

Denby Parish Community Action Group

The Combined Community Association of Denby, Birdsedge and High Flatts

Minutes of the Steering Committee

Tuesday 28th August 2007 at 19:30

At The Friends Meeting House High Flatts

Opening:

The meeting of the Denby Parish Community Action Group was called to order at 19:30 on Tuesday 28th August 2007 in Friends Meeting House High Flatts by the Chairman, David Cook.

Present:

David Cook [Chair], Sue Daws, Andrew Brown, Andy Asher, Jane Fish, Walter Crossley , Joe Price, Peter Crosland

A. Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Alan Fish, John Cook, David and Dawn Smith, & Guy Ellis.

B. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous steering committee meeting on 31st July 2007 were unanimously approved.

C. Matters Arising

1. Footpath 77

It was reported that people who enjoy walking in the area are nervous of using this footpath because of the poor signage as the path runs alongside a house and garden. There is no obvious boundary to the garden and walkers could be mistaken into trespassing onto private land. People need confidence in walking the path, and signs would answer the problem.

Action: Walter Crossley to pursue the matter with the Public Rights of Way Department at KMC.

2. Newsletter

The first issue of the newsletter is ready to go to the printers. There will be an item on Denby Delf in the newsletter. The Three Villages Conservation Volunteers have been involved in working on the fields, removing hazardous weeds and cutting the grass.

3. Denby Delf

Councillor Jim Dodds had a meeting with Neil Windett of the Countryside Unit, David Knight of the Garganey Trust, and M Barnes of KMC Legal Department on 14th August. Mr Knight said that the Trustees of Garganey Trust would consider withdrawing to make way for KMC to take over management of the land. The Government has offered the lease to Garganey Trust and do not seem capable of withdrawing the offer, so it is up to the Trust to withdraw, at which point the Government will offer the lease to KMC. Councillor Dodds said that he would consider bringing a maladministration action if there were no movement. We as a group need to put up a good case to the government to show we can look after the land.

It was reported that Garganey Trust had been recommended to the government as suitable managers of the land by KMC Countryside Unit, backed up by a number of organisations – Denby Dale Parish Council and Environment Trust, British Trust for

Conservation Volunteers (who subsequently stated that they were unaware of the recommendation), and Natural England (i.e. David Knight and Jeff Lunn both trustees of Garganey Trust).

Discussion centred on whether we should form a charitable trust; we could cover not only the Delf but also Birdsedge Common, making the idea of a trust more viable. Also, the Council would not be able to get grant money for the management of the land, but we as a trust could. It would also show the Treasury Solicitor that we mean business.

Action: Andy Brown to investigate the means by which we could set up a trust; possibly call an additional meeting to discuss this; contact YRCC for advice.

4. Funding

The Parish Council rejected our application for a grant of £500; no reason was given.

5. Jordan Bridge

Public Rights of Way Department (PROW) of KMC are not charged with the design and construction of bridges, the Design and Construction Department are, and they have designed a stone bridge (known as a clapper bridge). However, PROW have stated that they intend to erect a wooden bridge. How do we take the matter from here? The Denby Dale Environment Trust (Steve Robinson) want a stone bridge also. We could also enlist the Council for the Protection of Rural England (they have a local representative in Almondbury) who might be supportive

Action: David Cook to contact the Environment Trust and the CPRE to enlist support.

6. Denby Dale Countryside Project

Accounts and reports had been received from KMC under the Freedom of Information Act. Analysis of the accounts and those of the Parish Council show that the PC gave £25,000 to the Project, but the Project accounts show only £20,000 was received from the PC. Also, money has been spent by the Project on the Light Railway (which is privately owned) – why?

Action: David Cook to gather evidence and query the accounts provided as they do not constitute proper accounts in our eyes. We must query the information provided.

7. Sellars Field Birdsedge Lane

The Planning Inspectorate Inquiry took place on 17th August at Huddersfield Methodist Mission. A number of Birdsedge residents attended. The Inspector gave no preliminary decision..

8. Local Planning Applications

The planning application for Pog Hall (building extension) has been refused. It was suggested by the planning officer Chris Helliwell that we write to English Heritage regarding the application to convert Green Lane Pumping Station to a dwelling. The work needs to be done sympathetically.

Action: Sue Daws to write to English Heritage.

D. Issues

A number of fields around the parish seem to be being abused:

1. Bank Lane

A field off Bank Lane in Upper Denby is being used as a garden, but also has on it containers, cows and sheep. It looks like the owner is getting ready to build a house on the land.

2. Windmill Lane

Two containers have been placed in a field just off Windmill Lane with an awning strung between them and a caravan underneath. This looks like someone is trying to set up squatters rights. This is not strictly speaking in the parish as it falls within Barnsley District, but is of interest

3. Denby Lane

Another piece of land with shacks and other temporary structures.

Action: Sue Daws to write to KMC asking if they know what is going on on these fields.

E. Any Other Business

Walter Crossley suggested that we use the parish notice boards to highlight the work carried out on behalf of the community by the group.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 21:15 by the Chairman. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 25th September 2007 at 19:30 at the Friends Meeting House, High Flatts.

Minutes submitted by: Sue Daws [Secretary]
Approved by: David Cook [Chairman]