

MINUTES SOUTH MOLTON IN BLOOM (SMIB) MEETING 10/3/21 7pm by Zoom

PRESENT

Sue Harrison
David Worden
Andrew Coats
Elaine Symons
Verity Hanson
Margaret Chester
Mandy and Rob Ostler
Christine Barnes
Ruth Taylor-Jones
Penny Grigg
Glenys Laws
Sue Sewell
Julie Vaughan
Helen Cousans
Bridget Simmons

Apologies

Andrea Hutchings
Joanne Harris
Kirstie Halls
Christine Goddard
Paul Henderson

Absent

Sue Cornish
Mary McMonnies
Debbie Woolley
Anne Beagley
Dave Toms

1.Sue opened the meeting by thanking everyone for joining the group with such enthusiasm. The group is growing from strength to strength! Membership seems to be changing, so in the future a current members list will be sent out with the minutes each month. Contact numbers will be on the list but it is possible to add Next of Kin and contact details in case anything happens whilst we are out working on the gardens. We have lost Judith Ward, Lorna Hazelden and Jackie Griffiths this month. Darrell and his family will not be joining the group despite doing a fabulous job at Squires Court, as they have started back to school and college and are also seeking work. Helen and Troy have joined the group to do physical work but not for emails or meetings. Welcome too to Dave Toms, Julie Vaughan, Verity Hanson, Mary McMonnies, Margaret Chester and Elaine's son Lee.

2.Minutes of last meeting agreed.

3.Matters arising .. as detailed on the agenda .. needed to add NDDC Estates came to see the NDDC land that we are working with at Livarot Walk, next to where Dan the Fish Man

parks and opposite Squires Court which turns out not to be NDDC. The first two are no problem and Martin Mugford is going to help us clear that piece of land next to Dan. The land opposite Squires Court has been checked out by David and Andrew with their solicitors and we can carry on working with the land there and there is minimal risk that it will change and if it does, we will do our best to rescue all plants and replant them. It was designated open space and a wildlife corridor with the builders but they went bust and the land is now in the hands of receivers. Gary from Eastleigh Homes informed Sue today that he had been arranging the mowing, so would be delighted to have less to mow !

Ian from Quince Honey Farm is meeting up with Sue H next week.

Glenys is continuing to liaise with Fran Sendell to apply for a grant for £300 to try and cover costs to deal with Sheep Fair Field.. This would mean we could divert monies that would have been used for that elsewhere.

Mandy said best to withdraw the idea of painted stones as a bit of a liability, as to what would happen to them or where to put them

Anne Beagley will be asked if she could arrange, book and manage the market stall towards the end of May to sell plants that everyone is growing from seeds to fundraise for the group. **ACTION: SUE H to ask Anne**

4. Coordinator's Report

Entry forms for South West in Bloom have been accepted and we will soon be allocated a mentor.

Sue H especially wanted to thank ..Bridget, Elaine and Lee, Helen, Julie, Kirstie, Mandy, Rob, Ruth and Sue Sewell for all their hard work digging up turf and gardening since the last meeting. Thanks to them we have come on leaps and bounds.

Sue has continued to raise monies and sponsors are coming in...next month she hopes to publish a full list of sponsors for SMIB. In addition to money, we have loads of free compost available. We have also been given two spades, two forks and a wheelbarrow by Tony Mitchell. Mole Valley have given us £500 credit to spend on products and we decided to use it on bark chippings. Mandy and Rob suggested wood chippings from their son who is a gardener. There was then debate as to whether there were pros or cons in using them. If we could, it was agreed to store them in the bottom car park of the Community Woodlands.

ACTION: MARGARET CHESTER to investigate the value of wood chippings. Since the meeting Margaret has written ..'Since the meeting I have done some research on woodchip and I quote 'Since most arborist wood chips are chopped fresh from living or storm-damaged trees, let the woodchip mulch age and dry out, even as long as a season before using it'' So guess now it is up to Mandy's son and whether we can leave for that long in the car park so TBC at the next meeting ?

Homebase have given us paint for the dustbin area behind the library..**ACTION: ANDREW to get Stephen to mend the latch and the bolts on this before we can paint. Also need to remind him to mend the broken slate above the bed.** Homebase also gave us forest green

for the fence in Central Park and also the long fence along the pathway to The Community Woodlands.

Promises to date amass to around £3000 which sounds a lot but isn't when we consider all there is to do.

We have left all the beds in town at the moment as full of winter bulbs but we really need to start working on the beds along New (Church) Walk. The Community Woodlands pathway has been dug over and partially planted thanks to free plants from Sue's back garden, roses donated by Sue Sewell, free compost given by Mervyn Way and also John May. Livarot Walk has been started. Turf has been dug and six roses the colour of the rainbow plus a green sarcococca, donated by Bridget in aid of her charity www.disabilitysnowsport.org.uk. We are planning eventually to plant along the entire fence and also pop two planters in the seated area. Opposite Squires Court, we have been digging over the bank and it is nearly finished ready for compost. The plan is to plant the bank and leave a wildlife area at the back. Plants are being collected by the residents of Squires, Morrisons may look to provide plants and McCarthy and Stone have also been approached. Central Park is a massive undertaking but first we must paint the fence and the scout hut wall. Verity and Bridget will talk later about other plans. We need to weed and tidy inside the recreation area too.

5. Treasurer's Report

Ruth reported that the bank account is now fully open but only she has access on line at the moment. She reported that we have £770 in the bank from 8 donations and £150 in the cash account from 4 donations. She thanked the council for writing cheques to the value of £155 to pay the three bills for the RHS and South West in Bloom. The original start up money for us from Paul, the Mayor, was £300 and the remaining £145 will be transferred to our account now.

6. Front Gardens Competition

This was going to be Jackie's project but she has left. Julie has kindly agreed to lead a small sub committee to organise this. We need to get this sorted ready to plug in the next monthly magazines. Bridget and Margaret volunteered to get involved. Maybe Bridget's idea of streets having certain colours of the rainbow could be included but it was agreed to keep the categories and rules simple.. Eg front garden and frontages without gardens ...the idea is to get people to take pride in their front areas and make South Molton beautiful. This needs to move quite quickly as needs pushing in the magazines. Also Anne Beagley's husband offered to do printing for us so may be able to arrange some posters? All this can be confirmed when Julie has had a chance to discuss with Margaret and Bridget.

7. Bug Hotels

Bridget is to liaise with both primary schools .. Joanne at the Community Primary and Kevin at the Church of England Primary to get Bug Hotels for Livarot Walk and Central Park.

8. Tyres

35 tyres are now waiting to be cleaned at The Recreation Area. Lots of discussion ensued and it was decided that painting will be difficult, expensive and not environmentally friendly - so we will just clean and plant up. Verity had a good idea about covering with sisal coloured rope. This discussion has also to be passed on to the schools unless they want to paint them, as they have 21 between them. **ACTION: can we ALL have a think about this and research availability and colours and whether that will wear away like the paint .. to be discussed at next meeting**

ACTION: ANDREW to find out where we can get water to clean the tyres with power washers.? Ask Andy Houlsden

Glenys brought up the need to tidy up all the tyres on the entrances to South Molton and David said about cleaning the signs near them. Not everyone knew where they were so

ACTION: The two Sues are going on a rapid walk around town to assess these and report back at the next meeting. We can organise working parties to plant the tyres and clean the signs.

9. Working groups

Sue will continue to put out choices of dates depending on the weather and we can volunteer to dig, garden etc but we must wear masks, stay distanced and use hand gel. Obviously if you are exempt from wearing a mask for example if you have asthma or a medical condition that exempts you, that is fine. If you are on your own of course that is fine too or if you are on your own with someone in the same household.

10. Verity and The Skate Park

Sue said how The Skate Park revamp is being managed by Verity with the group's help and that Verity is full of good ideas and has credibility with the youths, as she boards herself. Verity outlined all her ideas and explained how she is involving all the local children who love the park and don't want to lose it. She will encourage them with a facebook group and will let us know when it has been set up. All three schools and Marland are helping - sweeping, cleaning and washing - Matt, a local artist, has agreed to do the mural (you will by now have seen an example of his brilliant work) - we/ council will pay for his paint. Verity will ask shops that sell boarding gear to help and contribute. Sue and Verity have been in contact with Blue Orange Signs at Pathfields, as the park will need signs at the

entrances - four - with safety rules and behaviour rules. **ACTION: ANDREW said he would look into what council signs need to be displayed and what phone number to put on to report problems etc. This needs to be reported to Verity asap. ACTION: VERITY to give more info at the next meeting.**

11. Areas of Responsibility

It was discussed how when the beds and gardens are planted, we need to share the responsibility in looking after them so volunteers were requested.

ACTION:

Christine and Ian had already said that they were happy to look after the circular beds on the bend out of town and Andrea if she is back has also expressed interest in caring for one of these

Sue Sewell and her husband will collect litter through the town

Margaret is happy to help look after beds in town

Penny happy to do beds near her home in the main street

Helen and Verity happy to do Central Park

Glenys will do the Library Gardens and under the mural

Ruth is happy to do beds near East Street

Julie happy to do up by woodland

Bridget happy to do Livarot Walk

Sue H happy to do woodland or in town

Sue H suggested Christine Goddard and residents at Squires Court would keep an eye on the bank opposite

ACTION : Members who were absent from this meeting .. *How can you help ? We need everyone's help as we will have a large area in Central Park and still have all the tyres on the edge of town?*

12. Swift Boxes and individual donations

Sue H to mention in the next magazines about people putting up swift boxes and also giving individual donations. **ACTION: SUE H to liaise with Fran Sendell re swift boxes**

13. Colouring and art idea by Elaine

Elaine Symons has come up with a brilliant idea and volunteered to organise it ie. flower related art work around the Pannier Market and in empty shop windows ready for judging day in July. For fun and open to all!

ACTION: ANDREW to investigate the best way to display them in the market.

SUE H to advertise in magazines for people of all ages and abilities to produce art work with name on to brighten up empty places in town.

ELAINE will approach schools and nursing homes and will sort where to collect them etc

AOB

ELAINE also looking into numbers for scouts, cadets, youth worker. (Girls and Boys Brigade David gave number 573334 Derek Summers) **ACTION: SUE H to ring**

PENNY volunteered an article for magazines on how to make a hanging basket and/or frontage decoration

Next meeting Tuesday 6th April 7.00pm

David to arrange a zoom with the link please, as he did it so successfully tonight .. thanks X

PS Sorry if any of you did not read the email in time with the change to a web link.