

Sproughton Parish Council – Annual Meeting

Report on Sproughton Millennium Green

Parishioners may be aware that this is my first year as a Director of the Trust and in fact as the Chair of SMGLtd. I indeed have very big shoes to fill, Ken (Seager) has served the trust and the wider community tirelessly over many years and I wish him all the very best as he steps back from SMG and looks to pursue new volunteering opportunities and maybe just a little more time to himself.

His legacy will remain and his continued and ongoing support of me throughout my first year, indeed serving in the newly created position of Vice Chair has been nothing short of amazing and I personally extend my sincere thank and gratitude to him on record with the Council.

The Green serves the local community daily and since Covid it has proven even more valuable to our overall sense of health and wellbeing – especially in times of lockdown and restricted movement. We should be mindful of what we have and never lose sight of the importance of maintaining green and open spaces for all.

The two main objectives of the Directors is to maintain a safe space for all to enjoy and to secure the funding to enable this on an ongoing basis.

With these aims in mind, we have created a sub-committee with the sole purpose of finding new and exciting ways to raise awareness and much needed financial support. Ken has agreed to continue to run the 100 club which currently is our only source of regular income.

On a slightly negative side, we are now being hit with a standing charge from British Gas for the supply to the Green although the consumption (year on year) continues to be zero. This is a double hit given the rise in prices. We have tried in vain to have this withdrawn but have had no luck to date.

Positively, we have seen an increased use of the site and request to hold events on the green – we hope this continues and we look to work ever closer with the Council to ensure the Green is of continued and increasing value to our community.

We are indebted to one of our team (Mark Scannell) and his colleagues from UK Power Networks who have given up their own time to attend to the much-needed tree maintenance. A 3-year plan has been executed extensively already and the remaining works should be completed before the end of 2023. This volunteer work has saved the Trust several thousands and provides much needed safety checks on the habitat – ensuring that we disturb the wildlife as much as possible.

Special focus is also being given to the original wildflower meadow with a small team (any help greatly appreciated) from the Directors looking to ensure the area is maintained as it should be and allowing the wildflowers to re-establish and take a foot hold once again.

Finally, the Director team continues to grow and strengthen. As your new Chair I am pleased to report that we have a team of 10 active members currently – with a newly appointed Vice Chair (Jon Tuppen) supporting me.

Of course, we would always welcome more helping hands and I would remind you all that if you cannot give your time (I know how busy everyone is), please consider the 100 club – a few tickets remain (@£1 per month per ticket).

Darren Smith

Chair

Sproughton Millennium Green Ltd

May 2023