REPORT OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING on TUES. 30th SEPT, 2014 at 8.30 a.m.
On the Rec. for a ‘Poo Check’. (5 culprits + foxes) then to School House.

Present - Mary Evans, Jane Lawrey, Charmian Marsh and Elizabeth Ward (Chair)
Apologies – Irene Roy.

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Declarations of Interest - None.

The following items were discussed and recommendations made.

Condition of Oxenhill Woods – We have had no further information on the ownership of the meadow to the south of the Shaw. SDC are investigating this with the Land Registry. Garden rubbish etc is still being dumped by the main information board opposite the entrance from Tudor Drive. A request has been made for the Zumaks to be removed from the western side of the area, (near to the railway boundary). Ragwort and thistles are becoming a real problem.

Chalkpit Area – The grass is very long and needs cutting.
Check with Brian Thomas if garden rubbish still being dumped from Tudor Drive?
Compost Maker still has to be removed?
Bamboo is coming through from a garden in Tudor Drive onto Footpath48. This path is also being broken up by tree roots coming through the tarmac. This committee recommend that KCC should be contacted, H& S issues, maybe areas should be marked by them with high viz paint? Repair work is really the answer, including Pickmoss Footpath 51, and from the station to the churchyard Footpath 49.

The Recreation Ground – The plastic mesh at the main entrance is in ribbons and needs the underlying surface to be levelled or made up with ‘road stone’ and replacement mesh installed. Also the plastic mesh in the Youth shelter is seriously curled up and needs attention, maybe the ground ought to be brought up to the same level? Committee ask that this matter is urgently looked at before the bad weather sets in.
Has OPC accepted the 2 lawn mowers offered in the Otford Society Newsletter for use on the Solar System orbits? OPC is still looking for a volunteer to mow the orbits next year.
The grass cutting has been superb, a credit to our village. A letter of thanks has been sent. It is upsetting to hear today (30th Sept.) Mr Catt’s tractor has been stolen.

Palace Park Wood – A site meeting has been arranged with the new steward on 31st October at 10 a.m.
CONCERN was expressed at this point about the parking of a number of cars on the grass verge opposite Beadles Garage. (Since this meeting cars have also been parked on the road opposite the garage). Both could contribute to an accident as it is at the point of slowing down to enter a 30 mph part of the village!

Telston Park – On 27th Sept. a small voluntary working party cleared a considerable amount of debris. Nettles and brambles were cut and burned together with old
branches and trunks. Letters of thanks have been delivered to those volunteers and it is hoped that another meeting can be arranged sometime over the winter.

**Hale Lane** – The grass cutting continues to be satisfactory.

**Village Green** - The grass around the Pond has been superbly maintained together with the village green itself and Palace Approach. Could OPC send a letter of thanks to the contractor? It is noted that the Christmas tree is to be felled, due to ill health. The Green will have lost a lovely Christmas feature of our village. It is hoped that another position on the Green can be found for a permanent Christmas tree in the future.

**Pond** – Thanks are due to Mr Thomas and Mr Catt for their care of the Pond and its inhabitants. It is hoped that a considerable amount of bull rushes can be removed as they have taken over a large area of water.

**Stream in Palace Field** – It appears that due to apparent widening of the stream in the neighbouring garden to the east, the stream running through Palace Field has now formed a marshy area to the west of the boundary of the property, and the banks of the stream running past the Palace Cottages are now being seriously undercut, because of the changed water flow and build up of silt. Both conditions are not satisfactory. SDC must be informed as the owners, and a site meeting convened to consider what action should be taken to rectify the situation.

**Condition of Planters and work on School House front garden** - The five planters in the village have been well planted and maintained by the sponsors. Letters of thanks have been delivered by this committee. It is hoped that red flowers can be incorporated in next years displays. The grass verge at the Parade has been excavated during the summer to install new electrical cabling. This has left the ground very uneven, until it has 'settled' it is impossible for KCC to mow satisfactorily. Hopefully it will be possible next year. Work on the front garden has been delayed due to various reasons, but the wooden picket fence with kickboard has now been installed. It has been stained, but the final colour has yet to be decided.

**Discuss implications for responsibility of the Churchyard** – The committee discussed this further.

**Correspondence** –
Letter from NW Kent Countryside Partnership re. Free Trees Scheme.
Minutes of Lafarge Tarmac Ltd. 16th Sept 2014. E.W. was unable to attend, next mtg. 17th March2015. 6 pm in Town Council offices, Brabourne Road.
Various correspondence regarding future maintenance of the churchyard.

**Community Working Parties** – 8.30 am. 4th Nov. at Palace Approach, others t.b.a.
DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tues.4th NOV. at School House following the above.