Friends of Worts Meadow

Minutes of Committee Meeting Wednesday 27th April 2022 Landbeach Village Hall 7.30 pm
Present: Frances Dipper (Chairman), David Pell (Treasurer), Robert Humphrey (Secretary), Neville Diver, Robert Stripe, Graham Ballard, Steve Robertson, Garry Ellwood, Anna Bilton,

Deborah Ahmad (CCC).

1. Introduction and apologies:
Apologies had been received from Anne Bullman, Claire Perrott and Ray Gambell.

FD welcomed those attending and thanked those who also attended the work party this morning.

2. Agreeing the Minutes of the previous meeting (26th January as circulated).
The Minutes were agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising that are not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

- Wording for new information board at Bourne Wood entrance.
  Carry forward to our next meeting. In the meantime any suggestions should be sent to DA or FD
- Fixing main entrance gates.
  Done.
- Repairing culvert.
  DA reported that this was in hand, there were funds for this and a quote from a contractor was awaited.
- Key required for main gate.
  DA reported that Phil Clark is having one cut.
  For information keys to the electric fence battery boxes are held by FD and DA. They should be contacted if the power supply to the fence needs to be turned off.
- Consider acquiring bee boxes.
  CP had a factsheet on how to make these. DA has details of where they can be purchased which she will forward to FD or RH. Examples to be circulated prior to decision. **Action DA**
- A copy of our 2022/2023 Work Programme and our Risk Assessment of our activities to be sent to the Parish Council.
  RH to send the Work Programme. **Action RH** (done)
  DA to send CP a copy of a CCC Risk Assessment to be used as the basis for our own. CP to prepare Risk Assessment for circulation to the committee and copy to be forwarded to the Parish Council. **Action DA & CP**

- Report on opening up the ride on the southern boundary carried out by Cambridge Conservation Volunteers and completed by our group.
  This had been completed. The section not completed by the volunteers had been done by GE.
  FD said that she had sent an email of thanks to Cambridge Conservation Volunteers.
  CP had offered to reduce the size of the brash which remained but the committee decided to leave it as it is as it will rot down and provide a home for wildlife.
  GE said that to maintain a 2 metre wide ride we needed to keep cutting back each year.
- Putting up donated bat boxes, fix date.
  FD offered to do this with her husband ASAP. **Action FD**

4. Management issues:

4a. Review of 2022/2023 Work Programme where the Friends Group is the sole or joint delivery agent and the objective is from February to April.

- Re-install electric fencing around moat and pond.
  Done at today's work party.
- Ongoing control of Spear/creeping thistle and ragwort.
  FD reported that Guy Warren is no longer able to do this. It was decided not to do spot treatment in future but to cut off any flower heads and remove them from the site to prevent seeding.
  Action All
- Maintain paths with more wood chip as and when available.
  This will re-commence once the culvert is repaired allowing safe access.
- Carry out Great Crested Newt survey to establish population size.
  FD said that this was done on 22nd March.
- With CCC undertake site safety inspection.
  FD said that together with DA a management review had been undertaken and some items flagged up.
- Carry out annual monitoring of all reptile and amphibian species.
  Ongoing. Further corrugated metal sheets were being donated by Peter Hatley who would deliver them to us. CP and FD would meet to put them out around the reserve. **Action CP & F** (done)

4b. Review of 2022/2023 Work Programme where the Friends Group is the sole or joint delivery agent and the objective is from May to July.

- Undertake yearly monitoring of our Water Vole population.
  DA reported that she had seen evidence that Water Voles are still present and will forward photographic evidence for circulation.
- Breeding bird survey.
  Members are going to undertake a visual check during May to see if birds are entering our small hole nest boxes. RH will undertake a survey of other birds present during the breeding season.
  Action RH
- Count of orchid flower spikes.
  FD said she is happy to do this again. **Action FD**
- Continue monitoring reptile and amphibian species.
  Checks to be made under existing and additional corrugated metal sheets. Sheets to be numbered and results of checks recorded. **Action all**
- Monitor water dropwort around moat pond.
  To be undertaken during July.
  DA said it will be interesting to see what effect our electric fence has been since the plant likes soil that has been poached by cattle and the fence put up last year prevents this.

5. Tree thinning and future planting.

We have lost some Ash trees from gales and disease and others may succumb.
We need to think about replacement native trees. FD suggested Limes, Hornbeams and Hazel.
DA and FD are going to meet for a walk to investigate requirements. **Action DA and FD**
GE said that Matt Redman has some oak tree saplings left over from planting on his farm and it was agreed GE would enquire about availability.

GE subsequently thought that this was the wrong time of year to plant saplings unless we kept them well watered. He thinks we should obtain some in the autumn and plant them then.

6. Correspondence.
None.

7. Treasurers Report.
DP handed out statements showing our recent transactions and that we have a balance in hand of £639.63.

8. Group training/equipment.
As per previous minutes we still require a Brushcutter training course.

9. Events and Activities.
9a. Report on activities since our last meeting:-
Work parties:-
23rd February, cleared away storm damage to make site safe. Particular thanks to GE and Dee Cooper.
23rd March, continued work on south boundary ride including moving the brash further away from the path. Also brambles cut back around the moat.
27th April, electric fence around pond and moat re-instated. Additional battery box installed and system checked in working order. Also bench seat at orchid glade rubbed down prior to re-painting.

Amphibian survey on 22nd March. FD will circulate a report. **Action FD**

9b**.** Future events.

- Dawn chorus on 7th May starting at 6 am followed by breakfast kindly supplied by FD and her husband John.
- Pond dipping. Event fixed for 20th August starting at 2 pm and led by Frances.
- Campfire sing song. To be organized by the Forest School ladies as a 'Thank you' for letting them use Bourne Wood for their training sessions. This will be a low key event and provisionally will take place on 6th September.
- Halloween event. Per email CP will provide further thoughts on this at our July meeting.

10. Nomination of our representative to the Village Hall Management Committee for 2022/2023.
RH said he was willing to stand again and was elected.

11. Any other business.

- DA said she would be starting a newsletter to be sent out to similar local groups.
- AB asked about the amount of reed mace in the moat. DA said this should get removed when the moat is dredged.

12. AGM on 25th May. Discuss whether we are having a speaker and refreshments.
Following a discussion it was decided that FD would prepare a quiz similar to last year rather than having a speaker. **Action FD**
RS kindly offered to provide the wine and cheese again. **Action RS**
RS said he would be standing down from the committee at the AGM.

13. Date of our next quarterly meeting.
This will take place on Wednesday 27th July commencing at 7.30 pm.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm.