

Emberton Country Park PLUG Minutes 17 October 2024

Via Teams

Attendees:

Chair & Olney Ward Councillor

MKCC, Projects and Development Manager Country Parks

MKCC, Emberton Country Park Manager

Olney Ward Councillor

Olney Town Council

Emberton Parish Council

Emberton Parish Council

Friends of Emberton Country Park

Sea Cadets

Apologies:

Emberton Park Sailing Club

Emberton Park Sailing Club

Meadow Brown/Emberton Cafe

Meadow Brown/Emberton Café

Static Caravan Representative

Park User

Park User

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies noted.
2. Notes and actions from previous meetings were discussed. Emberton Parish Council confirmed very little parking enforcement. Olney Ward Councillors have received parking enforcement reports and there have been two fines for violations in Emberton. Olney Ward Councillor queried cost to change

parking arrangements. MKCC Project and Development Manager said that current provider had quoted costs of over £60,000 to upgrade the current arrangement to ANPR and that was with existing equipment. In order to change to payment on access and allow both lanes to open (to prevent delays and traffic backing up on to A509) is over £20,000. Olney Ward Councillor said that this would need to be left due to the current economic climate that MKCC is facing and leave for at least a year.

Emberton Country Park Manager confirmed that black sacks had been attached to bins around the park for dog waste, however, this had led to issues with wildlife and caused more mess, so dog walkers are encouraged to carry their dog waste bags until they reach one of the MetroSTOR bins if they find the lids of the Eurobins too heavy to lift.

Rangers are warranted to issue fixed penalty notices to those that drop litter or leave dog waste. However, they can only do this if they witness the act. It was decided that this information could be provided in a positive way via social media to inform people that their cooperation is gratefully appreciated and for those that don't they could face a fine.

Action: Emberton Country Park Manager to create a Facebook post with the above message and share with the Olney Facebook page so that the message is shared with those from neighbouring locations.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

3. Development Update

MKCC Project and Development Manager said that as Emberton Country Park is 60 next year, we are looking to put on a 60's themed event and have consent to seek funding. Friends of Emberton Country Park suggested that former Ranger staff and employees be included, as the 50th event was very successful.

Olney Town Council said that St Peters and St Pauls will be 700 years old next year and there will be an event from the end of June to early July.

Action: MKCC Project and Development Manager and Emberton Country Park Manager to liaise with OTC to ensure there are no date clashes. Also, to continue to make arrangements for this event.

4. Operational Update

Emberton Country Park Manager updated that the Sailing Club had not been flooded. The café was burgled recently and their coffee machine, ice cream tricycle and the kindly donated mobility scooter were all taken. Emberton Country Park and the café had agreed how to manage the lending of the scooter and the announcement was planned for that week. Everyone agreed it was a senseless crime. The café will install CCTV.

Volunteers have planted 1000 native blue bells between the touring field and the meadow. Also a significant amount of snowberry were removed, an invasive, non-indigenous species.

The surface of the paths around the locked gates has been improved to benefit pedestrians, buggies, wheelchair and mobility scooter users.

New bin stores were well received in the static area.

There are plans to continue with the successful wildlife walks next year but may drop dragonfly walks. Will continue with bat walks and nothing with External Experts, as both are very popular. Also, will add walks with rangers, such as night safaris.

It was confirmed the black poplars are doing fine.

5. Updates From Park Stakeholders

Emberton Country Park Manager spoke for Sailing Club, as no one at the meeting. Mostly recovered from flood of 2021. Plans to coppice willow. Request to borrow OTC's chipper was agreed and the chippings will go to the allotments, as previously.

No one was available from the café, but their photography competition was very successful.

Static caravan rep not available. MKCC have eased the 20 year transfer rule and this has enabled some static owners to sell or transfer their van and leave the site. There have been a number required to leave and Olney Ward Councillor requested figures. There are 115 pitches, of which 87 are currently occupied (six left and seven came on). A site in Pavenham closed recently and a number of much newer vans have come to Emberton Country Park.

Sea Cadets updated how the Sea Cadets are moving their permanent location and they will put a container on at the former Results Base compound to store equipment. They have a 40th celebration coming up next year and are looking at orienteering activities at ECP.

Emberton Parish Council wants to know if café will consider a discount if people pay to come into the park. The Chair recommended a meeting between Emberton Parish Council, Meadow Brown Café MKCC Emberton Country Park Manager, MKCC Projects and Development Manager.

Action: Emberton Country Park Manager to book meeting.

6. AOB

Olney Ward Councillor said he will check re: Willen Lake Hospice Xmas tree collection again this year.

Action: Olney Ward Councillor to check re Willen.

Below are proposed dates of meetings for 2025. Future dates were discussed with the Olney Ward Councillor and the required frequency. Any concerns can be taken direct to the gatehouse or myself if they arise in advance of a meeting.

Future meetings:

Thursday 13 March 2025

Thursday 12 June 2025

Thursday 14 August 2025

Thursday 23 October 2025