

The Hoppit Woodland & Waterways Steering Group  
Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Dove Cottage at 7:30p.m.

## Minutes of Meeting

1. Members Present & Apologies:

Members Present

Steve Robbins (Chair)	(860304)	crossgreeners@btinternet.com
Kevin Voller (Treasurer)	(861688)	kevin.voller@btopenworld.com
Howard Simpson (Secretary)	(860138)	howard.simpson@bakerhughes.com
Richard Blackwell		richard.blackwell99@outlook.com
Alan Cushion	(860527)	alancushion63@gmail.com
Rhona Allen	(860990)	Rhona.allen@icloud.com
Ben Dowman		dowmanben@gmail.com

Apologies

Gerry Baxter  
Katherine Barlow (PC Rep)  
Brian Fearnley  
Mike Challis

Not Present

Pete Richardson  
Steve Giddings  
Caroline Giddings

Visitors

Mick Evans		mickevans60@btinternet.com
John Sweet (in personal capacity)		
Teresa Davies	(07928 512588)	Teresa.Davis@midsuffolk.gov.uk

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (12<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023)

The minutes were accepted as being an accurate representation of the proceedings.

Matters arising from the minutes:

- The Parish Clerk has been contacted re: annual bank statements, and these were forthcoming. Item closed.
- Committee members who were not present were contacted and have agreed to continue on the committee. Item closed.
- Instead of hiring a heavy-duty mower, a special wheeled strimmer was hired which was reasonably successful, although bits of plastic line kept breaking off. Item closed.

- Martin Durie & Joe Westrup flailed the brambles in early October, leaving plenty of cover for the wildlife. Jack, part of Martin Durie's team, carried out the bi-annual hedge cutting. Their invoices have been paid. Item closed.
- Mike C. was going to contact Chris Bridge from Scrub-Up Britain about ground-nesting birds. Item remains open.
- Howard failed to contact Ed van Ek of the Woodland Trust. Item remains open.
- The information boards still need new pinboards so we can affix notices. Item remains open.
- Pete Richardson was informally asked about sponsorship, but no funding from Aspalls is likely. Item closed.
- Denbury Homes – nothing has been forthcoming from our approaches, but Councillor Jane Baldwin has had some success. John Sweet to forward the Denbury contact name to Howard.
- Calendars – see later in these minutes. Item closed.
- Steve contacted Peter Huish. Item closed.

### 3. Treasurer's Update

Kevin presented the following financial activity:

#### Spending:

- Durie Partners were paid for hedge trimming at £384 excl. VAT.
- Cost of Fencing £350 incl. VAT
- Steve R. was reimbursed for strimmer fuel at £23.99.
- Calendar printing costs of £373 were not mentioned in the update, but will offset some of the income shown below.

#### Income:

- £950 received for calendar sales with £25 to come.

The balances are:

- Current Account: £990.26
- Deposit Account: £7,352.58
- Total: £8,342.84

### 4. Updates on recent activity

#### a. Calendar sales

This has been a big success, with only 3 out of 100 remaining unsold, generated sales of £975. Costs of printing were £373 resulting in profit of about £600. Next year, it is agreed we will solicit photos from public, and add a credit to the photographers. The calendars were of high enough quality, we don't need anything better. Mike will coordinate soliciting photos from the public on social media.

#### b. Fencing at lower entrance to lake

This has been completed, using treated wood which should last a minimum of 15 years.

c. Condition of bridleway

This is regarding the bridleway between the top of the cinder path and the gap to the path to Kenton Road. It is the responsibility of the Footpaths Agency (part of SCC) and the Landowner.

We have received a letter from SCC Highways - Rights of Way Officer. They will arrange an inspection.

d. Tool storage

Tools are currently kept in various places. There had been a discussion with the Parish Clerk Shed on whether we could use the shed at the edge of the recreation ground. It was decided to leave the situation as is.

e. Committee membership & GDPR

HS explained the annual GDPR requirement to explicitly ask committee members and visitors for permission to circulate their contact details in the minutes. Action HS: Those that were not present will be asked, before their personal details are shared in this way.

Mike Evans agreed to serve as a full committee member.

5. Update from Parish Council (if any)

None

6. Open Day – Steve R.

SR proposed having an open day in the summer for extra publicity, with activities such as storytelling with John Rowe, participation from the RSPB & Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Solicit donations. After discussion it was decided to leave this until next summer as it might be short notice to book visiting organisations.

7. Arts and nature project – Mike C.

In his absence, Mike sent a suggestion for a project to celebrate the diverse wildlife at the Hoppit, to encourage other people to use the woodland, engaging with schools, scouts, etc, maybe to use the area differently to how it is used now. Funding may be available. This would not necessarily be a money-making initiative.

It was agreed to follow up and discuss further.

Teresa has contacted Vicky, the Acting Head at the SRH Primary School. Vicky is keen to have pupils act as volunteers for whatever event takes place at the lake.

Action: Mick, Steve and Howard to meet informally with Mike and hopefully instigate something this summer. Alan offered any practical help that may be needed.

#### 8. Future funding

Calendars – Mike to solicit public as discussed.

Denbury Homes – Howard to make contact.

Could we run a 100 club? This was rejected because it was thought there is too much regulation with us being part of the Parish Council.

Annual raffle? - No

It was decided our finances are fairly healthy and no urgent fundraising is needed at this time.

Teresa pointed out she has a locality budget that we could apply for, but it must be something specific.

#### 9. Future working parties – dates and activities

During the next working party, we should pay attention to:

- State of paths around lake - grass ingress needs scraping.
- Either side of the bridge – suffering with wear and tear. We could use some 2mm thick checkerplate, attached to bridge. Alan to purchase suitably sized pieces. We should cement under the boards.
- Tackling self-seeded alders

Date of working party: Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April 10:00am-12:00

#### 10. A.O.B.

Poaching of fish. This was in AOB of last meeting. We will proceed with installation of 'catch & release' signs on the fishing platforms, in Styrofoam or aluminium. John Sweet will order two signs, which he will kindly gift to the Hoppit.

#### 11. Dates for future meetings

AGM: September 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm in Dove Cottage.