

DyFRA's response to the minutes of KPC's meeting Monday 18th July 2022 2pp.

In response to the requests in the minutes of 18th July 2022 Kempley Parish Council (KPC), described as Appendix 1:

47 Please note in reference to item 33 of the agenda of the meeting held on 16th May 2022 that KPC's only obligation at the time of the agreement with National Grid was to receive the funds for the project. The responsibility for the project's management lay with the *Wild Daffodil Project* a Dymock Forest Rural Action project (for further information about DyFRA, see below).

DyFRA's recent management of the road verges with the work of volunteers and contractors was outlined in its annual report to KPC's AGM of 7th June 2022. Since then, you have received the report on DyFRA's meeting with GCC Highways and Ecology, held 18th July 2022, which proposed a more extensive survey of our local verges, not just in Kempley, but also in Redmarley and Upleadon. As a result the GCC commissioned an initial visit made by Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records (GCER) to Kempley on 22nd August 2022 to review our Conservation Road Verges (pCRVs). A further visit is planned by Linda Moore for early next year at a better time for daffodil survey, and hopefully when the ground flora is less parched. Any data relating to 'baseline and current species diversity' may therefore be accessed through GCER.

Given the maturity of the verges project and KPC's renewed interest in the matter, this seems a good time for the parish council to assume the requested responsibility for liaison with the Highways contractors, Ringway, and the timing of their annual mowing visit to Kempley. As you will have noticed in early September, the hay cut of the verges, the wide splays, and the Forest England (FE) verges throughout the southern end of Kempley, Oxenhall and Upton Bishop have been flailed (including Hay Pitch) to ease the harvesting of the acorns, chestnuts and, especially, the Wild Service Tree seeds. The work is done by GCC Highways, FE subcontractors, our volunteers, and with some payments for labour and our mowers, by DyFRA in Kempley village. This has happened co-operatively with all concerned, through liaison on the ground for some ten years now.

48 The nature of parish activity has changed considerably over the last few years, from a time when the council was scarcely quorate and when many activities involving the churches, the village hall, the Daffodil Weekend, the paths and the pots were widely shared within the community, to the present, when the council is able to take a more active role with more carefully defined responsibilities. This has been an almost inevitable historical process.

For many years, the work of DyFRA and its volunteers has been a significant binding and galvanising social force. It has been involved in most aspects of village life and taken on activities which were either difficult or impossible for a parish council to manage. At the same time, DyFRA has always worked both within and beyond

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the immediate parish, bringing together villagers within The Golden Triangle in shared projects concerned with our history and landscape.

It is therefore a considerable concern that the very activities which once united us, in particular those involving the Daffodil Weekend, no longer engage all sectors of the community who are active in the working landscape throughout the year. We are all part of The Golden Triangle and, whatever our immediate parish loyalties, we have to do better to respond to the changing demands of landscape recovery and a broader community cohesion in a more cooperative and sensible manner. We feel sure that this can and must be rectified. However, DyFRA has no remit for this necessary diplomacy.

As for sharing the 'knowledge of events pre-dating the tenure of all current Parish Councillors', DyFRA would be very happy to make its extensive archive available to any councillor who may wish to access our information. Anything specifically related to parish council business is a matter of public record.**

DyFRA must continue to concentrate its efforts on wider issues if its climate campaign is to succeed. We welcome your suggested interest in the water catchment area of Kempley, specifically the rejuvenation of the Kempley Brook and its tributary springs and ditches, and how this might help to ease the flooding issues which affect the River Leadon downstream.

ABOUT DYFRA

DyFRA (Dymock Forest Rural Action) is a network of individuals and organisations with substantial experience in conservation and sustainable environmental action working in the Golden Triangle. Our mission is to maintain and develop, in a sustainable programme, the means of delivering economic benefit, climate mitigation, and enhanced landscape biodiversity to the local community.

DyFRA delivers an exemplar project of community woodland partnership; a model of co-ordination at grassroots level with statutory countryside agencies, wildlife and heritage groups, our district and parish councils, walking and cycling societies, small business contractors and a large body of volunteers. Working at the heart of the Dean Ridges and Leadon Vale, the group embraces the Wild Daffodil Project and manages recording the biodiversity of local flora and fauna as well as lobbying for action under the Climate and Nature Emergency resolutions.

DyFRA's work has concentrated on the Golden Triangle's 1200-acre public forest estate (Forestry England) with its contiguous margin of privately-owned forest, linked to ancient small woods of coppice woodland. Our iconic daffodils bloom widely across the district's woodland pasture and field margins. Formerly harvested

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and distributed to markets countrywide via the GWR network, they are now a major tourist attraction, at the heart of the "Daffodil Way and Poets' Paths" national trail.

Chris Bligh, Tim Rickard.

3rd September 2022

** on this subject a clarification of the 2020 Memorial Stone planting and Village Green maintenance is presented for the KPC Meeting 26.9.22