Friends of Worts Meadow
Minutes of Committee Meeting
Thursday 9 April 2015

1) Welcome, introductions and apologies.
Present: Frances Dipper (Chairman), Robert Humphrey (Secretary), David Pell (Treasurer), Lorna Thomsen (County Farms), Robert Stripe, Guy Warren, Ray Gambell, Dannie Gambell, Ruth McArthur, Graeme Bilton, Anna Bilton, Richard Taylor, Neville Diver.

Apologies for absence: Phil Clark, Dick Newell.

FD opened the meeting and welcomed Lorna Thomsen to her first meeting with us.

2) Agreeing the minutes of our previous meeting on 12 February.
These were agreed subject to amendment of the wording at item 4d which should read 'PC is developing a grant application for this work'.

3) Matters arising that are not covered elsewhere in the minutes.

3a. Dog waste posters.
Following our last meeting PC had circulated an example of a sign in use on other reserves for our approval or comments. Opinion was that the wording was OK but RG thought the font used was wrong and needed to be more easily readable. FD to re-design with different font then send to PC for a couple of signs to be made preferably in metal. **Action FD**

3b. Notice Board.
FD has obtained an A5 ring-binder with waterproof pages. She will hang this from the entrance notice board with a pencil so that visitors can record their interesting sightings in the reserve. She will leave just one page in the binder and replace each time it is full of records. **Action FD**

4. Management issues.

4a. Removing silt from moat. Per email from PC there is no progress on this at the moment.
4b. Bourne Wood seat needing repair. RH said that he had been waiting for the ground to dry out before attempting to detach the broken section for replacement, he hoped to do this soon.
(*Now dismantled thanks to Steve Anderson, replacement part pending.)* **Action RH**
4c. Eradication of Spanish bluebell. GW reported that he had dug up 90% of them.
4d. Topping vegetation in meadows. Per email from PC he has not yet been able to contact the tenant farmer, Richard Holland but he would keep trying. **Action PC**
4e Spot treating ragwort. GW reported that he has started on this again. FD asked him to tell us if he needs any help.

5. Correspondence.
RH reported that he had been sent details about the National Plant Survey where volunteers were required to undertake surveys in a selected 1km square. If anyone was interested see him for full details.

6. Treasurer's Report.
DP said that since our last meeting the only item of expenditure was £19 for the hire of the Village Hall.

7. Risk assessment of our activities in the Village Hall.
RH said that all regular user groups were being asked again to undertake a risk assessment of their activities in the hall and to record their findings on the form provided. RH said he had done the assessment and passed the completed form to FD to review and sign as Chairman, before it is sent back to the Village Hall committee. (*Now done).*

8. Group training/Equipment.
8a. Any requirements.
DP said he would like to be put down for any future Strimmer/Brush cutter training. **PC to note.**
FD has purchased a butterfly/moth net which we can try out this summer and if it is successful we can consider purchasing our own.

9. Events and Activities.
9a. Report on events since our last meeting.

- Wood chippings spread on pathway. RH reported that the load of chippings donated by Andrew Stevens was spread on 20 February and preceding days. Thanks to members DP, FD, RH plus Neville Diver, Steve Anderson, John Attwood and John Buckley. RH said we could do with much more as we only covered about 80% of one of the four sides. RH asked LT if she could help and she said she would put the word out.
- Replacing nest boxes. GW said that he had put up 10 new boxes to replace the damaged ones plus one new box for woodpeckers. In addition the 4 open fronted boxes were OK and are still up. RH has converted 1 of the damaged boxes to open fronted and put it back up and FD has 2 others to do likewise after repairs.
  The boxes will be numbered when we take them down for inspection and cleaning out in the autumn.
- Newt walk. FD reported that this had taken place on 31 March with 5 adults and 2 children attending. There was no activity apart from the pond in Bourne Wood where at least 6 Great Crested Newts were seen. FD said she would have a follow up walk on 16th April, anyone wishing to take part could meet her at the main pond at 8.30pm.

9b. Future events.

- 6 July, bat walk to be led by Iain Webb. Meet in the Village Hall car park at 9pm, visiting Bourne Wood, the Parish Church and Frances's garden in that order.
  RH has already put a short article in Fen Edge News giving details of the event and it is also now on the Waterbeach Community Association website diary. RH to have entry put in July 'What's On.' RG volunteered to prepare and put up posters in the village if FD gave him a copy of last year's poster to work from. (*Ray in due course if you let me have 4 copies I can get them put up in Waterbeach, R H)*
  Action RH FD & RG
  Bat detector batteries need to be charged up before the event, RH to let FD have these plus the charger before the event. **Action RH & FD**
  Risk assessment required before the event.

- 15 August (revised date), pond dipping led by FD. Meet by the main pond at 2.30pm.
  RH to get event put into next Fen Edge News diary, Waterbeach Community Association website diary and August 'What's On'. **Action RH**
  Responsibility for posters, discuss at the next meeting.
  Risk assessment required before the event. RH to notify Parish Clerk of changed date.

- 15 August, Moth trapping to be led by Peter Holt late evening (time to be confirmed at next meeting). Members can attend if they wish.
- 16 August, inspection of moth traps and identification of species before release led by Peter Holt. Event to be held in the Village Hall lounge starting at 8am. As usual we will be providing breakfast.
  RH to book Village Hall lounge from 8am to 10am. **Action RH**
  Catering arrangements to be discussed at next meeting.
  RH to get event put in the next Fen Edge News diary, Waterbeach Community Association website diary and August 'What's On'. **Action RH**
  Responsibility for posters, discuss at next meeting.
  (*If someone would like to do a short article on both these events to go into the next Beach News I can provide the contact details but the deadline for receipt* is *24 April, RH).*
- Swift evening. Dick Newell is away on 6 July so this cannot be combined with the Bat Walk. RH will discuss with Dick the possibility of an event in July if there is a 'Good Show' at the Church this summer.
- Fungus foray. By email PC said he is waiting to hear back from Lucy Evans who led our walk last autumn.
- FD thought we should think about holding an indoor meeting next winter with a speaker, this will be discussed at a future meeting.

10. Any other business.

- GW said he was about to phase out the bird feeding. He said the cost of food this winter was about £200. We were grateful to RT for providing a considerable amount of bird food free. RT said he would let GW know if he could obtain some next winter.
  It was agreed we would see how our finances were at our October meeting before deciding whether to finance bird food at this level from group funds.
- FD said that there was going to be a 24 hour bio-blitz at the University Botanic Gardens from 5pm on 12 June to 5pm on 13 June which she is leading the pond dipping. Anyone can attend and she will check whether there will be an entry charge to the Botanic Gardens for those taking part. **Action FD**
- RH said that RT was stepping down as our representative on the Village Hall Management Committee. He asked if anyone who was not already on the committee, representing another user group, wished to fill the post. There were no volunteers.
- RH reminded members that we have 3 bat detectors that were available to be borrowed but the batteries would need re-charging.
- RH apologised that he would be away on the AGM date, perhaps someone else would like to provide the refreshments. FD volunteered. **Action FD**
- RH asked for any proposed amendments to our constitution to be notified to him by 1 May, he will circulate any with the AGM agenda.

11. Date of next meeting.

The AGM takes place on 14 May commencing at 7.30pm.
The next quarterly meeting is on 9 July commencing at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.