



## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm – West End Tavern Garden

- Present:** Anne Boswell, Lyn Childs, Jane Cowin, Lucy Davies, Mike & Jean Lutener, Jane Stevens, Jean Stratton, Sarah Sullivan, Rob Thompson, Barbara Titchner  
**Apologies:** Emma Edmonds, Heather Moughtin, Val Owens, Lotte Scade, Judy Taylor  
The Chairman welcomed Sarah and Lucy to their first meeting.
- Minutes of Zoom Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021** – agreed and signed as a true record.
- Constitution 2021** – Anne had amended the Constitution and members agreed to endorse. The Committee will comprise of at least 5 members including the Officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer). Up to 6 members may be co-opted at the discretion of the Committee. All members are welcome to join meetings, but only Committee members can make a decision

### *The current Officers and Committee members then stood down*

- Election of Officers** – it was proposed and seconded:

**Chairman/Secretary – Anne Boswell**

**Treasurer – Rob Thompson**

**Election of Committee Members** – it was proposed and seconded that the following form the Committee: **Jane Cowin, Val Owens, Lotte Scade, Jane Stevens, Jean Stratton**

It was proposed and agreed that meetings be held every 3 months (Constitution states at least 3 per year) as this is sufficient to cover most issues, unless it was necessary to hold an urgent meeting.

Anne thanked ex-Committee member **Clare Hodgkinson** for all her dedication and hard work she had given to Marden in Bloom over the last 5 years since its inception – she will be sorely missed.

- Finance/Income & Expenditure – Accounts for 2020** – the Treasurer presented the accounts for 2020 and MinB currently has **£3,604** in the ‘pot’. Rob gave an overview of what money we had raised and expenditure over the last year. Unfortunately MinB have been unable to raise any funds so far this year, so we need to be mindful of expenditure and need to keep a reasonable amount in the ‘pot’ in case Golden Hill Nursery are unable to help us with the summer planting. £1,000 was set aside towards a Village Info Sign (£500 from KCC), but Anne and the History Group have been unsuccessful in progressing this project. The Committee had decided that £500 of that amount be put towards a MinB commemorative bench adjacent to the Wildflower Meadow in Southons Field which Marden Parish Council have agreed to. The £500 donation from KCC needs to be kept aside and see if the Village Info Sign project can progress at some point.
- Membership List and Data Protection** – Anne circulated the list of members to update and for Data Protection purposes, they are happy for her to hold their email address and telephone numbers.
- Annual 2020 Report** – Anne circulated the report on MinB’s achievements in 2020 which was also provided to the Annual Parish Meeting in April.
- Planter Update:**
  - **Summer Planting and Watering** – Anne thanked all those who had helped to replant the planters and those who were helping to water. It was stressed that any help with the watering would be great especially during dry, hot and windy spells.

Emma's step-son Dom was thanked for watering all the planters once a week during the Summer as part of his Duke of Edinburgh's award. Members really appreciate all the effort he is making.

- **Planter at Chainhurst** – Rob had investigated the damage of the Chainhurst planter and gave it a 'temporary' fix.
- **Planter at Chantry Road (Marden Horticultural Society look after)** – Jill Nicholls had reported that various plants have been stolen over the last year and also struggle with the watering. Jill had suggested maybe planting both Spring, Autumn & Summer bulbs, Anne had suggested maybe a few herbs like the Medical Centre planter and Alison Simpson had suggested maybe it could be moved to another position but Rob thinks if the planter is moved, it would fall apart.

## 9. Fund Raisers/Events:

- **June Plant Sale** – Unfortunately the dahlia tubers that Lotte, Heather & Barbara had planted up (80 in total) had not emerged so they were unable to go ahead with the Plant Sale. Lotte reported this to Thompson & Morgan where they had been ordered from who advised her to "keep trying". A couple of them are now showing some growth and Lotte will persevere. Anne managed to propagate 20 dahlias - 17 of which were sold so this counter-balanced some of the loss. Anne stressed that we were taking a chance trialling dahlias, but would propagate Bishop of Llandaff and the Bloomer tubers again next year. Barbara will plant the remaining 3 in the right hand bed at the Memorial Hall and dig up the tubers in the Autumn.
- **Autumn Bulb Sale – Sat 11<sup>th</sup> Sept** – Barbara, Heather & John are happy to proceed with the Autumn Plant Sale and they made a whopping profit of £500 last September. Anne also suggested maybe we could sell some bulbs at the Marden Motor Show in Southons Field on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> Sept but would have to ask permission. Barbara & Heather will choose the bulbs from Gedney and let Anne know who will order when she orders the bulbs for planting in the village in the Autumn.
- **Tree Charter Day – Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November** – Anne explained about the Woodland Trust/NALC Tree Charter initiative and the Parish Council are a Branch. At a recent Parish Council meeting Councillors proposed that we could maybe plant saplings from the Woodland Trust on the new developments where a number of trees had died. Roxana and Jean S are interested in this initiative and a meeting will be arranged with some Parish Councillors, Marden in Bloom, Marden Walking Group and the Marden Wildlife Group.
- **Scarecrow Safari** – Clare arranged two very successful Scarecrow Safaries in 2019 and 2020, but it was felt that we leave for this year and maybe run one again in 2022.
- **Marden at Xmas – Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Dec (date tbc)** – Jean S and Lyn are happy to run a Marden in Bloom stall at this event.
- **Garage/Boot Sale** – Clare had arranged an event in May 2020 which had to be cancelled because of Covid. Louise Hickmott, who is the Village Club Secretary, had contacted Anne to ask if we would consider running one and she was willing to help run the event to raise money for Marden in Bloom. However, it was decided there would be no appetite for such an event especially as the EcoHub are currently running freebie swap events.
- **Garden Safari 2022** – Jean S suggested we hold a Garden Safari next year ending up in Anne/Jean's gardens for tea & cake or Pimms which back on to Southons Field in late June. We would look to open 12 gardens just in the village perimeter and not necessarily show gardens, but small ones where residents have been inventive. Barbara & Sarah may open theirs at Highwood Green, Val is happy to open hers at Appledown Grange and Jane S will ask Vanessa at Church Farm House and put the word out to MHS. The gardens to be within the village curtilage not outside to enable people to walk around easily and not have to drive. Lucy suggested a clue be in each garden e.g. a question about a plant and there would be a prize at the end of the Safari – she will put her thinking hat on! This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

- **Any Other Fund Raising Suggestions** - As discussed at the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March, MinB have run various fund-raising events such as Wreath Making sessions, Fashion Shows, Garden Teas and Hoe Downs. However, it was thought another **Fashion Show maybe in March** would be a good fund-raising idea and Anne has now spoken to Lotte who is very happy to run again – a joint event with the Chalkdown Riding School.

## 10. Projects:

- **Spring Bulbs in Village** – The village looked stunning in the Spring and MinB received numerous compliments.
- **Memorial Hall** – Anne thanked Heather & John and Barbara & hubbie for tending this area and the planters which were looking lovely. Anne suggested if they needed any more plants to purchase them and give the receipt to the Treasurer. Barbara will plant the 3 remaining Dahlias in the r-hand bed at the Memorial Hall. Anne will enquire on which day Dom waters them so they don't have to do it.
- **Library Area** – A clearing session was held early Spring and Anne thanked those members who had helped out and Anne has done a couple of sessions recently but there is still more clearing of weeds/bulbs. A date was arranged for **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> July from 9.30am** – Jane C can help after 10.30am and Barbara possibly.
- **Wildflower Meadow in Southons Field & Bench** - Anne & Jean have worked on the meadow and planted some more seeds and plants. It has been looking stunning mainly with Ox Eye Daisies and we plan to remove some of them once they have finished flowering to allow other plants to emerge. Denise has offered her help. Anne is documenting the plants.

The Committee agreed to ask Marden Parish Council if a commemorative bench could be placed behind the meadow for residents to enjoy and they have given their permission. Rob advised that the local company we have chosen have a problem with delivery/supply of teak and the cost has gone up considerably (now approx £650 rather than £550). The company is currently not taking orders, but they should be able to fulfill our order by end August. Sarah asked if we could consider benches at a garden centre near Appledore, but Rob & Mike felt they may not be robust enough but happy to take a look.

- **Plantation Lane Alleyway** – Lotte kindly cleared this area in the Spring and a few plants are flowering there. The soil is very poor here and plants have difficulty in surviving.
- **Marden Primary Academy** – the School asked if we could provide sunflower seeds, pots and compost for the Early Years children to grow which Anne provided in April. The newly appointed Principal, Niall Dosad, recently emailed Anne to enquire if MinB would be interested in helping with a Covid Reflection Day they are holding on 14<sup>th</sup> July. They plan for each class to grow some seedlings and Anne has suggested poppy seeds (Denise has donated a huge amount for the Wildflower Meadow) or Forget-me-Nots which we have purchased. Anne also asked for an update on the 4 planters we placed in the school garden and the stones that were painted by the children to commemorate VE Day in May 2020 which was cancelled. Anne also mentioned the proposed Tree Charter Day and if the school wanted to participate.
- **Marden Dementia Group** – the Parish Council is still negotiating with Redrow on the handing over the allotment area at Highwood Green and a formal lease agreement with the Allotment Association is being discussed. Hopefully this will be complete in the next few months and the Dementia Group can plan their garden (2 plots). MinB promised to provide some planters for the garden. Anne is also the nominated Parish Councillor for the Dementia Group and Rachel Cachon has asked if MinB would provide a new planter possibly at the Library area to raise awareness for the Dementia Group which Rob is happy to make. Rachel has asked P&P Signs for a quote for a banner to be wrapped around the planter and we may also place one around an existing planter possibly outside the Unicorn pub. Anne will need to ask the permission of the History Group.

- **Autumn Bulb Planting** – MinB have already planted over 20,000 bulbs around the village and depending on budget, the following areas were discussed for bulb planting in the Autumn. Anne will need to order

the bulbs from Gedney in August along with the bulbs for the Plant Sale and also arrange bulb planting sessions.

<b>SOUTHONS FIELD</b>	<b>Naturalising Mix</b>	<b>Boundary of Southons Field to the left of the Beacon</b>
<b>THORN ROAD BY COPPER LANE</b>	<b>Naturalising Mix x 500</b>	<b>Andrew Etherington to plant + neighbours?</b>
<b>PATHWAY BETWEEN GOUDHURST ROAD AND COCKPIT AREA</b>	<b>Naturalising Mix x 1000</b>	<b>There are some crocus in there at the beginning – clarify with Carole Lower</b>
<b>PLAIN ROAD + MILLENIUM WALK</b>		
<b>JUNCTION OF PLAIN ROAD/THORN ROAD</b>		<b>There are already a few a daffodils and Crocus there</b>
<b>PARISH CHURCH</b>	<b>Naturalising Mix</b>	<b>Donation tbc</b>
<b>MARDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY</b>		<b>Donation tbc</b>

11. **Fungi Competition** – only 1 entry has been received but the closing date is end of year so further shouts will be put out in the Parish Newsletter, the Parish Mag and Facebook. Next year we may consider holding a Best Front Garden competition again.

12. **Sponsorship/Donations 2021** – Golden Hill were thanked once again for generously providing most of the plants for the planters this Summer. Peter Hall, Liz Stanley and Marden Village Club sponsor 3 of the planters. At the last meeting in March, it was agreed we did not need to approach any businesses this year.

The Parish Council have received a ‘Welcome Back’ grant from Maidstone Borough Council to use for winter planting in the village. The good news is that it has been agreed in principal that a donation (possibly £500) be given to Marden in Bloom towards replanting the planters in the Autumn, in the beds and towards some plants, more bulbs and in the new Dementia Awareness planter. If we receive this donation, it would mean we could choose bolder Autumn/Winter plants and make a statement in the village. Members were asked if they had any ideas of what we could purchase as these will need to be ordered in August. Anne will speak to Golden Hill to see if they have any ideas.

13. **Plant Passport** – after various discussions on Facebook about the selling of plants, Anne applied for a Plant Passport from the Animal and Plant Health Agency for when we sell plants/bulbs at fund-raising events, which has been approved. All we need to do is to make a note of where we have bought plant/bulbs from and when we have sold them on.

14. **Thank You to Golden Hill Evening** – Anne will speak with Golden Hill to arrange a date – **possibly Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> August or Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September** - venue either the garden of the West End Tavern, Marden Village Club or in Anne & Rob’s house (this depends on Covid restrictions).

**15. Any Other Business:**

**MHS Blog** – Jane S will kindly draft a MinB blog for the MHS e-Newsletter so members can see what MinB are getting up to.

16. **Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October – venue tbc** – Anne has a busy September so can we leave it till this date (it’s just over 3 months)?