Friends of Worts Meadow
Minutes of Committee Meeting Wednesday 26th April 2017

1. Welcome, introductions, apologies and notification of the Fire Procedures and emergency exit.
FD made the usual introductions and thanked Elaine Humphrey for supplying the cake.

Present: Frances Dipper (Chairman), Robert Humphrey (Secretary), Robert Stripe, Ray Gambell, Graeme Bilton, Phil Clark, Guy Warren.
Apologies for absence: David Pell, Dannie Gambell, Richard Taylor, Ruth McArthur, Anna Bilton.

2. Agreeing the minutes of the previous meeting (25th January) as circulated.
These were agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising that are not covered elsewhere in the agenda.
a. Joining Waterbeach Community association. RH said we were now members and read out the section of their latest minutes which welcomed us and looked forward to meeting with the group and perhaps receiving articles for inclusion in Beach News.

4. Management issues:
a. Annual work programme.

- Item 2b. Control of spear/creeping thistle and ragwort. GW said that he was continuing with spot treatment as usual. He treated around 150 plants every 4 weeks. FD thanked him for this and said his results showed a big improvement. She asked him to let her know if he ever required any assistance.
- Items 2c and 4c. Clearance of scrub in half moon area and clearance of bankside brambles by a contractor.
  RG reported that he had spoken to Peter Hatley to see if he could undertake this work but he was unable to spare the time.
  PC suggested that this was a task Amey volunteers could undertake in September after the bird nesting season. This suggestion was agreed by all and will be discussed further on the annual management walk.

b. Construction of a 'Bug Hotel' by Amey volunteers. PC will organise this and supervise, suggested dates to be given to them are September 6th, 13th and 20th. **Action PC**

c. RH said there was a rotten post by the kissing gate from the first to second meadows on the side of the moat adjacent to the reserve boundary. GW said there was another fence post leaning over by the entrance to Bourne Wood adjacent to the water trough. PC said he will mention these to Anna Hicks. **Action PC**

5. Attracting new members.
a. Stand at Waterbeach Feast. It was agreed this will go ahead and RH handed FD a pitch booking form he had downloaded.

- FD to supply the gazebo, mini pond dipping demonstration, and man the stand along with GB and perhaps DP. **Action FD**
- PC to supply tables, display boards with photographs (if anyone has new photographs put them on our Facebook page and Phil can use them as well as those he has), clipboard with log sheet that visitors to the stand can add their details and flyers to hand out giving our details.
  Action PC

b. Display at the Tithe Barn on 24-25 June. It was agreed we would have an unmanned display in the barn using the display items from the Waterbeach Feast event and more flyers. It was suggested that the stand also had a map showing how visitors could find Worts Meadow from the Tithe Barn should they wish to visit it also.

c. Any other ideas.
PC said that he was organising a display in Waterbeach Library during May and there would be flyers giving our details.
RG said we might also like to have a display at the Church Garden Party on 15th July.

6. Correspondence.
None.

7. Treasurer's report.
RH handed out copies of our latest financial position as supplied by DP. Since our last meeting we had spent £19.60 on Village hall hire, £300.38 on bird boxes and poo bags and £20 on Waterbeach Community Association subscription. The balance in the bank is now £1140.35.

8. Group training/equipment.
PC said that he now had funds to run a Brushcutter training course and volunteers should make him aware of their interest. FD said she was interested and thought DP had expressed an interest in the past.
Action all interested.
PC also said he had funds to acquire a pedestrian mower with a likely purchase date of September. It would be available to all his groups but 2 people from each group must be trained first. Possible use for us would be in the half-moon area once the scrub had been cleared.
PC now has a supply of hand tools so approach him if we have any requirements.

9. Events & Activities.
a. Reports on events since the last meeting.

- Putting up new nest boxes. RH reported that 8 Schwegler nest boxes had been put up in Bourne Wood by FD, GW, DP and himself on 19th February and that a further 4 boxes were put up on 30th March, 2 of which are in the meadow boundary trees.
  GW said that already a squirrel had enlarged the hole of one of the boxes. It was agreed we would review the position in the autumn and decide the next action.
- Amphibian walk on 15th March. GW said this was attended by himself and Melanie Hale from our group and about 8 others. Froglife led the walk, they were good and very keen. They were interested in improving all our ponds to benefit amphibians but the work they envisaged might cost £20,000.
  30+ Great Crested Newts were observed in the original half-moon area pond but few elsewhere.

b. Future events.

- Site visit to review the management of Great Crested Newts. PC announced that this will take place tomorrow commencing at 3pm. Representatives from English Heritage, County Farms and Froglife would be present.
- Bird walk. This will take place on 13th May commencing at 10am. PC to let FD have some posters. **Action PC**

- Moth trapping. FD to contact Peter Holt to fix a date if he is prepared to come again. Once the date is known PC to be informed so that he can list the event on the flyer to be handed out at the Waterbeach Feast. The group to be informed if the event is prior to our next quarterly meeting. It was agreed that in view of the small number that attended last year's event we would not hire the Village Hall. **Action FD**
- Pond dipping 26th August. Discuss further at our July meeting.
- Annual site management walk. This was arranged for 1st June commencing at 7pm.

10. Annual General Meeting on 24th May.
RS volunteered to provide the refreshments.
FD said she would accept the nomination as Chairman for another year. Hopefully by next year our recruitment campaign may have attracted a new member prepared to take on the role.
The existing committee members are prepared to be nominated again apart from Richard Taylor but Anna Bilton is prepared to be nominated. Any further nominations to be notified to RH by 17th May.
Following the formal business PC will give a presentation on the Cambridgeshire nature reserves under his umbrella.
RH to send out the agenda on 9th May along with the minutes of last year's meeting and a copy of our Constitution as requested by RS. Email to request people to 'like us' on Facebook. **Action RH**

11. Any other business.
- RG suggested that next year we hold a joint Landbeach Society/FOWM meeting where an updated version of the talk by PC on the Cambridgeshire nature reserves he oversees could be given to a wider audience. This was agreed.
- FD said she had collected some winter aconite seeds that could be sown in Bourne Wood. GW said if he gave these to him he would sow them next autumn in a suitable area. **Action FD & GW**
- GW suggested we could put up some bat boxes, it was agreed to discuss this further at a future meeting.

12. Date of the next meeting.
Our Annual General Meeting is on Wednesday 24th May and our next quarterly meeting on Wednesday 26th July.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.