Report of Environment Committee on 4th February 2014 in School House at 8.30 am.

Present – Jane Lawrey, Charmian Marsh, Elizabeth Ward (Chair)

Apologies – Mary Evans

Minutes of previous meeting were reviewed.

Oxenhill Woods – It was noted that the whole area was a quagmire, due to the prolonged rain. Attempt had been made by the contractor to remove the log piles at the Tudor Drive entrance. THIS WAS A DISASTER; the rides have been severely damaged. DEEP ruts have been made by the heavy machinery, it is hoped that the rides can be repaired as soon as practical; this work will involve additional unnecessary expenditure on an already very tight budget. The rides must be levelled before early summer when the gault clay dries like concrete. This has been discussed at a meeting with Dave Boorman at SDC. Roadstone is awaited at the bridge entrance into the meadow abutting M26. It is appreciated that the continuing weather conditions have impeded necessary work.

Chalkpit area – It is noted that bottle digging has ceased, following notices being displayed.

Scout Hut area – This continues to be much tidier.

Litter picking – from Gulliver’s to Tudor Drive, part of Pilgrims’ Way East, the Chalkpit, and Station Road back to Gulliver’s, is continuing on a rota system by members of this committee. EW. had a site meeting with Sharon Smith from SDC re. the installation of a litter bin near the exit from the station on the down side. S.S. was informed that this committee had a rota running for litter removal as it was so bad. S.S. explained that SDC are under contract from KCC to come and remove litter, every eight weeks, on this path and continuing on to Dynes Road, Kemsing. EW. said OPC were, in the meantime, going to erect a notice requesting folk to take their rubbish to the nearest bin or take it home as it gave a very bad impression to visitors and others using the path. The siting of the bin was discussed. The cost will be £300 and when OPC have agreed this, contact will be made by OPC to SDC re purchase and installation. RECOMMENDATION to OPC to purchase a bin. For the foreseeable future it would be up to us to arrange transportation of the black bag to the bin at the top of the station steps in Station Road every Tuesday morning. At present SDC are concerned about the numerous bags of OIL being put in this present bin, despite their notice ‘requesting no household rubbish’. If this continues they will remove the station steps bin!! Path from Pilgrims Way East to Gullivers – is extremely muddy, it has already been swept by Cllr M. Evans and her husband, but because of the continuous rain, soil is being washed onto the path from the higher ground of the KCC sycamore triangle, query what can be done?

Recreation Ground – Football has been cancelled due to the continuous rain.
Dog Fouling – A dog fouling check has not been done this month. Area is very wet.

Palace Park Wood – It is now beginning to take on a Woodland appearance. Again because of the rain it makes a very soggy walk.

Telston Park – A nearby resident has cut a number of trees, without permission, and left the debris and other material on site. Correspondence has been sent by OPC and resident liaising with BT.

Hale Lane Rec. – Has not been checked by this committee this month.
**Planters** - Continue to display flowers despite the rain. Suitable plants to commemorate WW1, will be discussed at our next meeting.

**Solar System Maintenance** – C and E Ward have volunteered to assist JEW with the cutting of the orbits in 2014 until a younger volunteer can be found. It is very important that this unique model is properly maintained.

**Nature Event 22/6/14.** The application form has been handed in to the Organiser of the Sevenoaks Summer Festival. EW has met Jonathan Webb the SDC Woodland consultant and has discussed with him our preliminary thoughts for the day. He is concerned about the state of the rides at the moment, but nothing can be done at present. Expanding the plan for the day will be discussed next month. EW also had a meeting at SDC with Dave Boorman to discuss the Event and its implications and specific needs. SDC will do some printing for us and also provide a number of poles and a large map of the area.

**Posts and Signs** - Following observance by the C’tee it was agreed that many just wanted a wash to remove green mould. This will be done discreetly by the committee when the weather improves. Precise position will be noted of redundant poles so that they can be removed safely by the appropriate authority. Thoughts on additional signage will be presented to OPC at a later date.

**Correspondence:**
Email report from Brian Thomas 8/1/14 re. trees in Telston Park C’tee noted points raised. Concerned about possible flytipping.

OPC letter 14/1/14 to resident re. part of the above. C’tee will be interested in the reply.

Email from Brian Thomas 27/1/14, post by flagpole on the green and condition of Christmas tree: C’tee suggest that if the tree has to be removed a request be made to the Fete C’tee, Vestry businesses and parishioners for contributions to fund a replacement tree.

Email from SDC re. Flood Alerts and assistance etc. C’tee. Noted.

Email from Rick Bayne re. the next stage of Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme to apply again for HLF grant, as the first attempt was considered to be very good.

Letter from Kent Men of the Trees, asking us to consider entering the 2014 competition.

**Community Working Parties** – no dates can be arranged due to present weather conditions.

**Addition to next Newsletter** - To ask every resident to regularly pick up any litter that may be outside their residence. It is done in other countries; let us show we care for our surroundings.

**Date of next meeting – 4th MARCH 2014 8.30 a.m. in School House.**

Elizabeth Ward (Chairman)
5th Feb 2014