

CALEY GREEN WORKING PARTY MEETING
10AM THURSDAY 6 JANUARY 2022
CALEY GREEN SITE

The following report is not a full verbatim record but follows the itemised agenda for the meeting and actions following the December Working Party meeting. It suggests a way forward to be discussed by Parish Council. There was general discussion and recap of information provided at previous meetings. J & S Dalton had set out markers at the edge of the river to show the two short areas where planting could be located between oak revetments in accordance with the scaled drawing, based on a drone photograph provided by a resident and circulated before the meeting (see other attachment).

1. To consider updated drawing showing positioning of aqualog/oak revetment and low planting following previous meeting (circulated herewith)

The height of the Green and water was noted. In the Summer, the difference is more marked and the water shallower at that point. Erosion has increased and more engineering is required. It had been agreed at the previous meeting that further technical advice from various contractors was needed. The general feeling is that the use of the Green and river by visitors had decreased this year but there is a need to plan ahead based on current use. It was reiterated that it is essential that any application fulfils the obligations laid down by legislation. A middle way to accommodate use of green, view of river and wildlife habitat is needed. SD mentioned that according to one local contractor, they would usually deal with the application paperwork (in the same way as an architect does with planning applications). It was agreed to add this element to the 'without prejudice' letter of enquiries with contractors and suppliers. (see Item No. 5)

Although SD and JD felt that there was only a need for grass down to the water's edge if aqualogs were used, others felt there needs to be some low protection to prevent use by kayaks at the very weak points. Low planting where backfilling is needed for the gaps caused by kayaks (particularly the serious craft users) would discourage use in that small, vulnerable section. Paddle boarders are more likely to use the shallow areas on other bank. The ditch corner slopes downwards, planting to secure it would be low, but need to have strong roots to hold it. (Something like Iris rather than reeds). SD felt speed of current erosion is exacerbated by human activity and swans.

2. To consider planting options (details circulated herewith) *It was decided to delay choices of plants until after further technical advice had been received from contractors.*

3. To consider next steps on collecting residents' views on possible jetty option.

Any comments from residents will be collated as planned, but it was decided to delay recommending proposals to Parish Council until further technical advice had been received. In any event, this could be dealt with separately. JD not in favour of jetty.

4. Feedback from James Finch re landowner responsibility for long reed bed. *Cllr J. Finch had discussed with SCC officers. They confirmed that there was no obligation for them to manage the long reed bed, but he was awaiting a call from another officer re riparian rights. Inevitably, there is a budget issue. MG said that some land ownership deeds included riparian rights to the middle of a watercourse and therefore management of the riverbank area. The type of SCC rights and obligations needed to be verified. N. Cartwright asked about the details of the Parish Council Maintenance Licence. MG said Files back to building of bypass are in Parish Archive Store.*

Long Reed bed *This element is separate from the erosion problem but needs to be addressed urgently. There was further discussion about the history of reed clearance, EA change of policy, the*

licence agreement with guidelines made between Friends of Caley Green and Suffolk CC set up in 2017. This agreement still stands, but the volunteers involved were no longer able to carry out the work. In any event, this had been restricted to the wide area near Bear Street, not the long reed bed. SD will provide copy of 2017 licence.

The idea of creating a whole community project group of volunteers, negotiating a new agreement to include the long reed bed, annual maintenance including 'topping' the dead reeds was discussed. MG felt that a lot of new young families had moved into parish recently and perhaps this is something that they would wish to get involved with rather than just those living nearby. There could also be assistance from AONB Volunteers. Nayland Land Company could be involved on the other side of river. Some residents unhappy with current maintenance and suspected that any future planting would not be maintained but P Wilkie repeated that a proper maintenance plan would be essential and should be specified as part of a contract that is monitored regularly.

J. Finch said that there are similar problems in Waveney area and confirmed Ea reviewing whole of Stour for navigation clearance. At the other end of reed bed there is just about enough room for one canoe.

- 5. Feedback from Ned Cartwright on preparing draft letter of enquiry (to be approved by whole council).** Any other contractors? J Finch had forwarded details of a Sudbury company today: could be useful for reed bed management. MG would forward details of the contractor used by Bures PC to build jetty/revetment. Need to include a time scale for response stating interest and ask about preparation of paperwork.

Extra item: MG reported re criteria for grant applications and 'cash value' of contribution and time of volunteers as part of partnership funding. Need to keep River Stour Trust advised of progress. If grant being held is not used, it will be returned to RST.

Actions: SD to provide copy of the 2017 Licence for re-negotiation.
MG to circulate draft notes today.
NC to amend letter of enquiry for approval by whole council
JF to report back re further conversation with SCC land officers
Recommend delay of choice of plants and possibility of jetty until further river engineering technical advice received.

Notes taken by M George 6 Jan 2022