



Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council

CLERKS REPORT – February 2023

1. New developments and dog waste bins – new dog bin arrived. Redrow to be contacted again
2. Speedwatch – the Okehampton Hamlets Speedwatch Group has been set and I have completed and passed the required training. More volunteers are now needed to undertake the training and sites for undertaking the Speedwatch exercises need to be agreed before submitting them to the Police. Okehampton Town Council have also received a presentation on the Scheme with other local Councils invited (update from that previously circulated), contents of which to be considered at meeting.
3. Red Squirrel South West – Meldon Village Hall booked for a training event on Friday 17th March. Nothing further heard from organisers, OTC have accepted offer of a place.
4. 2023 OHPC 125th Anniversary Celebrations – see other information emailed to Councillors. Okehampton Celebrates event being planned, working group meeting 14th Feb am, consideration needs to be given to how this is progressed, further info being sent out separately –
5. 2024 D Day 80th Anniversary 6th June – OTC have accepted invitation to jointly organise events. I have requested use of Okehampton Showground and costs of musical entertainment forwarded separately.
6. Internal Auditor appointed for 2023 (Microshade VSM) and audit taking place this week with final actions taking place at end of financial year.
7. Open Spaces Working Group – an initial meeting between Cllr J Heard, Littlejohns and myself has taken place with White Wood Management to discuss formalisation of 10 Year Woodland Management Plan for Meldon Woods and OTPLNR. The Council needs to register with RPA initially which then opens up the opportunity to obtain grant funding for the grant. Once funding is obtained, there is a max of 2 years to put the plan in place and the plan will cover a 10 year period. Other items may be included in the plan with the possibility of further grant funding obtained for those works. Comments received from Jack (WWM) after the meeting –
I got a good overall impression of what you need from us regarding your general objectives regarding both woodlands. The focus is largely on access – maintaining and discouraging respectively – and maintenance of the woodlands as both areas for public recreation and areas for conservation, particularly in relation to bluebells and ancient trees. Tree safety is also a consideration, but that is largely being dealt with by cc and their regular surveys.

Management plans will generally include an element of thinning, which I think in the case of Meldon and Old Town Park will consist of halo thinning around the ancient trees to allow more light in, control of holly (and invasive species such as Rhododendron if present), and recoppicing hazel to encourage bluebells and natural regeneration. There may also be an element of guarding natural regeneration as well as fence work for access.
8. Open Spaces – StOC undertook more coppicing in Meldon Woods on 27th January, about 20 volunteers were present. The ViceChairman and I visited at lunchtime with pasties. A lot of work was completed, their next allocated day for the Council is 24th March – the work required then needs identifying.

8. Okehampton Sports Plan – it appears this is an initiative that has been in place, affecting The Hamlets but no invitation received to be part of it. The Hamlets are now part of the Group and will be involved from now on. Consideration to be given to election of representatives from the Council to be part of the initiative.