**ALDERBURY PARISH COUNCIL (APC) FOOTPATHS WORKING GROUP**

**NOTES AND ACTIONS ARISING - update from Liz H (clerk) 7.7.25**

**DATE: 10 JUN 25**

**In attendance:**

MS - Mike Sneddon (Footpaths Lead)

MD - Mike Dent

KD - Kim Diprose

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| Ser | Notes | Action | Clerk |
| 1a | **ALDE 20 – Junction Road**. Discussed options to avoid potential collisions between vehicles on Junction Rd and speeding children on bikes leaving ALDE 20. In the absence of any engagement with Longford Estate (LE) since last APC meeting, WG considered only viable solution would be bund along line of existing posts. Unclear who ‘owns’ existing posts. | MS to liaise with LE through Clerk to advise of our conclusion and identify who ‘owns’ post line and request bund be added to restrict available exit width. | Take further advice from the July meeting |
| 1b | **ALDE 20 extension AWGS to Avon Drive**. KD recalled JJ from LE as stating late June/early July as likely dates for installation of proposed concrete slab solution across muddy section. | MS to liaise with LE through Clerk to establish what assistance APC might be able to offer LE with installation or securing grant funding. | Clerk to write to LE |
| 2. | **Equipment**. APC does not currently own equipment suitable for heavier brush-cutting or hedge trimming. MS had obtained specialist advice and various quotes. Cordless electric professional equipment offered comparable performance to petrol machinery without the attendant requirements for flammable fuel storage, fuel mixing and transfer, noise, toxic exhaust fumes, handle vibration and engine servicing. This was better from both an environmental and operator health and safety perspective. The exception to this was in the realm of ride-on mowers, where cost remained prohibitive. MD offered a surplus pull-start Mountfield petrol walk-behind mower as a potential replacement for those belonging to MS which were reaching the end of their useful lives. | MS to request purchase of a suitable professional cordless electric brush cutter/hedge trimmer, batteries and fast charger through the Clerk. | Waiting for MS decision – money is in reserves |
| 3. | **Regularising Footpath Network**. MS proposed attempting to ‘regularise’ the ‘permissive path’ network around the village to accurately reflect the routing of paths which have been used for >25years on the Wiltshire Definitive Map. KD counselled against doing anything which might rile landowners or force closure on safety grounds. It was agreed to ‘let sleeping dogs lie’. | MS to wind his neck in! |  |
| 4. | **Mud**. MS reported positive engagement with the landowner of Greenset House and the tenant farmer at Rectory Farm regarding prospective remedial work to muddy stretches of the circular path which had proven challenging through winter months and might be considered a safety issue. It was agreed to pursue this further and seek written agreement from the landowners before proceeding. | MS to liaise with the landowners through the Clerk to obtain written agreement on the nature and extent of remedial work.  MS to enquire of LE through the Clerk whether they had any objection to additional aggregate/scalpings in their fields along the line of the circular path and whether they could supply scalping free of charge | Clerk met MS for better understanding and will now write to LE |
| 5. | **Fencing**. MS advised of collapsed fencing on both sides of the circular path between Matrons College Farm and the Boardwalk in the Orchid Field. One side belongs to private land off Castle Lane. The other is around a field believed to be owned by Mr Leach, tenanted by Marcus Light. This impinged significantly on the circular path near Matrons College Farm. MS understands Mr Leach has been made aware and was going to task his contractor. MS had spoken briefly with someone who was clearing the private land towards Castle Lane and they acknowledged the need to replace their fence. | KD to try and obtain contact details for the owner of the private land off Castle Lane and pass to the Clerk.  MS to request the Clerk to prompt the owners of the private land of Castle Lane to resurrect their fence.  MS to confirm with the Clerk that the fence to the field is ‘in hand’ with Mr Leach and his contractor, with a view to seeking an update from Mr Leach. | Awaiting this info  Still to do at some point if not finished |
| 6. | **Greenway to Downton.**  MS broached the possibility of pursuing a Greenway to Downton along the former railway line. The current footpath/bridleway deviates alternate sides. It was agreed that this would be a valuable recreational amenity that would encourage active travel within our rapidly growing community, providing a safe and easy route for walking and cycling towards the New Forest away from traffic. KD highlighted that significant dumped waste would need to be cleared in addition to the dense vegetation growth. MS was aware that previous attempts to pursue this had met with resistance from landowners – a COGS member from Downton tried about 10 years ago and had offered to hand over their file. MS had broached the possibility at the previous SW Area Board and there was significant interest in pursuing this from people in both Landford and Downton. A joint approach would be required as it went beyond the APC Parish boundary. | MS to obtain the file associated with previous attempts to pursue a Greenway along the railway line and make a tentative approach to landowners through the Clerk to establish whether this is worth pursuing further. |  |
| 7. | **Ash Dieback.**  MS identified several significant trees with Cat 4 Ash Dieback which might pose a threat to safety of walkers, cars and power lines. One had already fallen in High Trees Wood which MS had cleared from the footpath and another fell on Southampton Road causing temporary closure by the Downton turn-off. KD reported that SSEN had conducted a survey within the village recently and would be aware of any risk to power lines and were contacting affected landowners; there was a ‘105’ contact number to report any concerns. JJ from LE was aware of the risk in High Trees Wood and was monitoring the situation; he may have to close footpaths while clearance work was carried out there. LE had hoped to save as many trees as possible but trees which had been left last year have deteriorated further. | MS to report any trees presenting major concerns through MyWilts and 105 if power lines are threatened.  MS to contact landowners through the Clerk where trees badly affected by Ash Dieback (Cat 4) are in the garden of private homes inside the Parish boundary. | Will act if required |
| 8. | **Sinkhole.**  The deep sinkhole was still apparent beside the lower path through the ‘Horse Field between Silver Street and the Church. It was believed this land belonged to LE although tenanted by the owners of the horses. The paths in use do not align with the right of way shown on Definitive Map; hence WC declined to get involved. KD counselled against raising it as a safety issue with LE as it was beside a permissive path. | MS to informally raise the issue with JJ at the next opportunity to ensure he is aware the hole is there and how deep it is. | No furtehr action |
| 9. | **AOB.**  There was none. The meeting was closed | N/A |  |