



Needham Market Town Council
Climate Awareness Group
MINUTES: Tuesday 30th January 2024
7pm, Green Room

Present	Amanda Reardon (Chair); John Reardon; Jo Lea; Jean Pittaway; Richard Pittaway; Andy France; Nicola Booth; Mark Dimes; Ray Darnell.
Apologies	Jo Hughes; Alan Wilkinson; Graham Cave; John Matthissen; Ross Piper; Martin O'Shea; Ruth Coomber.
Minutes of last meeting	The minutes of the meeting held on 28.11.2023 were approved.
Thermal Imaging	- The camera purchased has been in use. We need to complete surveys for the remaining residents on the waiting list. - We will create a set of instructions for using the camera indoors and trial lending the camera to members of CAG in their own home. We will then consider lending to residents.
Flooding Resilience	- Discussion covered potential mitigation ideas. - It was felt that with the public engagement meeting coming up and the potential for a Flood Group, it would be best to wait to see where the CAG might be able to contribute so that we avoid overlap.
Community Orchard	- Grateful thanks were expressed to Richard for all his hard work to coordinate and project lead the orchard. - Richard updated the group on progress and plans. Proposal copied as an appendix to the minutes. - Insurance has been organised. - Invitation to children to help plant was drafted and will be circulated once agreed. - Nicola will provide refreshments. - Richard will lead the day. - Mark will collate tools – we will need 16-20 spades and watering containers. - Six of the trees have been delivered. - Pincroft Way green was mentioned as a potential site for other fruit trees.
What next?	- We need to review the meadow managed areas and feedback to Richard Parmee for the coming season – agenda item for next meeting. - We could put forward the idea of a wildflower meadow on the Middle School field as part of the consultation that will happen.
AOB	We will ask Beth Murrell to attend our next meeting.
Next Meeting	To be confirmed once availability of Ross Piper and Beth Murrell: 27 th Feb; 5 th March, or; 12 th March.



Community Orchard Proposal

NMCAG propose the following for Town Council approval:

1. A community orchard to be planted on the Middle School Field, adjacent to the Jigsaw Pre-School building. See plan in Appendix A. Our vision is that this would be a shared community space which provides an area to cultivate and pick fruit as well as allow people to enjoy nature.
2. The orchard to be stocked with native species of fruit trees of rootstock MM106/MM111/M25 and the grass to be subject to the meadow management process.
3. The orchard to be bordered with native hedging plants to create a defined area (Phase 2 in October).
4. *Legal responsibility and liability to be with Needham Market Town Council. (This is on land leased to it and the scheme is being led by one of its sub-committees.) **TC agreed that this is appropriate.**
5. Responsibility for maintenance of the orchard to be with NMCAG and its orchard volunteers. If this group were to cease being, responsibility for maintenance to be with the Town Council to organise. **TC agreed this would be the case.**
6. Access to the orchard to be from the Middle School Field pedestrian entrances.
7. The entrance from the Community Centre car park to be used only with permission from the Town Council (this is due to be gated as part of the lease).
8. The pedestrian entrance adjacent to the netball court to be made accessible – to be funded and managed by the Town Council.
9. Town Council to fund and purchase a bench seat from the CIL fund set aside for Middle School Field seating. **TC agreed.**
10. Initial planting launch date to be Saturday 17th February 2024, subject to the availability of trees. **TC agreed that this can go ahead.**
11. *NMCAG members and volunteers to be covered by the Town Council's insurance and Public Liability Insurance whilst carrying out work on the orchard. **TC's insurer has agreed to insure 9 volunteers at any one time with no additional charge.**
12. Further development to be proposed as the orchard develops.

Information to support the proposal:

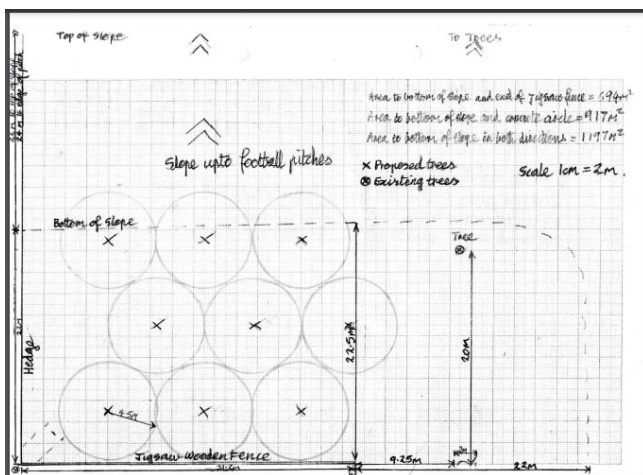
- Items 4 and 11 above are subject to final confirmation from the Town Clerk after inspection of the terms related to the lease and insurance policies.
- The scheme would be funded by:
 - NMCAG budget
 - MSDC District Councillor Locality Fund
 - Other local schemes providing plant stock which we can access.
 - Possible NM Rangers (£120)
- Jigsaw Pre-School have agreed to allow the attachment of a water storage system to their roof drainage system and the siting of a water storage container within their grounds. (Email of agreement available).
- The initial planting day on 17th February would be a small event to which members of Bosmere Primary, Jigsaw Pre-School and the Scout and Guiding groups would be invited.
- In the first year or so, the trees would need to be watered consistently. Volunteers could complete this task using stored water from the Jigsaw site and brought in if needed. Alternatively, we could explore if we are able to engage Vertas to do so. **Vertas unable to,**
- Trees would be purchased as saplings at 2+years old and would be protected with guards and mulch mats.

- Advice has been sought from the following agencies to inform the scheme:
 - Richard Frost, local Tree Warden (recently involved in installing a community orchard in Stowmarket).
 - Richard Parmee, MSDC Biodiversity Project Manager.
 - Paul Read, Suffolk Traditional Orchard Group.
 - Government guidance document re community orchards.

Questions to be answered:

1. Can existing CCTV be extended to cover the orchard area? Information from other community orchards has been that vandalism has not been a huge issue. **This is not possible. The existing system is already hosting the maximum number of cameras that it can. An update to the system would be a great cost.**
2. Mowing needs and access so that we can liaise with Vertas and the MSDC Meadow Management team. **Can be agreed.**
3. Lease terms relating to planting and responsibility. **All allowed within terms of lease.**
4. Insurance terms relating to cover for NMCAG members and volunteers. **In discussion with insurer.**

Appendix A: Plan of Site



Appendix B: Image of Site

