

**Notes from Shurnhold Fields 'Friends of' Group Meeting at  
St Barnabas Church, Beanacre on 24 July 2018**

Several members of the public were in attendance with representatives from both Melksham Town Council (Cllr Richard Wiltshire) and Melksham Without Parish Council (Cllrs Richard Wood; John Glover; Paul Carter)

Following a recent site visit, it was asked if anything had occurred to people since then.

Members of the public raised the following points:

- Visit was helpful, but difficult to get perspective on what it will look like.
- Who will own site ***(The land was being transferred to Melksham Without Parish Council from Persimmon Homes)***
- Can anything we build on it? ***(The land is currently designated as public open space and you can only put a small building on the land relating to its use).***
- Who will be responsible for upkeep costs ***(This will be a shared cost between both councils)***
- Flooding a concern and whether footpath will be accessible. ***(An all-weather path will be installed. Flood experts will be involved, a Natural Flood Management Plan will be looking at ways to alleviate flooding in the area, including an attenuation pond)***
- Who will be responsible for locking the car park at night? ***(It is envisaged to have a small car park and it is hoped volunteers from the 'Friends Group' would come forward and assist with this)***
- Would plans disturb wildlife. ***(Consideration is being given to a wildflower meadow on part of site to encourage biodiversity, bat boxes could be installed)***
- What about the Himalayan Balsam and Black Thorn on the site. ***(This will be investigated and appropriate action taken)***
- Any rules on hunting. ***(It is illegal to hunt on public land)***
- What will happen to the existing hedgerow running between the 2 fields. ***(Would like to see this retained)***
- Allotments, do we need them. ***(It will be looked at whether they are needed and if so how many would be appropriate).***
- Could we have community allotments. ***(If the 'Friends Group' feel it would be appropriate to have community allotments, then cannot see no problem why not).***
- What about bees ***(Could be a possibility, this will need investigating)***
- Could BBQs be installed? ***(Up to Friends Group to consider)***
- Has any fund raising taken place for project? ***(Yes)***
- What will constitution of the 'Friends of' group be? ***(Have examples of various local groups, which could be looked at to help i.e. CAWs and BRAG. At a minimum will need a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and several committee members)***
- When will the 'Friends of Group' start? ***(Need to get experts in first to see what can be achieved and then go from there)***

Councillor Paul Carter reminded those present, if planning permission for a car park was not granted, the Working Group had decided that it would not be viable to go ahead with the project without it.

Feedback from members of the public present was that this should not be a stumbling block to the project not going ahead.

The meeting was informed that a site meeting with the Natural Flood Management Team had been arranged on 8 August at 10.00am if anyone wished to come along.

Those involved included: the Environment Agency; representatives from Wiltshire Council Drainage Team and the Countryside Officer; Bristol Avon Rivers Trust; Forestry Commission; Wiltshire Wildlife; Wessex Water and representatives from both councils.

The following agreed to come along to the meeting:

Sarah Woodruff  
Frank Roberts  
Roy Dobson  
Tia Smith

Emma Drage was suggested by the group as someone who might like to come along, as well as Phil Mason.

The meeting finished at 8.40pm and the Working Party convened their meeting. Whilst most residents left, one stayed for the meeting.