FRIENDS OF WORTS MEADOW
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 9 May 2013 at Landbeach Village Hall

Present:

Frances Dipper, David Pell, Robert Humphrey, Robert Stripe, Anna Bilton, Graeme Bilton, Dannie Gambell, Ray Gambell, Phil Clark, Melanie Hale, Ruth McArthur, Judy Stevens, Andrew Stevens

1. **Welcome**, introductions and apologies.

FD opened the meeting by welcoming those present to our second Annual General Meeting. Apologies were received from Clive Brown and Guy Warren.

2. **Agreeing the minutes** of the 2012 AGM.

Apart from the following minor amendments:
- Page 2 under 'Other Notices and Events' third paragraph change third word from 'the' to 'today's'.
- Page 3 second bullet point insert colon after word 'need'.

the minutes were proposed as correct by RS and seconded by RG.

3. **Matters arising** from those minutes.

There were no matters arising.

4. **Report on activities** over year by Chairman:

As you all probably know, Worts Meadow including Bourne Wood, officially became a Local Nature Reserve in 2011. The Friends of Worts Meadow LNR was set up to help Cambridgeshire County Council deliver the management of the site. The stated aims are:

- To assist with the management of Worts Meadow Local Nature Reserve, enhancing, improving and protecting its archaeology, wildlife and farming interest for current and future generations.
- To involve and encourage the local community to use the site.
- To monitor and record the sites wildlife.
- To maintain and improve physical and intellectual access to the site.

Progress for the year is summarized below:

<u>Management activities</u>

<u>Bourne Wood</u>. In December 2012 a proportion (about 20% in theory) of the field maple and other multi-stemmed trees were coppiced, at the instigation of the County Council and the Forestry Commission. The aim was to open up the canopy and allow the better quality trees to develop and to provide open areas for butterflies and understory plants. FOWM produced publicity to tell residents what was happening to their wood and why. We also spread the resultant chippings on the paths which helped

alleviate their waterlogged state. We were given permission to allow Landbeach residents to take some of the logged wood in return for a suggested contribution to FOWM funds. The remaining wood will be piled to provide homes for insects, newts and other wildlife.
Ragwort. The meadow has a problem with ragwort and thistle. We are currently discussing with County Farms the best way to deal with this. Spraying is restricted due to the status of the site which is now in Higher Level Stewardship Agreement, in place since 1st January. Last year we tried digging them up but the timing was too late.
Ponds. The wood pond has been fenced to keep dogs out and this has resulted in its colonisation by Great Crested Newts. We will hopefully be able to fence the half moon pond at the edge of the wood as well.

Involvement of the Local Community/Activities
The FOWM has 15 officially signed up members but a much wider circle of interested people. During the year we have organised several public events designed to encourage people to enjoy and learn about the wildlife of the reserve. These included:

- a 'wildlife discovery walk' around the reserve at the May 2012 AGM
- a bat walk using bat detectors in June where we 'tuned in' to soprano pipistrelle bats
- a pond dipping event in September where 9 children showed 15 adults how to get wet and muddy
- a torch lit amphibian walk this month (April 2013), postponed from the icy blasts of March, where we saw, heard and recorded great crested newts, smooth newts and toads

We have further activities planned for this year including more pond dipping on 31st August, a fungus foray on 12th October and possibly some moth trapping.

Monitoring and Recording Wildlife
We now have a system for recording wildlife sightings online using the Biological Records Centre online recording portal called iRecord. We have our very own Worts Meadow recording form within that system. We are currently working to teach and encourage more people to use the system. Those without online access give their records to us on paper and I enter them.

In July last year Dr Lynne Farrell (Botanical Society of the British Isles and former senior ecologist with English Nature) came at our invitation to carry out an initial botanical survey of the field part of the site and recorded around 100 species.
Equipment/reference books. We have purchased 3 bat detectors and a series of FSC foldout guides to various groups such as butterflies and birds. These are kept in the Village Hall Office and are available for anyone to borrow.

Acknowledgements
We have had considerable help with our events from the Parish Council, County Council and Wildlife Trusts for which we are most grateful.

The Chairman's report was proposed by GB and seconded by DG

5. Treasurer's report on finances of FOWM

DP presented our accounts showing that at today's date we had a balance on account of £2567.67.
Income consisted of a grant of £2400 from Cambridgeshire County Council and £410 from the sale of wood.
Expenditure consisted of £13.80 hire charge for Village Hall and £228.53 for purchase of bat detectors.

The report and accounts were proposed by AB and seconded by RM.

6. Election of Management Committee

The existing officers and ordinary members were all willing to stand again and no further nominations had been received. MH proposed that the existing committee was re-elected en bloc. RM seconded this and there was a unanimous vote in favour.
The Management Committee is therefore:
Chairman- Frances Dipper
Treasurer- David Pell
Secretary- Robert Humphrey
Ordinary members- Phil Clark, Ray Gambell, Robert Stripe and Guy Warren

7. Amendments to the Constitution

The following amendment was proposed by RG and seconded by GB as an addition to Clause 4b:

In particular, young people with the support of their parent/guardian, are encouraged to become involved in the activities of FOWM.

This was passed unanimously.

8. Any other business

PC on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council thanked the group for a 'good job' over the last year and was pleased the group was working well.

FD wanted to thank Jane Andrews-Gauvain and Deborah Marchant for the help and support they had given to our events over the last 12 months.

9. Dates of next Friends Group meeting and next AGM

Our next meeting is on Thursday 11 July and the date of our 2014 AGM will be determined later this year.

Appendix

Prior to the AGM many members, plus John Buckley participated in a management walk around Worts Meadow LNR. The following matters that arose during the walk and also in informal discussions after the AGM can be discussed further at our July meeting.

- Log piles to be amalgamated- method of stacking and timing
- Ragwort- no automated puller available, consider hand pulling again.
- Coppiced tree stumps should ideally be covered with brash to prevent deer eating new shoots however no brash left from last autumn's tree thinning and brash from previous thinning already in wildlife friendly piles.
- Bird nest boxes-see if Emmaus can make some for us, if not, purchase from RSPB. Metal plates for nest boxes with two different size holes are available separately from RSPB.
- Moth trapping event- PC has equipment that is battery operated and offered to bring this to an event with suggested date 11/12 July in particular to see if the white-spotted pinion moth can be located. (Subsequently PC thinks this may be too early in the year for this species and has proposed 31 August/1 September instead. This will follow on from our pond dipping event).
- Landbeach Events Committee are holding a garden party on 6 July and have invited village societies/groups to have a stall to promote themselves/raise funds, there would be no charge but groups need to supply table etc.
  Agreed to participate, PC said we could borrow his display boards but we would need more up to date photos.