

## Emberton Country Park PLUG Minutes 13 June 2024

### Emberton Park Cafe

#### Attendees:

Chair & Olney Ward Councillor

Emberton Parish Council

Emberton Country Park Ranger

MKAA

Park User

MKCC, Emberton Country Park Manager

Olney Town Council

Meadow Brown/Emberton Cafe

MKCC, Projects and Development Manager Country Parks

Friends of Emberton Country Park

#### Apologies:

Portfolio Holder – Public Realm

Emberton Café, Meadow Brown Restaurants

Emberton Parish Council

Park user

Static Caravan representative

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made and apologies noted.
2. Notes and actions from previous meetings were accepted and actions complete. There was discussion regarding the successful bid for funds for the dissolved oxygen meter and the two new fishing swims

that have all been ordered. The dissolved oxygen meter is due this week and the swims should be installed in the next 6 weeks.

### 3. Development Update

MKCC Project and Development Manager relayed that a thorough parking review had been done in 2021 and the current arrangement had been considered the most viable option, as there is free parking available in Olney and the annual passes are reasonably priced. To offer options of length of stay on arrival would impact the time the queue takes to access the park (although the transmission method used in the past was slower) and the busiest days would leave the system open to abuse. The current provider will provide a cost to upgrade to ANPR so that payment is made for duration. However, this is not expected to be cheaper than it was last time this was reviewed. Other potential systems to be considered.

There was extensive discussion regarding the current issues and alternative arrangements in other locations. MKCC Project and Development Manager offered to provide leaflets for car windscreens showing the cost of the parking fob. This was discounted in case vehicle owners then accuse those putting leaflets on as vandals.

Emberton Parish Council reported that the Emberton Parish Council meeting with the organisers for the upcoming Lithuanian event had been very helpful as their concerns were heard and understood. MKCC Emberton Country Park Manager confirmed that Park Management and MKCC Licensing colleagues have been working closely with the organisers and that they had been actively encouraged to lay on coaches as people are travelling from other parts of the country to attend.

MKCC Project and Development Manager requested that a record is kept of the extent of the parking issue and was clear the decision on whether MKCC does make a change to the current arrangement is not down to PLUG to decide.

**Action: Emberton Parish Council to keep a record of the number of vehicles parked in restricted parking areas, including the Resident Parking area and those outside of these restricted areas whose owners are potentially accessing the park. MKCC Project and Development Manager to report back on potential solutions, including high level indicative costs.**

Following the wedding fair at Olney Town Council, Emberton Country Park is looking to offer the rally fields as a location for festival style weddings.

Also, looking to do market engagement for other activities that could be put on at Emberton.

There are upcoming nature well-being walks and a sketching group to start up again.

Emberton Parish Council explained that there is funding for school trips and there will be 94 children attending the park tomorrow. With advance notice, it was agreed that something could be arranged for wildlife talks and activity sheets provided.

There are upcoming repairs that are essential for safety, plus improve access for wheelchairs and prams around the locked gates as well as hard standing for the bins.

All available funds are to go towards improvements to play areas.

Green Flag was asked about. The Management Plan is regularly updated with all the progress that has been made. However, until new play equipment is installed it will not be awarded. Emberton Country Park Manager has completed his training as a Green Flag judge and is well aware of what is required.

#### 4. Operation Update

Emberton Country Park Manager said the new programme for wildlife walks has been set and the next is nothing on Sunday 23 June. The last one was enormously successful. The next dragonfly one is 30 June and there will be bat walks again later in the summer.

Crossroots MK will play this Sunday at Emberton Café.

The next volunteering event is Wednesday 19 June and will focus on bee hotels.

Raleigh Chopper bikes have been back recently and will return in September. The Lithuanian event was mentioned – the Mayor has been invited.

The sand and gravel that has been delivered is due to go in the mine soon.

The orchard was planted near the timeline wall recently.

The Rangers have completed fixed penalty notice training and will be able to issue fines for littering and dog fouling.

Results Base are putting on the triathlon 4 August. There was discussion around the layby being opened on the A509. MKCC Project and Development Manager explained that the appropriate process had been followed last year for this to be done. Olney Ward Councillor had been concerned about a marshal stepping onto the A509 to attract a cyclist's attention. This was discussed with Results Base. Olney Ward Councillor requested that the parishes be fully informed of the event and its timing.

Emberton Parish Council expressed concern at the speed cyclists come through the village and Park User added that other villages also experience issues.

**Update: MKCC Emberton Park Manager notified Results Base of concerns raised at meeting in particular speed of cyclists coming through Olney Road in the village. The route no longer goes along Olney Road. The route is below:**

<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/34347113>

**Following advice from the Safety Advisory Group Emberton Country Park Manager also advised Results Base to inform the local parish councils of the route they use so that residents can be given advance notice.**

**The running route is below:**

<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/43532728>

Swims have been cut back.

Youth workers will be bringing children in care on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in July and August for summer activities such as fishing and ball games.

## 5. Stakeholder Update

Emberton Park Café running well. Looking forward to better weather increasing visitors and revenue.

MKAA had nothing to report.

Olney Town Council nothing to report.

## 5. AOB

Olney Ward Councillor mentioned that the Rangers had been awarded a Corporate Leadership Team award for all their hard work. He queried why it has not yet appeared in Councillors' News. Also, Emberton Parish Council requested an update to go into the Parish Magazine.

**Action: MKCC Project and Development Manager to find out and update accordingly.**

### **Future meetings:**

Thursday 15 August 2024

Thursday 17 October 2024