding and insurance etc. The group would need to appoint a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and develop its Terms of Reference.

Volunteers for the sub-group were:

- David Glover, Andy Moore Pete Dignan and Lesley Edwards

The group considered it would be better to concentrate on one pipeline project at a time in order to do a noticeable and thorough job. It was agreed that the clearance of ivy and brambles along the fence in the Churchyard should be undertaken on Saturday 24 September, followed by a litter pick on the last Saturday in November.

Volunteers for the first project were:

- Lynn Jones, Pete Nash, Sue and Andy Moore and Lesley Edwards

As there is a Local History group event running in the Church on the same day LE will inform the Church and the History Group about the project taking place.

The group recognised that both the Gardening Club and the WI were already undertaking projects to enhance the environment of the village, and it was agreed that it would be sensible and more sustainable to pool resources and work together for the benefit of the community; particularly on larger projects. LE stated that she would like to visit the Church, the Gardening Club and the School to invite them to join together with the group.

The group also agreed that it would be beneficial to get the local Primary School involved in projects where possible (some environmental projects are already run to the school as part of the curriculum) to get them interested in caring for the environment at an early stage and to encourage participation by parents.

LE agreed to circulate some dates for the initial meeting of the governance sub-group Volunteers for the first project to meet at the Church at 10am on Saturday 24 September.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm