MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on TUES. 1st JULY 2014
at 8.30 a.m. in School House.

Present  Mary Evans, Jane Lawrey, Charmian Marsh, Elizabeth Ward (Chairman)
Apologies  Irene Roy

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

The following items were discussed.

**Chalkpit Area** – The grass needs cutting, the area otherwise appeared quite tidy. There is to be a continuation of ‘ringing’ the ivy on the trees surrounding the grassed area.

**Review of long border in Palace Approach** - A successful working party was held on 10th June and approximately 75% of the border has been cut back and the cuttings put into builders’ bags to be collected and removed for disposal, by Brian Thomas. Another work party is planned for 9th July at 9.30 am hopefully to finish the rest. The Hibiscus that had been out of the ground for some time has been successfully revived and replanted.

**The Recreation Ground** – Was checked yesterday and the overall appearance was good. There were only two pieces of litter. Recently the bin by the main gate has not been adequate to hold the amount of litter deposited, particularly after a weekend. The Committee recommend that a 2nd bin be installed. Another spot ‘dog poo’ check will happen sometime this month. Four notices are to be displayed asking dog owners to be more responsible.

**Palace Park Wood.** – The paths had been cut, but the long cuttings had been left on the surface, making the area look untidy and causing the grass underneath to die back in places. It was lovely to walk round and see that at that time it was litter free!

**Telston Park** – The grass needs mowing and the path from Willow Park to Telston Lane in particular needs cutting. Ask The Parish Clerk if this can be done in the near future. Amazingly the area was litter free.

**Hale Lane** – The grass was well cut, but the areas around the three wooden circular seats need strimming. There was no litter! and only one ‘dog poo’.

**Condition of Planters** - The five planters have all been replanted for the summer and are beginning to looking very attractive. Letters of thanks have been sent to those who maintain them, for the pleasure of parishioners and visitors. Unfortunately the verge at The Parade, in Sevenoaks Road, has been excavated to lay a new electricity cable. Concern was expressed about possible damage to our new planters, but we were assured that the contractors would take great care. The condition of working was quite difficult and the soil atrocious. Topsoil and seed is to be applied to complete the contract.

**Work on School House front garden** – This has been unavoidably delayed but it is hoped that something can be done in the near future.

**Discussion following Nature Event on 22nd June.** – It was agreed that the event had been very successful. Some 200 people attended. The face painting was very popular. Other attractions were enjoyed. The Kent Wildlife volunteers appreciated the interest shown in their
Information table and the live moths that were displayed. The moths had been trapped in Otford the previous night and were released back in their habitat as soon as the event was over. Thanks have been sent to them and also to McDonalds who kindly donated bottled water. Jonathan Webb, SDC’s Woodland Consultant, led a walk explaining how the area was managed. In November the Environment Committee had raised £217 towards the expenses of this event. It formed a part of the Sevenoaks Festival. SDC had assisted with the printing of maps of the area for all participants and also information leaflets explaining the history and management. As after thoughts, it would have been interesting to ask folk how they had learned of the event and where they had come from. Also it might have been useful to display a timetable of events. Probably it would have been helpful to mark on the small maps the paths used for the Treasure Hunt.

A booklet will be prepared by EW to assist planning another similar event in the future.

**Commemorative Seats** – Three requests have been received and discussion followed. It was suggested that one seat being donated could go on the Rec. against the fence of the Children’s Play area, between the youth shelter and the gate into the play area. The trim trail equipment near the gate into the allotments, is to be moved to the far end of the Rec. to be with the other items. (The Recreation Committee are also in discussion about the positioning of possible multi-gym equipment on the Rec.) Suggest that another commemorative seat be placed on Palace Approach near to the Silver Birch tree that is adjacent to the wall of Pond House. The final request to position a seat next to the church gate presents a problem. The Clerk is to be asked to discuss this with the donor.

**Implications for responsibility of the Churchyard** – There is to be discussion between representative Parish Councillors and the Vicar.

**Correspondence:**

Agenda for AGM of River Darent Preservation Society (DRPS) THURS 10th JULY, past-Cllr. John Wickens is OPC representative. Enclosed also ‘Newsflow’ Summer 2014 information leaflet.

Email - Agenda for AGM of OPEN SPACES SOCIETY in London on 8th July at 11 am. together with the Annual Report and Accounts for 2013 and the Summer edition of Open Spaces magazine Vol.30 No. 10

Email – Cory, landfill Site Meeting 12th June 5pm followed by Greatness Liaison Group meeting at 6pm in Sevenoaks Community Centre. Both attended by Elizabeth and Cliff Ward. A very interesting site visit, a report of the liaison meeting will be received from Cory later.

Email – From Lesley Bowles, SDC, introducing small grants, up to £500, to improve business and retail areas. The committee recommend the triangle in the roadway between The Crown and The Corner House. Install a Planter, to be maintained by the Crown and the Woodman?

Email – from Rick Bayne thanking us for our commitment to the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme ‘Valley of Visions’.


**Date of next meeting** – Tues. 5th August 8.30 a.m. School House has been cancelled.

The next meeting will be on 2nd September at 8.30 am in School House.

Oxenhill Site Meeting 10th September at 10 am followed by Management Meeting.

Elizabeth Ward (Chairman)