

Minutes of Friends of Haddon Wood
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held on Thursday, 13th May, 2015 at the Alhampton Inn, Alhampton

Present: FHWC, Margy Cockburn, Jessica Leach, Andrew Leach

Apologies: Stewart Gould, Maureen Hawes, David Kerr, Chrys and Mike Henning, Anne and Ian Telfer, Fiona de Fontblanque, Heather Edwards, Alf and Jill Brummel

MINUTES

ACTION

1 **Minutes of the last meeting** signed by HH as a true record

2 **Chair's Report**

HH welcomed all to the meeting before outlining events from the Friends group's second year, yet again, a very busy one:

May:

- There was a thistle-pulling session on one of the hottest days last year, when a stoic group pulled hundreds of plants in F2. The difference is apparent, but a concerted effort will be needed in this orchard this year.

June:

- Two gateways were gravelled to make access easier
- Alhampton Open Gardens, in aid of the wood, raised an astonishing £1000. Special thanks to those who opened gardens, sold refreshments, plants and tools, helped with ticket sales and signage and baked for the teas.
- One failure – we had to accept by June that the Yellow Rattle, sown in November '13, had failed to germinate in the proposed wild flower areas. We were advised that it might happen in Spring '15 but that hasn't happened

August:

- saw the completion of the pond. Hopefully its siting is understood, thanks to Roger Hutton's brilliant explanation about the topography and drainage and it certainly seems to be a success – particularly as swans, geese and ducks, seen visiting, together with evidence of deer. Wildflower seed sown in Spring is producing gratifying results, though it's proving as hard as ever to keep everyone off it while it establishes.

October:

- Brush-cutter training was undertaken by three Friends, all of whom are now Lantra qualified
- A grant of £1000 was received from John Crossley (DC), which will be used towards a locally sourced, green oak picnic bench

November:

- FHWC visited Dave Boyer's farm to see his (slightly more mature) woodland and pond. It was decided not to take any marginals from him, but rather to wait and see what appears naturally at Haddon.
- Several Friends turned out to help plant the remaining alder and willow around the pond
- Six members of the committee underwent intensive first

aid training, so that a qualified person can be at all public events

- Haddon Wood had a write-up in the Guardian, courtesy of local contacts

December:

- a week before Christmas – later than planned due to a mild Autumn delaying the lifting of fruit trees, the orchard was planted. HH took the opportunity to give special thanks to the family and friends of Bill Hutton, who died earlier last year. For many years he farmed the land on which Haddon now stands and his family had asked for donations for the wood at his funeral. The final total exceeded £500, which purchased more than half the trees for the orchard. Bill's son and daughter, Roger and Sarah, helped enormously with the planting, which was far a more intricate process than the rest of the woodland, with mulch mats and hand-cut tree guards.

Ongoing issues:

- **Jacob's Lane parking area** – Despite much discussion with the WT about the damage to the parking by the gate and the resultant flooding across West Lane, no official action took place, so Mark spent some time repairing the damage to the surface, only to have it ruined 24 hours later by a parked lorry
- **Dog poo** – the apparently never-ending battle to educate dog walkers to pick up after their hounds continues
- **Pond** – the replacement tape, put up to keep people from walking the banks round the pond while everything settles and the wild flowers establish, broke within a couple of days, so it is hoped that continued use of signage will work on all but the most stubborn walkers.
- **Wild flowers** round the pond are beginning to come through nicely
- **Water aid** installation by the pond is not something the WT want to pursue, though the new manager may feel differently
- **Water Troughs** – much confusion abounds as to how much it would cost to retain them and who pays at the moment. Roger Hutton may have the answer
- **Special thanks** this year to the committee, with particularly mention of:
 - **Nick** who did all the planning, ordering and planting co-ordination as well as a lot of work planting the orchard
 - **Jo** who, along with Mark, raised an amazing £110 from tea and cakes on Open Garden day and who keeps everything in order re Health & Safety
 - **Mark** for his wonderful grass path cutting
 - **Rose** for her photography and with things like her photographic exhibition at Dicheat fête, gets valuable publicity for the wood
 - **Nell** for managing to take minutes at some (despite HH's best efforts) undisciplined meetings and for the blog

- **Gert** whose plant and tool sales at Open Gardens raised £180, plus his incredible work rate planting the orchard
- **Additional special thanks to**
 - The Hutton family for advice about the pond and the orchard
 - Alf Brummell for simply spotting things that need to be dealt with in the wood and getting on with them eg thistles
 - All those Friends who are real stalwarts and turn up regularly when help is needed with planting, or thistles, or in fact anything else that is asked of them

3 Treasurer's Report

Report attached –

In summary:

- Income included £1000 from Mendip DC, £1205 from donations (including from the Hutton family), £1000.73 from the Open Gardens
- Outgoings include investment in training on both brush-cutting and first aid
- Year end balance - £2982.46

4 Election of Officers

Per the constitution, all committee members resigned. All, however, expressed a willingness to stand again and were duly re-elected.

5 Secretary: Nell - Proposed by HH, seconded by RH:
Unanimously approved

Treasurer: Jo – Proposed by NT, seconded by MC:
Unanimously approved

Chair: Hil – Proposed by RH, seconded by NMH: Unanimously approved

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| 1. NT to contact Justin Millward re running costs of a similar sized wood | NT |
| 2. An Extraordinary meeting will be called re leasing in late Autumn | |
| 3. JC reminded those present of the need to keep on fundraising | |
| 4. NT to email orchard plans and variety info sheets | NT |

There being no further business, HH closed the meeting just after 8pm.