

## Southbourne Environment Group

### Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 7.30 pm at St John's Church Centre, Southbourne

**Present:** Lyn Davies (LD) (Chair), John Auric (JA) Amanda Tait (AT) Judy Knapp (JK) Lyn Hicks (LH) Julia Hankers (JH), Naomi Pattinson (NP), Paul Metcalfe (PM) Sarah O'Brien-Twohig (SOT) Elizabeth Medler (EM)

**Apologies:** Alison Barker

1. **Minutes** of the last meeting of 14 2024 were approved.
2. **Budget:** AT reported that this will remain the same for 2025 at £1,500. AT hoped to get tree budget back and order more trees, including those free from the Woodland Trust. However, these were in bundles of 50. **Action:** Amanda to check what they have. PM proposed that any spare trees could go to Friends of Hambrook. SOT suggested that trees could be offered to new housing estate residents.  
**Recommended:** to purchase two bird boxes for two trees at the triangle.  
**Action:** JA to approach Men's Shed to make these. PM suggested bat boxes but it was unclear where these could be sited.  
**Recommended:** new perennial plants and shrubs be purchased to replace both weak and dominating plants in the Tesco bed.
3. **Reports. Triangle** – LD reported that most of the membrane was up. JK had started a dead hedge on the south west corner.; there is a compost heap. Next job: mark out areas for planting in 'dot' formation. Structure could be introduced by bits of old brick (LD can donate) and planting could start in March. **Action:** LD had written a list of possible plants but analyses was needed. 5/6 whips probably needed. She mentioned 'Purging Blackthorn' but not much was known about it. LD to prepare and circulate plant suggestions for year round attractiveness/food for insects. It was thought quite a lot of plants could be grown from seed which anyone could contribute. (NP donated some seeds at the meeting.) Bug hotel: It was agreed that Southbourne Junior School could be involved in making one. JK had experience of making one from an old wine rack. AT offered to donate chicken wire. There will be a gardening session at the Triangle each month initially. **Action: PM** to collect gas canister found at the site from LD's home and take it to Westhampnett  
**Holm Oak:** AT confirmed that Holm Oak was being felled because it was diseased. It had been monitored for years, but now completely hollow inside. It will be replaced – probably with a native species tree. LH suggested that a statement should be put out. AT reported that the PC would put out an announcement. **Action: LD** to make reference to this in her article for the Village News.  
**Cherry trees, Stein Road.** JA reported that he had contact four tree surgeons. He was waiting for quotes. Public liability insurance would automatically be included.

He also reported that one cherry tree had been pushed down and needed staking.

**Action:** AT to report to Darren at WSCC Highways and ask if he could deal with it.

**E-coli Testing:** PM reported that samples had been taken from the Hambrook, Black Barn, CSO outlet and ford on Farm Lane to test for e-coli/nitrates. This was also done monthly at Nutbourne Marshes. SEG had already agreed a donation of £100 in respect of testing water in March 2024. **Action:** LD To refund PM and claim £104.99 (the full cost) from the budget. **Action:** as suggested by AT, **PM** should apply for a grant from SPC as his work for the Western Sussex Rivers Trust (a registered charity) and is for the benefit of Southbourne.

**Shed:** LD reported that the shed had been tidied up but there were things belonging to SPC that had not been moved. LD suggested that lighting go into the shed.

Discussion ensued. **Action:** **PM** can donate strip of led lighting. Recommended:

Battery and charger needed. PM located solar panel and lithium battery controller at £90 on Amazon. Tools: LD reported that tools had been purchased by WSCC for SEG including forks, spades, Wolf Garten tool handles and various tool heads to attach to them, mainly rakes, hoes and weeders.

**Planters:** JA was thanked for his repair work on the planters after they were hit by a vehicle.

**Tesco planting:** tidying would continue monthly. Plants such as Salvias had become dominant and would need attention. **Action:** **PM** offered to donate some Rudbeckia plants.

4. **Talks:** Sarah Hughes' forthcoming talk on February 13<sup>th</sup> would be advertised on Facebook, Village Magazine and posters. She would talk on 'The state of our rivers'. **Action:** **AB** to liaise with SH on audio-visuals. There will be a cash collection in aid of Western Sussex Rivers Trust. On 13 March John Arnott will speak. He does not ask for a fee but SEG will collect donations in aid of Chichester Harbours Trust and top up to £75 from SEG budget. Group to arrive at 7pm to set up chairs. **Possible future events:** Gillian Edom – foraging walks (AT has sent LD details), October possibly a talk by Final Straw. **Action:** LD to investigate. SOT suggested therapeutic gardening as another subject. A previous suggestion by JK that Jane Reeve from the Manhood Wildlife Heritage Group (MWHG) might speak to us will be followed up.
5. **SEG 2025 calendar:** dates for various events was put down on the draft calendar, some TBC. **Action:** all suggestions to be confirmed and sent to LD for inclusion on the final calendar.

The meeting finished at 9pm.

**Date of next meeting:** 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7pm in order to put chairs out for talk which will start at 7.30pm.