

The Thoburn Land Trust.

Minutes of a meeting of the Thoburn Land Trust

held on Wednesday 9 April 2025 at 7pm in Rolvenden Village Hall

Present: Councillors: A. Hinge (Chair), C.E Barham and S. Bryant,

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk.

1. Apologies for absence:

An apology for absence was received from Cllrs. Balch, Geerts and Green and the reasons for absence were accepted.

2. Declarations of interest:

Cllr. Barham declared an interest in the residual S106 funds.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 17 February 2025 were approved.

4. Finance

a) To receive information on the accounts

The Unity Trust Account balance as at the 31 March was £11,182.06. It was noted that the S106 grant has been received along with all the allotment rent. The Clerk was asked to issue an invoice to the tenant for the grazing of the parkland at a price of £30.00 an acre.

b) To receive an update on the new mandate

It was noted that Cllrs. Hinge and Balch are now signatories on the Unity Bank Account and that all the previous signatories have been removed. The Clerk has access to submit payments and view the account only.

c) To sign a letter to change the details of the online administrator

It was agreed for Cllr. Hinge to sign a letter instructing Unity Bank, as requested by them, to make the Clerk the online administrator for the Unity Bank Account.

5. Land Registry

Investigations by the Parish Council has revealed that only the allotments have been registered to the Parish Council in February 2023, title number K957751. The parkland, title number K806834, remains registered in Pat Thoburn's name and the executors and has never been transferred to the Parish Council. Thomson, Snell and Passmore, the solicitor acting for the executors, has sent the Clerk copies of the AS1 forms for the two land titles and a copy of the letter which were sent to Wellers, solicitor for the Parish Council, in November 2022. The Clerk has been in touch with Wellers who have requested the files from their archive storage facility and hope to have these by next week. Wellers will then investigate why the parkland was not registered to the Parish Council. Wellers have suggested to the Clerk that the same AS1 forms could be submitted to the Land Registry and would not need to be resigned. Councillors

agreed that the Parish Council, as the Corporate Trustee, should then take further action to enforce the restrictive covenants in the car park.

6. Charity Commission

The Trust is not currently registered with the Charity Commission because it did not meet their minimum annual income threshold of £5,000.00. However, the Clerk is hopeful that the S106 grant will be accepted as income meaning that the Trust could be registered with the Charity Commission. It was agreed that the Clerk should begin the process of registering the Thoburn Land Trust with the Charity Commission.

7. Future use of the Land

a) To receive an update from CLM

Baseline Survey.

It was noted that CLM have carried out a desk-based Constraints and Opportunities Assessment and intend to visit the site in May 2025 to confirm habitat classifications and to carry out an assessment of the trees.

Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)

CLM has advised the Clerk that the SFI funding is unlikely to be available until 2026 but that that capital work funding (fencing etc) will reopen this summer. Defra have also said the FiPL (Farming in Protected Landscapes) funding will be available through to 2026.

b) Rural Payments Agency Registration

It was noted that the Clerk has obtained all the login details for the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) and has forwarded these to CLM.

c) To discuss the next steps

Given the above possibility of grant funding for fencing reopening in the summer it was agreed to identify which fencing and tree works need to be done first. It was agreed that the fencing on the southerly section of the land needs to be replaced and that various trees need some remedial works. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotes in line with the DEFRA specification for a possible grant application. The Clerk will then need to contact the management of Great Maytham to advise them of these works. It was also suggested and agreed that the Clerk asks Tompsetts, the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contractor, for a quote to tidy up the trees bordering Maytham Road.

8. Date of the next meeting:

To be agreed at the next Full Council Meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.58pm

Signed:

Date: