
Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee

Title: Report - External Organisations

Date: 18 July 2023

a) Chinnor RFC (Cllr Bretherton)

Nothing received at 12/07/2023.

b) Thame Town Cricket Club (Cllr Champken-Woods)

The Club is entering its busiest time of the season in July, with a number of high profile cricket events taking place.

On 12th July we are hosting the England Over-60's team who are playing Australia Over-60's in a one-day 'Silver Ashes' match. This is followed by a three-day Oxfordshire Minor Counties Championship game between Oxfordshire and Berkshire on 23rd to 25th July.

Off the field, the solar panel installation has been approved by SODC planners, and work is due to be completed this month.

Finally, the Club is pleased to announce that our Chairman, Peter Tervet, has been appointed Chairman of the Oxfordshire Cricket Board, and will take up his new role fully in 2024. Peter will continue to be involved in Thame cricket, in a playing and coaching capacity.

c) Cuttle Brook Management Committee (Cllr Jones)

The annual council site visit to the Cuttle Brook took place on 28th June which was poorly attended with just 3 councillors and one officer present. The first half of the visit was to Nontron and Rycote meadows (either side of the Oxford Road).

The following points were raised:

- Nontron meadow is recovering now paths are no longer mown and people and their dogs tend to avoid it.
- The hedge along the Oxford Road path has rejuvenated since it was cut back and parts replanted last year.
- It would be beneficial to the meadow if its isolation could be complete by fencing/hedging the remaining length of the Oxford Road path and installing a large gate (to allow access for Maintenance Team and Hay Cut Contractor). It would also be necessary to close off the gap in the fence on the Spring Path, which would also necessitate moving the dog bin. As that is council property that shouldn't be a problem.
- Rycote meadow needs to be incorporated into the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve as soon as possible. **This will need a council resolution to facilitate this** (Officers will present a report to Council/CLR following final discussions with Thame Green Living in mid-July). It is necessary for insurance purposes inter alia.
- Opening access to Rycote Meadow is on-going. The suggestion is for a meandering path but the Cuttle Brook volunteers would prefer a straight path, along the hedge line to the gate.
- It should be noted that the two hay meadows are continuing to be very biodiverse with pyramidal orchids still present on Nontron meadow.

The visit went back through the reserve to Cox's Wood where the effect of ash die back is obvious due to the number of trees which had to be felled. New trees have been planted to replace them.

Other matter arising:

- Residents along the margins of the reserve are still using the reserve as a dumping ground for garden waste and unwanted plants. This is not acceptable.

- Publicity needs to be given to the catastrophic effect tic and flea treatments for dog have on the fauna in the Cuttle Brook when recently treated dogs are allowed to splash about in the brook.
- Similarly these dogs cause unacceptable soil erosion to the banks which help silt up the brook destroying fish spawning sites.
- The insurance for the Cuttle Brook volunteers has gone up exponentially. An increase in the Cuttle Brook grant would help alleviate the expense to the group.

d) Thame Good Neighbour Scheme (Cllr Dollman)

The TGNS has been fairly busy recently with 35 requests mainly for transport, shopping, prescription collection and befriending since April. To date we have had over 1000 requests for help, almost all of which we have been able to fulfil. We currently have around 40 volunteers. Following the success of our 'thank you volunteers' tea party back in March, we have another one planned at the Barns Centre in September.

e) Thame Carnival Committee (Cllr Emery)

Nothing received at 12/07/2023.

f) Thame Football Partnership (TFP) (Cllr Dyer)

Some Councillors may have caught rumours surrounding Thame Football Partnership so I explain the background and clarify the current situation.

On Friday 2nd June, without any prior warning, Mark West (Thame United Manager), Stuart Blaik (Assistant Manager) and Ben Johnson (Coach) announced that they were all standing down with immediate effect. Stuart also resigned his position on the TFP Board and was joined by Jake Collinge, who had given thirty years' service to the club.

Two other Board members had also previously advised their intention to step down – Neal Garnett (job move to the States) and Les Knock (pressure of work) – leaving just three Board members in position.

Subsequent to the Friday resignations there was some regrettable social media comment but largely contained to within the club's own social media accounts.

The remaining Board members then called a member's meeting for Tuesday 6th June, which I attended, to answer questions regarding plans for the future. The meeting was very well attended with over fifty members present.

Richard Carr (Chairman) explained the current financial pressures, largely resulting from increased energy costs, and advised that the club had already received many expressions of interest in the vacant Thame United management positions, then threw the meeting open to questions and debate. The resulting discussions were very positive in support for the remaining Board members, and quickly reached a consensus on the necessary criteria for selecting and appointing a new Thame United Manager.

In essence the criteria were that the successful applicant must recognise that it is a community club first and foremost, and that the raison d'être of the senior first team is to inspire the juniors and provide a pathway for progression. The need for change was welcomed as an opportunity to be grasped and to bring the seniors and juniors closer into the 'one club' ethos.

The meeting was also attended by Paul McDonagh from ASM (the main sponsors) who confirmed their commitment to the club at all levels and pledged their continued financial support. It was

agreed that the AGM, originally planned for 19th June, should be postponed to allow time for more nominations to the Board.

Matters have since moved on at some pace. A new first team manager, Ben Williams, has been appointed, sufficient nominations have been received to ensure that the Board will have a full complement of Directors, and the AGM will now take place towards the end of July (which I will endeavour to attend). In the interim the annual Festival of Football has taken place with a record number of 270 teams participating, and record takings in excess of £ 35k. There is a very positive vibe at all levels, and lots of plans emerging for wider community engagement. Exciting times at TFP !

g) Thame Museum Trust (Cllrs Cowell & Emery)

The Museum continues to provide a local focal point for the history of Thame. Whilst looking to continually improve the offerings

Activities update.

- The Future Development Plan continues to move forward, Trustees are currently looking at external support to enable this important work to move forward at a faster pace.
- The website is currently undergoing redesign, to allow easier updating and reviewing the e-commerce platform used for online sales.
- The ceiling in the Robin Gibb exhibition has been re painted to provide a more appropriate atmosphere for our local star.
- The AGM will be held at the Museum on the 22nd July at 10:30. Where “The story of our Town” will be presented.
- The group are working on a marketing plan.
- LWS year 7 will be visiting July 10th to 14th.
- Finances continue to be favourable for the year.
- A review of Space vs. Activity review is to be undertaken. In relation to the proposed extension
- New External signage has been proposed with consultation from TTC.

h) Thame Remembers (Cllrs Bretherton & Dyer)

A report is provided (Appendix 6h). Following that report: Those referred to in the May 2023 update have now been installed and that another twelve plaques have also been manufactured and will be installed mid to late July, taking the total up to 39 plaques commemorating 40 men (one double plaque).

i) Twinning Association (Cllr Emery)

I attended the funeral in May of the late John-François Bell ex-Mayor of Montesson with thirty years' service. John-François has been the Montesson figurehead for as long as most of us can remember, a symbol of continuity. We remember his visits to the Thame over the years, both on happy occasions such as when he signed the Twinning Charter with the late Don Butler and the Twinning Charter Committee on Thame Town Council in 2001, last year we celebrated 22 years in Montesson with a fantastic programme of events at the annual Pate de Carmen. He served Montesson with incredible dedication and dignity. It was an emotional three-hour event with over 550 people in attendance. All his relatives and close friends made their individual goodbyes. Twinning has become more successful; our membership is growing and fundraising is on track.

The latest Carnival fundraiser made £227.

Our next fundraiser will be at Charity Market Day on Tuesday 22nd August.

The September Thame visit to Montesson is well on track with an expectation of 20 plus people attending.

Linda

j) Thame Sinaia Friendship Association (Cllr Bretherton)

Nothing received at 12/07/2023.

k) Music in the Park (Cllr Jones)

The event pretty much broke even after all sponsorship money was collected. There is a plan to review ticket pricing for next year.

l) Thame Shed (Cllr Wyse)

The Shed continues to develop effectively and successfully. Significant donations of timber from Jewsons and Crendon Timber have supported the workshop's ability to complete a significant number of community projects as well as provide materials for members to use. Over 40 people have joined since October 2022 when the workshop opened and it runs on Monday, Tuesday and Friday mornings with Monday afternoon dedicated to woodturning instruction. Whilst most members are retired men we do have three female members and some members who still work!

There are members working on their own projects whilst others are very much involved in working together on community projects. Refurbishment work has recently been carried out on a model railway layout of the old Thame railway in readiness for a display in the museum. Work is underway repairing and refurbishing a model carousel, also for the museum. Two tombola drums have been made for Barley Hill school and benching is being made for the rugby club's extended changing rooms. Advertising boards have been made for Lord William's Festival Chorus and the box which houses the Town Seal in the Town Hall has been renovated.

The website <http://www.thameshed.co.uk> has further details.

m) Thame Sports Club (Cllr Jones)

The tennis club is going to replace the bulbs in their floodlights with LED ones to save costs in the long run and to be more environmentally friendly.

The sports club is also planning to lower the height of the hedge that borders Chiltern Grove by a couple of meters as it is almost unmanageable at present. There appears to be no reason for it being the height it is other than it's been allowed to grow that tall.

n) Friends of Elms Park (Cllr Champken-Woods)

Thame Concert band will hold an afternoon concert on July 22nd at 2.00pm.