

## WEST DOWN VILLAGE GREEN FIELD ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

7.30pm on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at West Down Parish Hall

**Present:** *Officers of the present Management Committee/Trustees* – Chairman, Mr John Stainer; Vice-Chair, Mrs Sue Squire; Treasurer, Mrs Grazyna Ellis; Secretary, Mrs Dianne McGahran  
*Members of present Management Committee/Trustees* –Mrs Pauline Hart; Mr Martin Hodsman; Mrs Alison Hume; Mrs Carole King; Dr Adam Kwiatkowski; Mr Andy Lyons; Mr Pete McGahran; Mr Keith Oades. *Association Members:* - Mr Dick Devlin; Mrs Jane Devlin; Mr Paul Hillier; Mrs Fay Hookway; Mr Terry King; Ms Jan Oades; Mrs Jan Pennington; Mr Eric Philipson OBE & Mr Barry Scobling.

**Apologies:** *Member of the present Management Committee/Trustee*, Mr Roy Drew.  
*Association Members:* David & Sue Ayre; Ruby & Terence Ayre; Catherine & Simon Barker; Dr Sally Bevan; Pat Drew; Sara Hodsman; John Hookway; Martin, Alex & Robert Hume; David & Veronica Maidment; Paul Millard; Sally & Sam Parsons; John Redhead; Heather Stainer.

### 1. **Welcome & Introductions**

Chairman, Mr John Stainer, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, thanking them for attending and identifying the present Trustees.

### 2. **Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM held on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015**

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

### 3. **Matters Arising from 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM minutes** There were no matters arising.

### 4. **Chairman's Report** by Mr John Stainer

*"A big 'thank you' to all of our Committee for the time, enthusiasm and effort that you give to ensure the continued success of this major community facility which without you would mean the site returning back to just a field.*

*The Committee meet most months to discuss many topics, such as improvements to the facility, on-going maintenance such as grass cutting, fencing, etc., also a big topic is how to continue to raise funds to cover the ever increasing cost of maintenance and insurance. Once the Play area is built, insurance cost are likely to double and there will be safety checks to be undertaken on the equipment.*

*Sue Squire, who has been on the Committee since its inauguration over 3 years ago, has now decided to resign, I would like on behalf of the Trustees to thank her for her years of service. (Mrs Sue Squires was presented with a card and bouquet of flowers from all the Trustees)*

*Most organisations rely upon the secretary and we have been very fortunate over the years to have Dianne McGahran keeping us all in order. Many thanks Dianne.*

*Other people I would personally like to thank for their time and enthusiasm are Andy Lyons and Martin Hodsman for all the work they do in the field, grass cutting and much more.*

*I can't forget Sarah Hodsman for running the Bars at our functions and in particular this year thanks must go to Alison Hume and Adam Kwiatkowski for the tremendous amount of work they have put into the proposed play area project. All our Committee Members are vital to the function of our organisation my sincere thanks go to each of them.*

*Any organisation needs the support of the community and I would particularly like to thank Lisa Tossell and Donna Wright for the Big Breakfasts they have organised to help fund the play area. Thanks to Sarah Hiscock and Sarah Land who brought Christmas, Santa and his Sleigh for the children to West Down with huge success. Barry Scobling has given much of his time in helping to erect new fencing in the stream area of the community field – many thanks Barry. Again to everyone that helped at the Village Fayre stalls held in the Parish Hall due to the appalling weather in particular Jill, Collette, Shirley and Chris for the delicious Cream Teas. And a special thanks to Jose & The Hotdogs for such a successful and enjoyable evening.*

*If I have missed anyone I do apologise. The Committee appreciates everybody's help in any way they may have contributed.*

*I am extremely pleased to report that after three years the final paperwork has now been received and completes all the documentation in the transfer of the field to our organisation, and the Deed of Dedication which protects the land in perpetuity for the Parish of West Down. The West Down Parish Council have agreed that all of these documents can be securely held in their Bank for us.*

*We now have our own pages on the "all new" West Down web site ([www.westdown.org.uk](http://www.westdown.org.uk)) which gives much information about our organisation, including all our meeting dates for this year and our position regarding association members attending our Trustees meetings, i.e. if you would like to attend please contact our secretary so that we know to expect you, and if you wish to discuss a particular topic please advise us 2 weeks prior so that it can be put on the Agenda and time allocated for discussion.*

*This year we purchased a second-hand large marquee at a very advantageous price which just needs a little roof re-enforcement which is now under way in time for use at our Village Fayre.*

*Also this year we have landscaped the lower part of the field near the stream and erected some fencing.*

*As an organisation we have elected to have 15 Trustees on our Committee and at present we have only been able to muster 13 willing volunteers, and on the resignation of Mrs Sue Squire we will only have 12. We have advertised for more interested persons to join us, but have not had any volunteers. I am quite concerned about this as we cannot continue to rely on the few willing persons currently involved, and if we do not get these younger new volunteers we know what will eventually happen! Please consider joining us or persuading others to join us. There is a lot of work to be done – particularly with the play area.*

*Thank you"*

## **5. Treasurer's Report** by Mrs Grazyna Ellis

Copies of the Financial Summary which had previously been circulated were handed out to those who had not brought them along and the Treasurer reported that WDVGFA has managed to remain solvent again this year – but she highlighted the ongoing costs of running the Community Field.

She also pointed out income sources, in this financial year, which generated just over £8000 of which just over £3000 was raised specifically for the Play Area and Play Equipment.

Although the balance held is just over £11,000, over £8500 is allocated for specific projects, leaving under £2500 in the general funds, which is not a lot considering that expenditure in the last financial year amounted to over £4500.

Keeping the grass cut has cost almost £1800 this year - a fixed rate of £1420 p.a. paid to the benefactors who purchased the mower, to cut the grass more frequently than the previous commercial contractor, plus fuel and servicing costs. As discussed at last year's AGM, after 3 years this expenditure will be reduced to only fuel and mower service costs.

Public liability insurance which now costs over £400 will be increased on installing the Play Equipment, which will also incur costs of annual inspections and maintenance.

The Treasurer thanked everyone who has financially supported the Community Field and took the opportunity to acknowledge the tireless work put in by the Chairman.

## **6. Election of Trustees/Management Committee Members**

In compliance with the requirements of the Charity Commission, Trustees Roy Drew, Alison Hume, Adam Kwiatkowski & Martin Hodsman were standing down for re-election. However, as no nominations had been received by the closing date all four were re-elected on block.

Mr Paul Hillier put himself forward for election from the floor. As there are three vacancies and no other nominees, hence no need for an election, this late stage nomination was accepted..

**Comfort Break** – refreshments sold – raising £21.50 towards the Community Field funds

- Opportunity to peruse equipment plans and draft Business Plan for the Play Area.

## **7. Public Meetings/Committee Meetings**

Information, including the planned dates for Management Committee Meetings, has been put on West Down's Website, under the Community Field.

This explains the format of meetings and that any Member of the Association wishing to come along as a guest should contact the Chairman or Secretary in advance. Notification must be given, at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting, of any specific topic being raised so that the item and speaking time can be added to the Agenda.

### **8. Dog Fouling**

The amount of dog's mess not being picked up by owners is still a problem, although improving. The NDD Council Dog Warden is being very supportive and has suggested using luminous spray paint on 'deposits' to highlight how much is in situ and hopefully shame the owners. He has given us signs to display and also suggested that observers report offenders (forms available from WDVGFA secretary, or can be downloaded from NDDC Environmental Health website). The warden would then visit offenders to address the matter. Signs will be displayed stating that dogs whose owners are not carrying 'poo bags' will not be allowed on the site.

Whilst on the subject of dogs, it was mentioned that recently two loose black dogs, whose owner was some distance away, had intimidated 3 smaller dogs who were being walked on leads. Any such future incidents should be reported, as soon as possible, with relevant information so that they can be acted upon. Dogs displaying unsocial behaviour or accompanied by owners who do not pick up their mess will be banned from the Community Field. The Dog Warden has confirmed that the Management Committee are within their rights to impose such a restriction.

### **9. Play Area Project**

The Chairman reiterated that particular thanks go to Mrs Alison Hume and Dr Adam Kwiatkowski and also to Mr Jon Rodney-Jones for his invaluable assistance.

Mrs Alison Hume reported that the idea of a Rocket Style Play Frame had been shelved, due to lack of enthusiasm. Dr Adam Kwiatkoswki and Mr Jon Rodney-Jones had dismantled the donated second hand play equipment and transported it to Mr & Mrs King's barn, where it is being stored. The Play Area project is being undertaken in two stages.

Phase 1 - Professional Play Equipment specialists, Rhino Play have offered to provide and install a set of two baby swings, a set of two children's swings and a bird nest swing, complete with safety matting around each unit, at an unmatched price of £6500 plus £1300 VAT. This can be installed in April 2016. Funds raised to date stand at £6335 so almost meet the cost of the equipment but not the VAT.

Phase 2 - To raise further funds for the renovation and installation of the stored second hand equipment and for the purchase and installation of safety matting around these items.

The ongoing cost of providing this much wanted and needed Play Area for the Community cannot be understated. The Community Field's 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance cover will increase substantially when the Play Area is included and annual inspections of the equipment will cost around £250.

Mrs Jane Devlin suggested the Parish Council be approached to assist with funding. During further discussions, it was suggested that the Parish Council may be prepared to pay for the annual inspections or insurance cover. This will be followed up.

Using funds raised by the WDVFGA and the community for the purpose, the Parish Clerk had looked into whether the community's Play Equipment could be purchased by the Parish Council, on behalf of the Community, so that the VAT could be reclaimed. Neither the Parish Council Chairman, nor any of the councillors present, could recall or explain the reason why, but this had not been possible. This is particularly disappointing as Play Equipment is often provided by Parish Councils and considered an essential facility, especially in rural areas.

#### **10. Any comments/suggestions/questions from the floor**

It was suggested that anyone wishing to use the Community Field for a specific purpose – e.g children's party, football match etc – should contact a member of the Management Committee beforehand to ensure that they are acceptable and do not clash. They may also like to make a donation towards the cost of fuel for grass cutting.

Many people probably do not realise how much work and costs go into maintaining the site. Some people are ready to criticise but not prepared to help. However, most people are extremely supportive and they are very much appreciated.

#### **11. Future fund raising events**

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2016 – Neon Lights Disco @ Mullacott Arena

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016 – Village Fayre, Fun Day and Dog Show in the Community Field

There being no other business the Chairman again thanked everyone for attending and for their participation and closed the AGM at 8.50pm