

Friends of Worts Meadow
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday 12 July 2012 Landbeach Village Hall

1) Welcome, introductions and apologies.

Present:

Anna Bilton AB, Graeme Bilton GB, Clive Brown CB, Frances Dipper FD,
Dannie Gambell DG, Ray Gambell RG, Robert Humphrey RH, Robert Stripe RS,
Guy Warren GW

Apologies: Iain Webb, David Pell, Melanie Hale and John MacMillan

2) Minutes of meeting on 26 April 2012.

The minutes as circulated were agreed.

Matters arising:

- a. Notice Board. Nothing new to report, however CB said he might have an old blackboard at work, which could be used, and he will investigate. **Action CB**
- b. Dog waste bins. The two extra bins and now been put up, RG said the Parish Council had decided on the sites, one along the High Street near the bus shelter and one in Waterbeach Road. RH asked if the dog waste bag dispenser could now be put up at the main entrance to Worts Meadow, it could be nailed to the kissing gatepost. FD said she would speak to Melanie Hale, the Parish Council chairperson, about this and also about waste bags the Parish Council had previously agreed to obtain. RH said he could keep the dispenser topped up if there was no one else. **Action FD**
- c. Insurance cover. RH stated that the Parish Clerk had informed him that our events and activities would be covered under the Parish Councils' policy providing we informed her in advance and she informs the insurance company. We also need to undertake a risk assessment.
- d. Record sheets. FD said she is still working on these. Carried forward to next meeting.

Correspondence

RH gave details of correspondence received since our last meeting.

- a. Email from Malcom Busby saying he may undertake more surveys of Great Crested Newts. FD said it would be good to receive results of all surveys undertaken on site and she will contact Malcolm for his results. **Action FD**
- b. Email from John Macmillan (County Farms) about trees felled in Bourne Wood by Butterfly Conservation without permission of Forestry Commission who funded our trees in the first place.
- c. Email from Sarah Shepherd (County Farms) saying farmer had agreed to graze cattle in one field at a time as an experiment. Also that farmer did not want ragwort sprayed but dug up and removed (See also 5a). She also said she had been unable to get a derogation from Natural England for spraying to take place.

3) Group training/Equipment

FD said a record should be kept of those members who had been trained and in what. **Action RH**

GW said equipment depends on what work we are going to do and it was agreed that at present we have no special requirements.

4) Events and Activities

a) Ragwort Clearance

Spraying could not take place (see 3c) and RH read out Phil Clark's thoughts that there was too much to pull up by hand.

GW suggested that we should at least cut off all the flower heads to prevent further seeding. This was agreed. We fixed first date as Wednesday 18 July at 7.30pm, when, using secateurs and protective gloves, we would cut off flower heads, bag up and GW would remove from site for disposal.

b) Coppicing in Bourne Wood

Sarah Shepherd has obtained funding and the work has been prescribed by the Forestry Commission.

Sarah is to meet with GW in August to mark those trees to be thinned.

The work is to be carried out next winter by contractors although we can do some of the coppicing of smaller branches.

GW to discuss with Sarah amount of our involvement. CB, who has a chain saw licence, expressed an interest in thinning out some of the larger trees selected. GW to tell CB when survey taking place so he can attend as well. **ActionGW**

c) Pond dipping

Suggested date Saturday 1 September starting 3pm. FD to lead and contact Phil Clark about nets etc.

Publicity required. **Action FD to contact Phil and RH to publicise event along with moth trapping once that event confirmed.**

d) Moth trapping

GW said his contact had equipment problems but he had hoped to confirm August date OK on 21 July. However, as this would be too late to get entry in August 'What's on' we agreed to postpone event to evening of Saturday 1 September on the same day pond-dipping event. GW to confirm date OK with contact before we publicise. **Action GW**

e) Publicity via programme of events card.

FD suggested we should fix all our 2013 event/activity dates early in the year and circulate event cards round the village. This was agreed.

Action RH put on agenda for January 2013 meeting.

f) Report on past events and activities

Two FOWM events have taken place since the last committee meeting in April. The first was a 'Wildlife Discovery Walk' led by Phil Clark immediately prior to the AGM and open meeting on 24th May 2012. Attendance was small but keen with about 8 participants. Phil was ably assisted by Jane Andrews-Gauvain, Olivia Maes and Lizzy Edson. Highlights were the song of a Reed Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat plus the sighting of a Speckled Wood butterfly.

The second event was a Bat Walk led by Iain Webb and attended by about 9 participants. Iain provided bat detection devices and participants were able to 'tune in' to the local bat conversations. In Bourne Wood several soprano pipistrelle bats were seen and heard. The weather was not ideal, as it was overcast, breezy and cool. Added interest was provided by the patch of Bee orchids temporarily cordoned off to prevent trampling. A visit was then made to the churchyard where more pipistrelles were detected along with brown long-eared bats.

g) FD said that tomorrow she is visiting our reserve with a botanist, Lynne Farrell, to see what plants are present.

5) Group logo and Website

CB suggested that we could ask children for their ideas on a logo for our group at the pond-dipping event on 1 September. It was thought there was some merit in this but FD thought we would need to give some guidance.

It was pointed out that we already have a page on the Landbeach.org website. RH and FD to get together to see if we can input directly to this and what capacity it has for photo's etc. **Action RH and FD**

6) Photo archive/Facebook page

Hold over to next meeting. In meantime RH to speak to someone outside group about setting up and operating a Facebook page.

RS said that if photos were displayed care needed to be taken with protected species not to identify the location.

Action RH

7) Risk Assessments

RH to request generic risk assessment forms from Phil Clark. Also ask him if training needed by assessor. Review again next meeting.

Action RH

8) Emmaus summer camp

FD said Anna McArthur had informed her that there would in fact be no spare time for the volunteers to help us.

9) Clause 4a of Constitution

RG handed over a draft amendment to paragraph 4b that he thought would cover his concerns. RH to hold draft and circulate with 2013 AGM agenda.

10) Items carried forward from previous meeting

- a. As no one from County Farms was present the signing of the MOU by both sides was carried forward again.
- b. RH had emailed David Kenny at English Heritage for an update on the silt survey/removal. He read out the reply that Quinton Carroll from the Cambs. CC Archaeology Office will set things in motion as soon as possible and David will let us know when the fieldwork begins.

11) Signing of declaration by the Management Committee as per 5j of our Constitution.

Declaration signed by those members present.

12) Bank Account

Our Treasurer was unable to attend but FD said there was a slight hiccup in the paperwork she had sent to the bank. This had been sorted and our account should be fully open shortly (this week).

13) Any other business

RH said he had been told by people using the reserve about holes in the meadow (dug by rabbits?) that were not visible because they were overgrown by grass. There was a danger of someone losing their footing and falling. It was agreed we would identify these holes and fill in during the autumn when the grass was shorter and they could be seen. RG suggested that if silt was removed from the moat we could use some of it to fill in the holes.

Action agenda item next meeting

GW asked if there was any objection to the temporary footpath diversion he had made in Bourne Wood being made permanent. This would protect the bee orchids and allow them to spread. This was agreed but FD asked if it could be made tidier. **Action GW**

GW asked if FD could obtain a licence to survey the Great Crested Newts. She said she would look into this. **Action FD**

GW asked if, when we had our budget, we could obtain a couple of bat detectors for the group. It was thought this was a good idea.

Action agenda item next meeting

FD said we must keep a record of where seeds were spread or plants moved to. We could then monitor the results. GW said he would do this.

GW thought there was a need to stop dogs entering the pond in the 'half moon' area. We could repair some of the existing fencing but we might need some sheep netting to complete the job and perhaps County Farms could supply some.

Action assess requirements before next meeting.

14) Date of next meeting

This is on Thursday 18 October starting at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.05 and RS expressed everyone's thanks to FD for chairing the meeting so efficiently.