

Friends of Upper Saxondale Conservation Area Group

Meeting held on Monday 12th September 2022
At 6:30pm in the village hall



Credit: Rushcliffe Borough Council

Attendees: Rebecca Forster, Tamasine Green, Richard Harris-Burton, Fay Harrison (note taker) Lizzy Hunt, Glyn Miles, Georgia Moore (to introduce the meeting), Kate O'Callaghan, Louise Potts, Jo Ratcliffe-Stenson & Chris Terry

Apologies: Steve Ball, Phil Marshall, Lesley Murray, Jane Rogers, David Shutter & Mich Stevenson

Background:

The need for this group emerged following discussions about the tree work recently carried out on David Wilson Homes (DWH) owned land and how village residents could have a greater say and involvement in how land in Upper Saxondale is managed and cared for in the future.

This group's initial remit is to make recommendations to USRA about how they would like to see budgets spent on maintenance for USRA owned land. It is hoped this group would stay in place if a new parish council were formed.

Key points:

- Georgia introduced the meeting, setting out the group's remit with initial focus being on USRA owned and managed land. Originally, the hospital had 7 full-time gardeners to care for the gardens.
- DWH are in discussion with Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) about the potential handover of DWH owned land. USRA Committee has been involved in some of these discussions and recently walked the land with DWH and RBC. It is expected that DWH will undertake bigger picture projects, such as refurbishing the gazebos, rather than focusing on smaller scale projects in the lead up to any handover. It was suggested that additional replacement trees for the felled Cherry Blossom on Westminster Drive grassed area, land currently owned by

DWH, is likely to be a project undertaken by the proposed Parish Council once the land is handed over.

- On USRA owned land, the Poplar trees that line the back road will need considerable work in the near future. A tree survey would determine exactly what is needed but given their height and age it is likely to be costly and a project undertaken by the proposed Parish Council.
- On DWH owned land, where their contractors do not currently mow the smaller pockets of grass by residents' homes, it would be beneficial if nearby residents were able to volunteer to care for these areas if they are becoming an eyesore, at least in the short term.
- Suggestion of two key elements to group's remit:
 - **Strategic longer-term planning** - identifying areas of specific work such as community composting, water harvesting from the village hall, conservation benefiting wildlife including no-mow areas and wildflower meadows. Highly likely to have budget implications.
 - **Community engagement** - such as regular/monthly land tidies where village residents could work collaboratively in the soft fruit area, orchard, woodland walk, and back road area in front of the village hall. This would benefit from advice from Paul Ashdown, who is currently employed by USRA to mow USRA grassed areas, and Jane Rogers, who currently volunteers to prune the soft fruit area, and Chris Terry who has organised orchard pruning. Likely to have low or no budget implications.

Actions & next steps

- **Fay Harrison** to
 - circulate village map which identifies USRA, DWH, Bowls Club and Playpark areas.
 - arrange the next meeting for about 6-8 weeks' time.
- **Chris Terry** to
 - ask Paul Ashdown which areas he recommends the group could help with.
 - consult with Jane Rogers on what help is needed in the soft fruit area.
 - consider the best time to do the next pruning of the orchard fruit trees.
- **Everyone** to consider what they wish to be included in strategic planning and community engagement activities.