

# **MALVERN HILLS CONSERVATORS**

## **MEETING OF THE BOARD**

12 March 2009 7 pm

Committee Room, The Council House, Malvern

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Present:- Mr R Chamings, Mr C Cheeseman, Mr R Hall-Jones, Dr T Hunt, Mrs J Kelly, Mr M Morgan, Mr A Phillips, Mr B Pilcher, Mr J Plant, Dr B Smith, Mr C Smith, Mr J Smith, Mrs H Stace, Mr R Roberts (Chairman), Mrs S Thetford, Mr R Thomas, Mr P Tuthill, Mr D Watkins, Mr P Watts, Mr W Watts, Mr J Webb, Mr B Wilcock.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Conservation Officer, Financial Consultant.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** Mr M Cordey, Mr A Myatt, Mr C Rouse, Mr M Soley, Mr P Watson.

### **2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

2.1 Malvern Town Council – Civic Service. The Chairman recently represented the Board at the Town Council's Civic Service held in the Priory Church.

2.2 Three Counties Show 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> June. The Chairman gave members advance warning that the notice for the next meeting of the Board would include a request for members to volunteer to staff the stand at the Three Counties Show.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS.** Mr P Potts of Blackhill House asked members to reconsider the installing of barriers at Blackhill Car Park in view of the anti-social behaviour that he and his family were experiencing that included noise nuisance from vehicles, criminal acts and harassment. This regularly took place at the car park between 10 pm and 2 am. It was **AGREED** that the Land Management Committee would reconsider the matter which would include a site visit.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** None.

**5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.** On the proposal of Mr C Smith, seconded by Mr J Smith, it was **AGREED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 8 January 2009 should be **CONFIRMED** and **SIGNED** as a true and correct record.

### **6. MATTERS ARISING.**

6.1 10.1.1 Hydraulic Pumps. Mr Pilcher advised that it was hoped shortly to make a site visit to see one of the pumps in action.

6.2 10.2 Mr Ralph Storer, deceased. The Chairman advised that he had represented the Board, together with several other members, at the funeral of past Chairman of the Board, Mr Ralph Storer.

### **7. COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

7.1 LAND MANAGEMENT. Mrs Thetford presented the report of the meeting held on the 29 January 2009 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Dr Hunt.

Arising.

7.1.1 4.1 Brown Signs. The Director confirmed that the height of the post had been reduced. This was **NOTED**.

7.1.2 6. Views from Gardiners Quarry. The Director advised that the work of thinning the trees, to be carried out in the autumn, would be funded by the Earth Heritage Trust from a Heritage Lottery grant.

7.1.3 8a. Well Dressing 2009. The Director thanked the organiser of the Well Dressing, Mr Lionel Butcher, for his co-operation and liaison regarding the dressing of Springs and Spouts on Conservators' land.

With regard to the Hayslad Spring, he reported that the bifurcating spout was currently with the blacksmith for refitting.

7.1.4 9.5 South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy. The Chairman reported that together with the Director and Administrative Officer, he had attended consultations at Sherrards Green and Poolbrook. Full information was on the web site: [www.swjcs.org](http://www.swjcs.org).

Mr Tuthill reported that he had recently attended a meeting when a representative of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) had given a clear explanation not only of the SWJCS but the Regional Spatial Strategy and suggested that the CPRE representative should be invited to address the Board at its next meeting. This was **AGREED**.

The report was **CARRIED**.

7.2 ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES. Mr Wilcock presented the report of the meeting held on the 19 February 2009 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr Morgan and the report, including items 10-14, taken in committee, was **CARRIED**.

**8. INVESTMENT WORKING PARTY**. Mr Wilcock presented the report of the meeting of the Working Party held on the 5 March 2009 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Dr Smith. Mr Wilcock asked that the belated apologies of the Vice Chairman of the Administration & Resources Committee, Mr J Smith, be recorded as his notice of the meeting had been lost in the post.

#### Arising.

Before discussing the report, the Chairman of the Board stressed that the Financial Consultant could answer factual queries but was unable to advise the Board on where the funds should be invested. Mr W Watts expressed surprise and concern at the decision to place half the funds in the Charities Aid Foundation Bank which was a limited company and did not have to have the same level of disclosure as larger Banks. It was pointed out that the Bank was a registered charity and therefore its accounts were controlled by the Charity Commission. It was established in 1986 and received deposits only from other charities. It currently held 21,000 accounts and one billion pounds on deposit; 10% of charities use the Bank. Its investment criteria did not include lending money and its funds were managed by Barclays Global Investors Limited. The Bank invests in UK gilts, sterling Eurobonds, floating rate notes, commercial paper and the sterling money market. CAF gave a very competitive rate of interest compared with four leading Banks. Several members felt that they would be happier if the funds were divided between four separate Banks as had been discussed at earlier meetings. Mr Wilcock advised that the Working Party had the choice of five Banks and having regard to the government handling of the financial crisis, as well as the loss of funds by dividing the money, felt that in making the recommendation members/Trustees had acted reasonably as required by the Charities Act. He therefore moved that the matter be put. This was seconded by Mr C Smith and was **CARRIED** by 13 votes to 7.

Note: At the end of the meeting Mrs J Kelly and Mr W Watts asked for their names to be recorded as voting against the motion.

### **9. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES.**

9.1 Malvern Spa Association. Mr Roberts reported that the theme for the Well Dressing this year would be Darwin's Earth and that on Tuesday, 31 March Dr John Harcup OBE and Mr

Lionel Butcher would be giving a talk on 'Well Dressing and Darwin'. The Association's spring newsletter was awaiting publication.

9.2 Great Malvern Town Centre Partnership. Mr Roberts reported that there had been no meeting of the Partnership recently.

9.3 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. Dr Smith advised that the meeting of the JAC scheduled for early February had been cancelled due to heavy snow falls. The next meeting would be held on the 22 May 2009.

**10. URGENT BUSINESS.** None.

**11. INFORMATION.**

11.1 Management Report. The Director presented his report which was **NOTED**.

Arising.

11.1.1 Dog Waste. In response to a request the Director agreed to obtain precise costings of disposing of dog waste for the next meeting of the Land Management Committee.

11.1.2 Volunteers. The Director advised that he would be amending the Wardens' job descriptions to reflect the increased work with volunteers.

It was noted that the work of volunteers had now extended to the office and it was agreed that the Board's thanks be conveyed to Carol Burgess and Jenny Cheale for their help.

The meeting closed at 8.02 pm.