

## **National Trust – Sherborne Parish Council Update Meeting – 19.03.26 – 5.15pm**

### **Attendees:**

- National Trust (NT): Andrew Danson (AD), Simon Nicholas (SN), Laura Nicholls (LN)
- Parish Council (PC): Cecelia Humphries (CH), Andrew Woolley (AW), Tom Whiffen (TW) -via TEAMS.

The meeting was limited to 45 minutes and most of the discussion centred around the proposed 'Working Group' for the 'Lady Sherborne's Walk' project.

### 1. Lady Sherborne's Walk – Working Group:

AD commented on the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the proposed working group for Lady Sherborne's Walk (LSW), as prepared by the PC. AD felt that the ToR was a little too bureaucratic for what was a relatively small project and was somewhat biased towards the PC and community. In particular, he wasn't comfortable with the section on 'Decision Making'

AW agreed that that the Lady Sherborne's Walk was a relatively small-scale project, but there is already considerable concern / opposition to the project from a number of residents whose properties are adjacent to the proposed footpath. Access for the general public to the field north and north-west of the Social Club has raised significant concerns regarding residential privacy and security for those properties backing on to the field.

TW said that the main objective of the ToR was to allow the community to review and discuss projects with the NT at an early stage and to help the NT in achieving its objectives without alienating the village. He said the section on 'Decision Making' in the ToR is open for review or could be deleted in its entirety.

Laura suggested that a 'Community Liaison Group' might be a more appropriate platform. A number of liaison groups have been established on NT properties elsewhere in the country and these had allowed for selected local residents and other stakeholders to meet with the relevant NT teams to discuss ongoing projects on a regular basis. Laura said she could send some examples of existing liaison group formats to the PC for review.

All agreed that this was potentially a more appropriate way forward in providing the community with a greater insight and involvement into the 'Big Nature - Better Access' projects and other local initiatives. The PC will put forward a list of

possible participants from the local community with the aim of convening a first meeting in early summer.

With regard to the LSW project, AD reported that the outline plan was to provide a footpath from the social club to the turbine house, with the provision for some public parking in the social club car park. There was also an outline plan to take the footpath across the brook and then heading west parallel to the Narrow-water utilising a former trackway. This path could potentially link back to the bridge on the upper, weir or head north towards the Sheafhouse and beyond (presumably linking back to the east-west footpath from Northfield Barn). CH raised some concern about establishing a path within close proximity of the Narrow-water which might have an adverse impact upon wildfowl on the Narrow-water, particularly if dogs were not restrained.

AW also suggested that a fenced path extending from the Clapton Road to the Turbine House alongside Mareslaid Copse might be more acceptable to the community as it would have less impact upon village residents.

## 2. Broadwaters Wetland Scheme & Restoration

Andrew D reiterated that there were no immediate plans for the Broadwaters following the withdrawal of the Wetlands planning application in December. The original funding has been withdrawn and would have to be reapplied for. Enough remains, however, to conduct a study of the silt being carried down the Brook into the Broadwater. Silt monitoring is being carried out upstream of the Broadwaters, within the Broadwaters themselves and also downstream, to try to understand source, composition and areas of deposition.

A Broadwaters specific meeting with senior NT management has been convened for the 5<sup>th</sup> May in order to review the project options going forward, but AD suggested that there was little appetite amongst senior management to resubmit a planning application or carry out any works this year.

AD indicated that NT policy and objectives were still very much focused upon restoring nature and public access, with heritage being less of a priority. National expenditure for 2026/27 would be capped at £250 million, which would potentially curtail some existing projects in Sherborne.

### 3. Drainage Grips

There was some discussion regarding the ongoing maintenance of drainage grips. AD reported that the NT will continue to maintain the grips on the inside of the wall in Ragged Copse. They are also proposing to re-excavate the roadside ditch to the east side of the Bourton Road between Sherbrooke House and Moor's Copse – to prevent the ditch overflowing and flooding across the road.

### 4. Litter Picking

At the recent 'drop-in' session, one of the attendees from the village raised the issue of litter within the village and questioned whether the NT would be prepared to organise a litter picking work party. The main areas of concern were the road verges entering the village, particularly the road verges down from the A40. AD suggested that this should perhaps be a village/PC initiative to be organised by the PC and involving village volunteers. However, AD suggested that the NT could potentially help out by providing resources in terms of manpower (Rangers / NT volunteers) and the use of a vehicle to pick up and dispose of litter. AW will put a proposal to the PC.

The meeting concluded at 6pm.