



KIRKBYMOORSIDE TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Manor Vale Management Committee meeting held on 12 July 2024 at 11am in The Moorside Room, 9 Church Street, Kirkbymoorside, YO62 6AZ.

Present: Councillors J Illingworth (Chair), S Woodhams and Committee Members Andrew Hall and Jim Pewtress.

Also present: Town Clerk L Bolland and guest Jim Reader.

Cllr Illingworth welcomed all present.

MV24001 Agenda item 1. Apologies for absence were **received** from Cllr Shields, Tom Denny and Mike Simpson.

MV24002 There were no Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

MV24003 Public Session - There were no additional members of the public present.

MV24004 Management Plan

a. The Management Plan was **reviewed**.

The Town Clerk explained that the exercise to review the Management Plan had been prompted by comments by a member of the public at the Annual Town Meeting on 7 May 2024.

They suggested that there had been a progressive loss of diversity of wildlife and plants and explained that, where previously wild plants had thrived, they are now unable to grow due to the dense brash that has grown around and over the fallen wood throughout the woodland. The current approach to management, leaving fallen and felled wood in situ to rot down, has had the effect of covering the ground to such an extent that there is limited light to support new growth of wild species, whilst encouraging the growth and spread of brambles. The areas on the side of the golf course road had supported a variety of wildflower species but these have been encroached by the brambles.

They also commented that they suspected a reduction in the number and variety of birds and wildlife in the woodland and asked if it would be possible to introduce some additional bird boxes.

Cllr Illingworth proposed to revise the format of the Management Plan to create two documents. The first document to comprise of Part 1: Site Description and Part 2: Evaluation to 2.2.10 'Potential value' inclusive. The second document, specific to management, to comprise 2.3 Management objectives, 2.4 Constraints on management and Part 3: Management programme. **Agreed.**

b. Recommendations to revise the plan in the interest of increasing biodiversity were **considered**. Jim Pewtress proposed inviting the Natural Historical Society and other suitably qualified individuals to study and document the ecology to provide an updated catalogue of species diversity. **Agreed.**

Cllr Illingworth proposed the addition of information by way of explanation of frequently asked questions. **Agreed.**

Examples of frequently asked questions:

Q. Why is the felled wood left in situ? A. Wood decomposition is one of a woodland's essential recycling processes and a natural part of every tree's lifecycle. Dead and decaying wood also provides a nutrient-rich habitat for fungi, a nursery for beetle larvae and a larder for insectivorous birds and other animals.

Q. Why are the brambles not cleared? The bramble is a source of food for many species of insect and mite, with some species feeding exclusively on bramble. The bramble is also important to dormice, which eat their flowers and fruit; they and other animals/birds seek refuge in bramble thickets. Brambles offer protection from grazing/browsing (by deer/rabbits) to young tree seedlings.

Q. Who is responsible for the condition of the ground surfacing of footpaths and bridleways? A. North Yorkshire Council is the authority responsible for Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which includes footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. This responsibility includes liaising with landowners to ensure they meet their duties and responsibilities, maintenance of path surfaces, clearing undergrowth from the path surface and improving accessibility where funding is made available.

The committee reviewed the management plan document with the following edits:

2.3 Management objectives: 'To maintain and promote biodiversity'

Specific to the golf course road, referred at 2.4e) and 3.2.1 h)

2.4 e) The need to maintain road access for the golf club: *The golf club has responsibility for maintenance of the road and immediate verge. The Management Committee is responsible for prompt removal of fallen timber which might obstruct the road, and for hazardous trees adjoining the road.*

3.2.1 Annual tasks:

a) Update reference to area D

b) delete – no longer relevant. There has not been sufficient manpower and finances to carry out this task.

h) *Mowing of the road verges(undertaken by the golf club) Note: grass cuttings left to mulch down may be contributing to stinging nettle growth.* Golf Course to be encouraged to arrange regular removal of arisings where possible.

Addition of North Yorkshire Council Public Rights of Way annual survey'.

3.2.2 Occasional tasks:

a) Maintain and repair Public Rights of Way including steps, handrails and gates (North Yorkshire Council) and benches (Town Council) as necessary.

d) Encourage further biodiversity surveys.

Addition of 'Check visibility of information boards'.

Create new section 3.2.3 Scheduled tasks In line with insurance requirements and good practice triennial tree safety inspections to be carried out by independent practitioner.

Revisions to the Management Plan were **agreed.**

Cllr Illingworth proposed a subsequent meeting to receive the revised plan in draft prior to the Full Council meeting on 16 September. **Agreed.**

MV24005 Installation of additional bird boxes at suitably determined locations throughout the woodland was **considered**. Jim Pewtress explained the importance of ensuring that bird boxes are situated in appropriate locations according to the bird type and their habitat requirements. For example, Barn owls like to nest in solitary trees or structures on the edge of woodland, between 3 and 5m above the ground, with immediate access to open grass or meadowland. It would not be suitable to situate an owl nesting box within the woodland. Additionally the nesting requirements vary according to bird type and information on the different nesting box designs and specifications according to bird type are available from the British Trust of Ornithology.

Cllr Illingworth proposed the Committee encourage the installation of additional bird boxes on condition that the location is approved by a committee member, together with the specifications of the bird box to ensure suitability according to the bird type. **Agreed.**

MV24006 Progress of Volunteer Activities was **reviewed**. Regular activities including haymaking, hedge laying and coppicing continue to be carried out by the Environment Group with guidance and supervision by Don Davies. Cllr Illingworth proposed inviting a member of the Environment Group to join the Management Committee as a non-councillor member. **Agreed.**

MV24007 There were no Questions to the Chair.

MV24008 The date of the next meeting on 5 September 2024 was **agreed**.

The meeting concluded at 12.13pm