

## KEYINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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27<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Dave,

Thank you for your interest in the future planning and management of the Boyes Lane Amenity Area and for gathering the signatures of people in Keyingham who have indicated their support for the development of this area as a community resource.

The Parish Council are delighted that so many people have indicated their commitment to helping to shape the future direction of this area, particularly as the small team of people who currently maintain this area are 'at full stretch' and what is desperately needed are volunteers with practical skills to help with the upkeep of the area.

The Council agreed that the next important stage in the development of the Boyes lane Amenity Area would be to create a **clear vision statement**, setting out what the area will be used for and how this will be achieved over the next five years.

Council members feel that input of residents, broadly representing different sections of the community, is crucial to this, and that a **public meeting** would be the best way to establish an open dialogue.

Advice from ERYC indicates that, following the current lockdown, we are likely to spend some time in a Tier(s) where public meetings will be prohibited, so that it is unlikely that we will be able to hold a face to face meeting until **late in the Spring 2021**. We will commit to convening a meeting as soon as it is safe and permitted to do so.

In the discussion of the petition, Councillors noted that the original group of volunteers included some 10 or so members, some Councillors and some members of the public, but that it has gradually dwindled to the three Councillors and two residents and more support is desperately needed.

The starting point for a vision is usually to take stock of what has been achieved, what people would like to see as a future development in the area.

### PC Vision:

- A well-managed, safe area where people can enjoy an open outdoor space
- Broaden the 'steering group' to include Keyingham Academy/youth groups/residents
- Apply for grant funding to progress the electricity connection to the area
- Consolidate partnership with Keyingham Academy – create a Learning Zone/outdoor classroom
- Increased biodiversity – wild-flowers, insects, birds & animals
- Effective balance of 'wild' and 'managed areas'

- Effectively and safely meet the needs of a variety of users

Activities which different groups of residents have requested/wish to pursue:

- Dog Walking
- Bee Keeping
- Encouraging Biodiversity
- Tree Planting/landscaping
- Re-wilding
- Bird & wildlife watching
- Outdoor Classroom/learning Zone
- Picnics
- Games/outdoor recreation
- Open air Concerts
- Farmers Market/Seasonal Crafts Markets
- BMX Bike Track
- Metal Detecting
- Folk Festivals

Part of the public engagement with the vision – which will help inform the future direction of the area – will be to make decisions about how many different activities can reasonably be accommodated, side by side and without impacting on the enjoyment or safety of another user group. As you can see from the range of activities listed- *and these are just the main ones* - it is often a challenge to provide for the varied needs of each user.

It is also important to bear in mind that the Boyes Lane Amenity Area is registered with the Charity Commission and that the PC are trustees of the charity. In developing the area we are required to abide by the terms set out in the document as these form the basis of the agreement with CCLA.

The trustees are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the terms of the agreement are upheld and that any decisions comply with the ‘spirit and letter’ of the agreement. It is important to retain the charitable status as this give access to grant funding.

**Boyes Lane: activities over the last 18 Months:**

The PC has had discussions with Keyingham Academy about creating an outdoor classroom or ‘forest school’ type learning environment. The electrical connection is a part of this plan and the initial assessment for this was carried out in November. The wildlife cameras were also set up as part of this project to provide opportunities for children to learn about birds and animals, undisturbed, in their natural habitats.

As a result of donations by residents we have acquired some outdoor furniture. Some of this furniture has sadly been stolen, and so those items which are not static have now been moved inside. In 2019 the Council received £500 for ERVAS for Trees to plant on Council land in Keyingham. Four trees are yet to be planted. Of those already planted, three have been dedicated to the memory of Keyingham Residents.

Last year, in response to a request from residents, soil was moved from Saltaugh Road and compacted to create a BMX track. This facility has not been used and has become overgrown. How this area is used in future will need to be reviewed.

In August an outdoor stage was created, using mainly donated wood, and an open-air concert was staged on the field. This was a smaller scale event than the folk festival of the previous year and was almost derailed by vandalism and antisocial behaviour prior to the event.

Assessment for an electrical connection has moved forward in the last month, and Northern Power Net have now provided an estimate which can be used to apply for grant funding. The partnership with Keyingham Academy underpins any bidding process for funds to realise this part of the vision.

The Area has been looked after by a small team who have continued to cut grass, mend fences, plant trees etc throughout two lockdown periods.

The roadway has twice been improved with road filings provided by ERYC and ER Highways Team recently made repairs to the junction of Boyes Lane and the A1033.

In late summer/early autumn the Council agreed to requests to plant wildflowers in the following areas and hope to encourage school children and families to take part in the activity.

- The margins around the field – all sides
- The raised flowerbed to the left of the gate
- Inside the Bee enclosure
- The wooded area to the west end of the field

#### Future Activities:

In line with the vision and ‘five-year plan’ the Council will need to consider how best to ensure that a reasonable mix of activities can be supported and managed safely and effectively.

**One of the biggest challenges is selecting which activities best meet the needs of the community and have the support and commitment of the majority of residents of Keyingham.**

*These questions will form part of the agenda for the public meeting in the spring:*

- What do most people want?
- How many of the things that people would like can be achieved?
- What are the safety considerations and how can we meet them?
- How can we ensure that people want to contribute time and energy as well as ideas?

I hope that provides you with a bit more background detail and insights into the current considerations. The PC would like me to stress that what they are really looking for is sustained commitment from people who are willing to get ‘stuck in’ and help with the hard work as well as contributing ideas.

Please feel free to share this letter, bearing in mind that it is a summary rather than the complete details of every aspect of the work in this area, nor does it aim to address every issue which we might reasonably expect to be able to cover in a public meeting.

We look forward to meeting with you as soon as Covid- 19 restrictions permit.

Kind regards

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