

**Friends of Worts Meadow
Minutes of Committee Meeting
Thursday 10 April 2014**

1) Welcome, introductions and apologies.

Present: Frances Dipper (Chairman), Robert Humphrey (Secretary), David Pell (Treasurer), Dannie Gambell, Ray Gambell, Anna Bilton, Graeme Bilton, Ruth McArthur, Robert Stripe, Phil Clark, Melanie Hale.

Apologies: None.

2) Agreeing minutes of previous meeting (9 January 2014) as circulated.

The minutes were agreed.

3) Matters arising.

a. Dog waste posters for lamination and display. PC handed over posters he had prepared and laminated. FD said she would put these up at the three entrance gates. **Action FD**

b. Nets for barley straw. Richard Taylor had kindly provided some netting but these were bright blue and therefore not thought suitable for our purpose. GW will try to obtain some green netting along with some fresh straw. **Action GW**

c. Ragwort clearance. PC gave an update from Sarah Shepherd who had met with a representative of Natural England. Boom spraying is not permitted on our reserve. GW said that, in accordance with a previous authorisation, he had been spot treating the ragwort and thistles and was currently half way through completing the job. He had been spending 1 hour on this each Sunday for the last 6 weeks. The meeting thanked Guy for his efforts.

d. Facebook page. PC said this had now been set up under 'Friends of Worts Meadow' title. To access you need to register for Facebook then go to the site and click on 'Like'.

e. Notice Board. This will be put up during our Management Walk on 22 May.

4) Correspondence.

RH gave details as follows:

- Sarah Shepherd had advised by email that there were no funds in the year ended 31 March 2014 to pay for an improvement, by adding stones, to the central gate between the two meadows where it had become very muddy last winter. She had put this work on the list for the current financial year.
- Barbara Le Gallez had invited us to provide her with a short 'Nature Notes' for inclusion in the 'What's On' leaflet that she produces monthly for circulation to households in the village. This need not be every month only when there was something of interest to say. FD volunteered to do this. **Action FD**

5) Treasurer's Report.

DP handed out a statement showing our current financial position, we currently have £1997.45 in the bank.

FD said she will be claiming back £107.94 for the purchase of a newt spotting spotlight.

6. Group Training/Equipment.

a. Risk Assessment workshop. Carry forward to next meeting.

b. First Aid kit. PC handed this over to the group, many thanks to him for providing this. The kit will be kept in the Village Hall office on top of the cabinets and will be labeled. **Action RH**
We will need to review the contents annually and top up as necessary.

c. PC said there were no courses available yet.

d. Strimmer. GW said that he had purchased a strimmer which he will own, but use it on our behalf. He will claim for the petrol he uses whilst working on the reserve.

e. Moth traps. GW said he has looked on the internet and found that a portable moth trap is expensive. PC said he would bring his along on the Management Walk evening so that we could see what it looks like before we make a decision on purchasing one.

f. Spotlight for newt spotting. FD said she had purchased one for the group and it had been successfully used at our event on 28 March.

7. Events & Activities.

a. Report on events since last meeting.

Newt walk: Seventeen people attended this, our first public event of 2014. The weather was kind (unlike last year) and we were able to look at all the ponds and record the species and very approximate numbers of amphibians present. Deborah Marchant kindly introduced everyone to the subject. During the evening everyone had a chance to see and learn to identify Great Crested Newts, Common Newts, Common Frogs and Common Toads. Deborah played a recording of the calls of frogs and toads to help recognition. The main field pond had plenty of common newts and several large GCNs. The moat proved the best for GCNs with at least 10 spotted plus a couple of common newts, around 5 toads and two frogs. The Half Moon pond was disappointing with only a couple of common newts. The pond in the wood also had GCNs. The field ditches were too covered in weed and debris to see anything. Everyone enjoyed the evening including two newcomers who had not attended anything previously. The remaining stalwarts at the end of the evening adjourned to the Social Club to warm up.

b.

- Consolidating log piles. The meeting agreed not to proceed with this and to leave the logs in situ.
- Newt surveys. RG said we needed to have a strategy for this so that we produce scientific results. At present no dates were fixed.
RH to try to make contact with two students at Anglia Ruskin who do surveys for advice. **Action RH**
- July moth trapping evening. This was fixed for 26 July starting at 9pm.
- Informal moth trapping evenings. Until we have our own trap no dates were fixed.

8. Website.

GB said this has now been set up but there are no entries yet. The address is www.fowm.landbeachvillage.co.uk.

9. Ditch clearance by entrance gate to Bourne Wood.

FD said that the ditch here had become full because water was not flowing under the culvert. She was concerned that water was not draining from the soil in the wood and this may affect the health of trees. GW said that he checked the culvert with RH last autumn, after contractors had done some ditch clearance. The old clay pipe beneath the entrance had collapsed and there was no way for water to flow through.

PC said that Sarah Shepherd had advised him the contractors were due to check the ditch again to see whether there were still problems.

10) Any other business.

- RH asked if there was a volunteer prepared to represent FOWM on the Village Hall Management Committee. As no one came forward RH said he would continue but if it came to a vote he would be voting with his Village Hall Secretary hat on.
- Our AGM is on Thursday 8 May commencing at 7.30pm. Following the formal proceedings FD would give a slide show of our events last year, there would then be refreshments and weather permitting a bat walk commencing at 9pm.
- PC said that the annual get together of groups he overseas would be hosted by March Ring's End group on Saturday 28 June from 10am to 2pm, he will email details.
- FD said the bulbs we planted are coming up nicely. She had received a suggestion that we should spread wildflower seeds along the cycle path between Landbeach and Milton and perhaps also in Worts Meadow. Following a short discussion it was decided to leave a decision until later.
- GW said that he had been clearing some areas with his strimmer in particular round the moat and could he clear some bramble on the island. PC thought he should not clear this area.
- GW said he thought we should set up a bird feeding station in Bourne Wood. The meeting agreed this in principle.
PC said we may be able to obtain some sponsorship as March group had done and he would contact Scotsdales Garden Centre Horningsea to see if they can help.
- PC reported that Sarah Shepherd had informed him that the work to create a new pond was currently out to tender.
- FD said that the group logo had been emailed to everyone for use on correspondence.
- Our annual Management Walk was set for Thursday 22 May commencing at 6pm. This would be the basis for a new Management Plan.

11) Date of next meeting.

Our next quarterly meeting will be on Thursday 10 July Commencing at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.