



BOX PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOX HILL & RUDLOE OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE **HELD ON 18th AUGUST 2025**

1. Present: Councillors: D. Dorey (Chair); R. Davies, I. Johnstone: R Leach: M. Tye; B. Walton and T. Walton

Mr S Vickery (Clerk)

2. Apologies: Cllr S.Roche.

3. Absence: Nil

4. Public Question Time: There were no members of the public in attendance.

5. Declarations of Interest: Nil

6. Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th June 2025 were taken as read and signed as a true record.

7. Matters Arising/Actions:

a. Grass and Tree management plan for Common(s).

There will eventually be an overall tree management plan and grass cutting plan. To assist identification, the naming of areas was suggested, possibly with a nod to history. This might also help to identify different areas of habitat. As a start point it was agreed to compile a list of tree surveys to date as a foundation. The OSM and Clerk would work towards a grass cutting plan.

The new Open Spaces Committee will drive some of this work. It was also agreed to only cut the Middle Common (one cut per year) next March.

Action: OSM and Clerk to compile tree survey work to date and to note the cutting plan.

b. Update on Rudloe Licenses (now F&G).

The co-terminus of the Rudloe licenses was discussed and closed at the at the Fin & Gov Committee.

c. Leafy Lane 3G Project.

The project lead for the Leafy Lane 3G pitch has confirmed that the project will adhere to the mandatory ecological surveys. No formal request has been received as yet for funding and there has been no sign of planning permission. Light pollution remains a concern for the Committee.

d. Little Nature Explorers.

The Licence has been paid and documentation has been provided (insurance and risk assessment). This was primarily for the use of the Recreation Ground. The organiser has approached various local parish councils for the use of facilities.

e. Encroachment Letters for Lower Common.

This item refers to the Middle Common; reminder letters are now required to preserve the beauty of the Middle Common; in particular the large washing line, which should be removed as a priority. Afternote: the peppercorn rent letter is sent annually in January.

Action: Clerk to draft a note for distribution to Albion Terrace residents.

8. Items for discussion:

a. Landscape quotes for The Green and subsequent cutting programme.

It was agreed to accept the quote from Company B for the landscaping of the football goalmouths. Consideration must be given to the safety of the new pitch once the posts are sited, in regard to the roads. It was further agreed to take on the mowing from Wiltshire Council, to mark out the pitch, to mow 2-weekly and to consider more meadow grass and tree-planting.

Recommendation: To accept the quote from Company B to landscape the football goalmouths at a cost of £2,366 + VAT.

b. Parish Office for half day at RCC.

It was proposed and agreed to operate the Parish Office from the RCC for a half day or one day per week. It was confirmed that there would be no financial outlay; it was hoped to encourage residents to visit the office. In addition, the Chair explained that there might be scope to hold further committee meetings and the Annual Parish meeting at the RCC.

c. Leafy Lane Wessex Water work.

It was confirmed that Wessex water would close and work on Leafy Lane from 9th September for 8 weeks; there would be no buses using Leafy Lane. The only nearby bus stops will be at either end of Leafy Lane.

d. Lower Common Wildlife Pond.

There was a discussion on the potential to create a wildlife pond at the Lower Common. This would be a long term project and was received positively. A source of water would be very beneficial to the habitat. The possibility of using run-off water from neighbouring properties, such as the Quarrymans (Butcombe brewery) might be feasible.

It was proposed to form a Working Group with local residents (Barry Dicks and Steve Murphie) and one or two councillors (Cllr Tye and B. Walton) to move the idea forward.

e. Additional item – the Cemetery field hedge proposal from Cllr Tye.

At the top of the 'new' Cemetery field, there was a proposal to complement the existing stock fence with a second stock fence (cost below) to form a centre hedge-row. This will enable the widening of the footpath 71 and encourage more wildlife in this new hedge-row

habitat. The Cotswold Wardens would take on much of the labour for the new fence and hedge-row planting. There will also be kissing gates in the fence to enable access.

Recommendation. To accept the quote of £556+VAT for the purchase of the new fence materials.

9. Update on Forward Plan/Risk Assessment and Asset Register.

Ongoing as an Open Spaces Forward Plan.

10. To receive any correspondence.

a. Alcohol Licence for Westwood Road – update from Fin & Gov.

As agreed at the Fin & Gov Committee, there were no objections to this licence request but it was requested that the license end time is decreased from 11pm to 10pm or 10.30pm.

11. Items to Report

- a. After an incident at the Lower Common, the Clerk was reminded of the need to ensure that there is no herbicide spraying without prior consent from the Committee. The Council needed to lead by example and to not contravene its own Climate policy. The Climate policy would be reviewed at the next meeting.
- b. There was a vote of thanks for Varian Tye for the painting of the GWR bench. There is ongoing discussion on whether the wooden slats should be treated or not.
- c. The stolen bench at Quarry Hill is on order and there is a strong need to make it more secure on the concrete base. Cllr T Walton agreed to advise on a more secure installation.

12. Date of next meeting - 20th October 2025

Meeting closed at 8.10pm

Chair