Friends of Worts Meadow
Minutes of Committee Meeting Wednesday 27th July 2022 7.30pm Landbeach Village Hall.

Present: Frances Dipper (Chairman), Robert Humphrey (Secretary), Deborah Ahmad (CCC), Claire Perrott, Neville Diver, Robert Stripe.

1. Introduction and apologies:
Apologies had been received from Anne Bullman, David Pell, Anna Bilton, Graeme Bilton**,** Ray Gambell and Steve Robertson.

2. Agreeing the Minutes of the previous meeting (27th April as circulated).
The Minutes were agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising where they are not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

- Wording for new information board at Bourne Wood entrance.
  At the request of FD, DA will provide her with the dimensions of the proposed board. FD will then work out how many words/photos can be included on it. **Action DA (***Done)* **& FD**
- Repairing culvert.
  DA said Phil Clark has the funds but is awaiting quotes for the work.
- Key required for main gate.
  DA said she needed to get an update from Phil Clark on this. **Action DA**
- Consider acquiring bee boxes.
  FD to send DA a photo of one she had seen in France**.** **Action FD**
  Subsequent to the meeting FD and DA have exchanged examples/guidance.
- A copy of our 2022/2023 Risk Assessment of our activities to be sent to the Parish Council.
  Following receipt of an example Risk Assessment from DA, CP will now go ahead and draft a simple form for consideration. **Action CP**
- Putting up donated bat boxes.
  FD apologised that this had not been done yet. She and her husband will do this with their tall ladder ASAP. **Action FD**

4. Management issues.

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

- Undertake yearly monitoring of water vole population.
  DA said MKA Ecology had recently carried out a survey but the results had yet to be reported to her.
- Breeding bird survey.
  RH said that in addition to the birds noted on our dawn chorus walk and nest box survey, he had checked for birds holding territory in late April/early May. It was agreed he would pass the results to FD. **Action RH** *(Done)*
- Count of Orchid flower spikes.
  FD said she had found around 7 spikes of Common Spotted Orchid in the cleared area by the bench.
- Continue monitoring reptile and amphibian species.
  CP will continue this by checking under the corrugated metal sheets. So far two grass snakes had been found on different dates and under different sheets so it could be just one present.

- Monitor water dropwort around moat pond.
  FD wondered if this was still present, but will check again. Possibly presence will be included in the ecologists report.

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

- Ongoing control of spear/creeping thistle and ragwort.
  A reminder to keep cutting off the flower heads and removing them from the site before they seed. FD said Guy Warren was participating in this. **Action all**
- Cut and rake orchid areas within the wood.
  A job for our September work party although ND may do some work prior to this by cutting back any tree saplings.
- Maintain paths with wood chip as and when available.
  As previously reported we cannot take any wood chip until the culvert is repaired. FD said we had recently had to turn down the offer of a load.
- Install a small bee hotel.
  See Item 3, 4th bullet point above.
- Cut and rake off selected areas around woodland edge ponds.
  FD reported that Roland had recently undertaken the cutting part of this objective and that these had been raked away by the Work Party today. Results were clear to see with more wild flower species and butterflies present.
- New information board at entrance to woodland edge ponds area.
  See Item 3, 1st bullet point above.
- Enhancement of woodland pond area. Repair fence and create open water.
  DA said that 10 volunteers from Bidwells were looking to spend a day helping on a nature reserve on 15th September. DA and PC thought Worts Meadow LNR would be a good location for this. It was agreed this was a task they could tackle.
- Remove overgrown vegetation from the ditch between the two meadows.
  Bidwells volunteers to undertake this if they have time.
- Continue monitoring our water vole population.
  Individual observations to continue and be recorded. **Action all**
- Continue monitoring water dropwort around main pond.
  FD said she would make another check. **Action FD**

5. Tree thinning and future planting.
DA, FD and CP agreed to meet on site on 25th August to discuss this. **Action DA, FD & CP**

6. **Correspondence.**
RH said the only item was an email from John Macmillan (County Farms) querying where the culvert problem was. Phil Clark had answered this.

7. Treasurers report.
In the absence of DP, RH said that the only change since our last meeting was £20 subscription paid to the Fen Edge Community Association and £20 paid to Landbeach Village Hall for our April meeting. We had yet to receive an invoice for our AGM in May. Current bank balance was £599.63.

8. Group training/equipment.
Training requirements were as per previous meetings.

Gloves. DA to supply gloves for the Bidwells volunteers after which we could retain them and FD agreed to store them.
CP suggested a check is made of the First Aid kit to identify anything out of date and that such a check is made annually. RH offered to check this year. **Action RH**

9. Events and Activities.

9a**.** Report on events since our last committee meeting.

- Work parties. 25th May- general maintenance
  29th June- cutting back pathways in particular entrance from Akeman Street plus brambles around woodland edge ponds.
  27th July – cutting back vegetation around woodland seats, raking away cuttings from Roland's work around woodland edge ponds and preliminary work at wood pond.
- Dawn chorus walk and breakfast on 27th May.
  See report in AGM Minutes.
- Nest box survey.
  RH had circulated the results to those who participated but for the record:-
  Observations were made at 23 small hole boxes, 7 (probably 8) were being used by Blue Tits and 6 (probably 7) by Great Tits. Of the 6 new boxes put up in late winter, only 1 was in use because squirrels had enlarged the holes. These have since been repaired so hopefully will be used next year.

9b. Future events.

- Pond dipping on 20th August starting at 2 pm. Already advertised in Fen Edge News and 'What's On' in Landbeach. FD to put up posters plus item on Landbeach FB page nearer the date. **Action FD**
- Campfire singsong in the wood with Forest School ladies in September.
  DA to check with them for confirmation and details. **Action DA**
- Visit by Cambridgeshire W.I. in September.
  Per ABu this proposed visit will now be in the spring of 2023.
- Proposed visit by 10 volunteers from a company wishing to spend a day working on a nature reserve on 15th September.
  DA had received a request from Bidwells and it was thought Worts Meadow would be a good location and they could tackle repairing the fence and clearing vegetation around the woodland pond under her supervision.
  RH to negotiate making the Village Hall toilets available for the rate charged to football matches on the recreation ground. Cost to be met by FOWM. RH to report back to DA next week, she will hold Village Hall key for the event, building to be locked when not in use.
  Action RH *(Done)*

- Halloween event.
  CP suggested this was postponed until 2023 and this was agreed.

10. Reported dog problem. Revised poster?
There was a short discussion following a complaint about the aggressive dog behaviour of an out of control dog towards other dogs during May. The Parish Council had put a notice to dog walkers in the village newsletter for June and the poster on the main gate to Worts Meadow instructed that dogs should be kept on a lead when in the same field as cattle. No other action was deemed necessary at this point but RH would let the complainant know. **Action RH** *(Done)*

11. Any other business.

- ND thought we should be able to plant some trees in the first two meadows to provide shade for cattle. It was thought that Historic England would object to this but DA will ask Phil Clark. **Action DA**
- RH raised a matter on behalf of SR. Did the large pile of cuttings in the woodland edge ponds area create a fire risk from spontaneous combustion during hot weather which could quickly spread to Bourne Wood if the wind was in the right direction?
  DA said she would do some research and also ask Phil Clarke**.** **Action DA (***Done)*
- FD thanked RH for applying wood stain to both our wooden benches.

12. Date of our next quarterly meeting.
This will be on 26th October.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm.