Minutes of the TGAA Committee meeting held at 14.00 on Thursday 28th January 2010 at 23 Chalfont Road, Oxford.

Present: Tony Hollander (chairman); Neil MacLennan (deputy chairman); Bob Crabtree (treasurer); Virginia Wallis (secretary); Vibeke Mannion (lettings secretary); Carol Jarvis (lettings secretary); Pete Jarvis (pest control); Jonathan Clark (website and machinery).

Apologies: Stuart Skyte.

Agenda

1 Formal objection to the closure of the level crossing

Stuart Skyte's view that fighting closure of the crossing was a waste of the Committee's time was noted. Also noted was advice from Deborah Caedel that we should formally object to closure because fighting the crossing closure gives us the opportunity to get a better alternative. It was also felt that we should abide by the majority view of the membership in favour of lodging a formal objection.

Action:

TH and JC to finalise the wording of the formal letter of objection and send it together with a copy of the submission sent to Chiltern Railways in May 2009.

2 Points arising from the meeting with county councillors and Nicola Blackwood

Earlier in the day members of the committee had met county councillors Rodney Rose (Cabinet Member for Transport Implementation) and Ian Hudspeth (Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure) together with Nicola Blackwood (prospective Tory parliamentary candidate for Abingdon and West Oxford) to show them what losing the level crossing would mean to allotment users. The councillors recommended that we both put in a formal objection on behalf of TGAA but also that we encourage our members to put in their own individual objections. They also advised that as each crossing within the overall Evergreen 3 plan should be looked at on its own merits it was worth emphasising the unique nature of our crossing. Nicola Blackwood offered to raise our concerns with the shadow Secretary of State for Transport and the shadow Environment Minister. She also suggested that a physical petition would be an effective tool in supporting any objection.

Action:

TH to send copies of our formal objection to the county councillors and Nicola Blackwood and also to Evan Harris MP.

VW to organise the petition and include details in an email updating the membership of the outcome of the crossing vote as well as information on how to submit an individual objection.

3 The proposed alternative or 'mitigation works'

It was agreed that given the lack of detail of the alternative to the crossing given in the Chiltern Railways' application, we should reject the planned alternative on those grounds. A more detailed plan of the alternative is available, however, although (as confirmed by Paul Clarke), it does not form part of the formal application. It was agreed that when seen in detail, the proposed ramp was not such a bad proposal after all and that it could be made to work with modifications. However, it was noted that no alternative gets over the problems that it will be further to go and there will be a gradient to climb. Discussions of the plans will be included at the TGAA AGM to be held on 31 March 2010.

Action:

JC to add the detailed plans to the crossing page on the TGAA website and organise a laminated copy to be put up on the allotment noticeboard.

4 Trustees

It has come to light the fact that we need to appoint two trustees. TH, PJ and JC all volunteered but the rules say that trustee vacancies should be filled at the next AGM.

Action:

VW to add election of trustees to the AGM agenda.

5 Rule changes

As agreed at the last committee meeting VW has been looking into possible rule changes in consultation with the lettings secretaries. A proposal for rule changes will be circulated with the Spring newsletter for agreement at the AGM.

6 Plant sale

It was agreed that this year's plant sale will be held on Sunday 2316 May 2010.
23 May was booked by somebody else.

7 Committee meetings

It was agreed that the Committee should fix quarterly meetings in advance starting with a meeting in the first week of March 2010.

The meeting ended at 16.00.