

Minutes of the AGM of the Friends of Selsdon Wood held on Monday 27th March 2023 at the 8pm in the Forestdale Forum.

Present as main committee/management group:

Heather Govier (Chair), Ted Forsyth (Vice-Chair), Linda Morris (Secretary), Karen Hall (Treasurer), Jim Dunning (Seats, benches and boxes etc), Neale Fox (H&S manager), John Bickerstaff (Insurance reviewer), Steve Budd (Bat adviser, DMMBFS stock keeper and Facebook manager) assisted by Ruth Budd.

Others attending: Sandra Crapper, John Zareba, Sarah and Colin Gardner and Chris Green

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Christian Kuepers, Tony Flecchia, Karen Fox and Paula Bagnall.
2. Minutes of AGM – 28th March 2022 - These had been previously circulated and placed on the website archive and were now unanimously approved. There were no matters arising.
3. Election of Executive Officers and management ‘committee’ - All had indicated they were willing to continue and so were duly elected unopposed. Steve Budd introduced Chris Green who was in the process of gradually taking over duties relating to the bat programme, the DMMBFS and Facebook from him and Ruth prior to their move away from the area. Linda gave copies of the 3 keys to the store room and ‘office’ padlocks to him and gave the receipt for these to the Treasurer for reimbursement to her of the cost of £36.
4. Report from the Chair - The report had already been circulated and archived so HG simply highlighted the main aspects of the year’s work and how it fitted with FSW’s aims. She thanked all those present (and those workers who were unable to attend) for all their time, effort and support during the year on all the various projects – giving special mention to the Budds, wishing them well in their eventual house move, and to the tree-cutting crew who had more work than usual to do following the big winter storms.

She was appreciative of Ted’s role in leading the regular work programme and also thanked Linda (assisted by Jim) for facilitating the work sessions attended by a small Outreach team of vulnerable persons brought to the wood by GrowWild. It was hoped these sessions would be able to continue in the coming year about once a month as their help with the basic tasks they were able to do was invaluable.

Continuing the ecological work theme, HG commented, amongst other things, on the planting of some donated juniper trees, management of the BB and removal of laurel – this latter task being helped considerably by a work day by the TCV team. It was hoped to continue with this in the autumn as it was getting too late in the season to do much more now.

She thanked JD for his work arranging for and collecting new / renovated benches and seats and plaques where necessary and the subsequent siting of the items at the appropriate points FSW had identified in the wood. It was noted that the next to be renovated was probably the one in the car park area. JD had also made many nest boxes (mainly for tits etc). He would now try to make some for birds who preferred open fronted boxes e.g. robins and use a similarly styled design to make some new leaflet containers which should

hopefully be less prone to vandalism. He would also try to make use of an old church box as another nest box.

Litter picking had continued throughout the wood by a band of regular walkers – and HG had augmented the council service by emptying the FSW dog poo bin at the top of F1. The weight of the bag taking the bin contents to the main litter bins every two days or so proved the need for the regular collection of this waste!

Finally, HG thanked LM and her team of helpers (many of whom were not actual FSW members) for their work on the Open Day as, apart from the subs, this was our main source of income. She was pleased to report that LM hoped to continue this event in the same format in 2023.

5. Treasurer's Report - KH had circulated the annual report and accounts and they were now archived on the website. She thanked Alan Williams for reviewing these again this year. The report and accounts were approved by the meeting and she was thanked for her work since taking over from Sandra Crapper, who was, in turn, thanked for giving her time to deal with the recent application for our Gift Aid payment. This had resulted in FSW receiving an additional £1034 from subs and donations.

In response to a question from Chris Green, it was explained that FSW received Gift Aid by virtue of a HMRC number but was not able to be described as a registered charity. Unfortunately, this could prevent companies using potential links with us (e.g. team-building events on work days etc) as they would not be able to benefit from them as tax-reduction incentives.

It was agreed that no papers needed to be kept after 6 years (as required by HMRC) especially as all important items were scanned and archived. Any older than 6 years should be shredded to comply with GDPR.

6. Membership fee - It was noted that FSW had 127 subscribed members but that there were approximately 300 on the newsletter mailing list. This includes many lapsed members as receipt of newsletters may prompt them to re-join or donate.

It was agreed that the annual sub should be maintained as a minimum of £5 per household. Very often, people added extra to this anyway but it was felt best left to their discretion rather than increasing the sub overall and so having to ask members to change their SO to a different figure.

7. Projects - Other than the routine woodland management work and informative walks etc, the current main projects are the BB, the DMMBFS and the renovation of the Linden Glade pool. These were considered in more detail in the business meeting immediately following this AGM.

8. AOB – there was none that would not be discussed at that meeting too.

The AGM ended at 20.55