

**Friends of Worts Meadow
Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 24th May 2017**

Present: Frances Dipper, David Pell, Robert Humphrey, Guy Warren, Ray Gambell, Dannie Gambell, Robert Stripe, Ruth McArthur, Maggie Stephens, John Buckley, Alison Buckley, Phil Clark.

Apologies for absence: Anna Bilton, Graeme Bilton, Andrew Stevens, Judy Stevens, Will Davies, Melanie Hale.

1. FD welcomed everyone to our AGM in particular PC who will give an illustrated talk at the end of the formal business. Thanks also to RS for providing the refreshments.

2. Agreeing the minutes of the 2016 AGM.

RS pointed out that under Item 4 Local Community Activities, fifth bullet point, line one that 'swift' should read 'swifts'.

Subject to this amendment the minutes were agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising from those minutes. None.

4. Report on the activities of FOWM over the last year.

Events

During the year we organised three public events namely:

- Moth trapping in July, where we identified 33 species – or rather Dr Peter Holt did
- Pond dipping in the rain in early September; this year adults outnumbered the children with 15 attendees in total including 3 Landbeach families who had not been before. The main field pond is now pretty muddy and the level was low but we still found plenty of invertebrates and their larvae including some lovely leeches as well as juvenile newts.
- An amphibian walk in March this year (2017) led by Froglife was well attended. The Half Moon pond is currently the only one to support good numbers of Great crested Newts. We are currently talking with Froglife with a view to them organising extensive improvement and management work to the 3 ponds in and on the edge of Bourne Wood (i.e. outside the ancient monument boundary) to improve their suitability and extent for amphibian populations.

Wildlife highlights

Our species recording sheet still hangs on the gate into Bourne Wood in spite of gale force winds and was well used with barn owls being one of the most common records. A single beautiful Bee Orchid was spotted along one of the edge paths. Last month (April) two white egrets were seen. We disregarded a record of a very large whale.....

Management

Our wooden bird boxes, scattered throughout Bourne Wood, were well used but many had been very badly damaged by woodpeckers and squirrels. So in March these were replaced with manufactured boxes made from Woodcrete. Hopefully the woodpeckers will now get headaches.

During the year work parties have been busy keeping the paths covered with wood chip (if anyone is having tree work done, please do contact us if you would like to give us the chippings); and in clearing scrub, nettles etc. from the entrances and around the two seats, especially where the spotted orchids come up in spring and summer.

We have recently had a site meeting with English Heritage, County Farms and Froglife to discuss remedial work on the moat and the main field pond which are within the Ancient Monument and both of which are being damaged around the edges by the tenant's cows and are becoming unsuitable for Great Crested Newts for this and other reasons. We are seeking permission to erect temporary electric fencing during the grazing season and to clear dense brambles in and around the moat.

The Chairman's report was proposed by RMcA and seconded by DP.

5. Treasurer's report on the finances of FOWM.

DP handed out a statement showing our income and expenditure over the last 12 months. These show that we have a balance of £1085.75 in our bank account.

That the accounts be accepted was proposed by GW and seconded by RG.

FD said there was no need to have a membership fee for the next year.

6. Election of the Management Committee for 2017-2018.

Richard Taylor stood down from the committee and Anna Bilton was willing to stand.

The nominations were:

Chairman	Frances Dipper
Treasurer	David Pell
Secretary	Robert Humphrey
Ordinary members	Robert Stripe
	Guy Warren
	Anna Bilton
	Phil Clark

Those nominated were elected by those present unanimously.

7. Amendments to the Constitution, if any. FD said no amendments had been proposed.

8. Any other business appropriate to the AGM.

- RG wondered whether anything could be done about the pond on the recreation ground that had been dry for many years now possibly as a result of a falling water table or the clay base being removed in error. It was agreed to consult Froglife about this when they next visited.
- WD via email had raised the question of the 'Spanish' Bluebells in Bourne Wood and suggested that next year when they are in flower they are identified and dug up. GW said that there was considerable variation in native bluebells and that he considered most of those in the wood fell within this definition. We should be careful what, if anything, we remove. It was agreed to look carefully in spring next year before taking any action.

9. Date of next Friends Group meeting.

The next quarterly meeting is on Wednesday 26 July at 7.30pm.

The date of the 2018 AGM will be determined later this year.

The meeting ended at 8pm.

Following the formal business PC gave an illustrated talk on Local Nature Reserves in Cambridgeshire similar to ours, explaining their important aspects and how they are managed by volunteer groups.