

GUNTON WOODLAND COMMUNITY PROJECT

Chairman: David Briggs Secretary: Barry Shimmield

MINUTES of the 19th Annual General Meeting held at Gunton Primary Academy, Gainsborough Drive held on Wednesday 13th April 2016, starting at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT. David Briggs (Chairman), Barry Shimmield (Secretary), Carol Murray (Treasurer), Rosemary Briggs (Merchandise), John Dickerson (Web site manager), Mo Dickerson (Minutes Secretary), Janet Field, Councillors Keith Patience and Janet Craig
Guest Speaker Mr. Simon Partridge
A total of 46 members attended.

- **Apologies for Absence**

Chris Chapman

Mayor Stephen Ardley, Cllr. Mary Rudd

Mel Canham, Colin & Beverley Fitt, Paul & Jenny Domaingue

Apologies from a number of other members as notified.

- **Minutes of the 18th AGM**

After welcoming everyone to the meeting, the Chairman gave a short summary of the minutes from the previous meeting. Full copies were available at the front desk.

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by John Dickerson, seconded by Daphne Williams and they were approved and signed.

- **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman started by thanking the committee for their support, Rosemary for organising most of the trips and social events and all the workers for their hard work. We have now achieved more than 40,000 hours of work on more than 2,000 work parties.

This year we have had the main path re-surfaced, which has proved to be very successful. The chairman thanked councillors Keith Patience and Janet Craig for their financial support in funding the project and also the Rights of Way Officer who covered the shortfall on the second phase.

The annual bird box survey found that 25 had been used for nesting, which is about the same as last year, so hopefully the numbers are starting to stabilise after one or two years which showed a slight decrease.

The annual tree inspection showed only a few trees needed attention. GWCP have completed all the work designated to them, but there is still some work for Waveney Norse to do.

The away trip to Kent in May was very successful, with some people saying it was the best one so far! In June we had a lovely day trip to Framlingham and then onto Shawsgate vineyard.

Rosemary organised another of her very popular Fish and Chip Bingo evenings.

In December, as usual, a full coach set off to the Snape Christmas show and it was agreed that we should book it again for this year.

In January we held our annual Christmas dinner at the Lowestoft College, which was not quite as successful as other years, so we may look for somewhere new next year.

Also in January, Terry Balls and his group CIRC64 provided us with a fund-raising evening, when more than 50 members danced and sang the night away.

This year we have helped GWBP to plant more than 6,000 trees in the burial park and some of the men have helped with the construction of fences and gates.

In February we were once again awarded Level 5 – Outstanding, by the RHS and Anglia in Bloom. Finally, the chairman thanked all volunteers for their continued hard work and support.

A full copy of the Chairman's report is attached as Appendix 1.

- **Treasurer's Report.**

The Secretary then presented the annual accounts.

He thanked Carol for her work as Treasurer and Graham Lawson for auditing the accounts.

He explained this is the first year that Gunton Wood and Foxburrow A/Cs have been joined together, which makes good sense as most of the expenditure covers both woods – tools, materials and insurance etc.

Gunton Wood	Surplus for the year	£1951.52
	Balance at Y/E	£8169.38

The secretary highlighted some of the main points of the accounts.

The surplus of £1951.52 is the largest we've ever had and is mainly due to the very generous donations we've been given during this year.

We received £1200 in memorial donations for two of our members who sadly passed away this year – Brian Channing and Marie Fuller.

We received £750 from Pleasurewood Hills, for which thanks are due to Chris Chapman who lead the negotiations with PwH manager Liam Holmes, to secure their sponsorship. PwH occasionally ask for our help, which has included putting in the steps at the railway bridge, and cutting down trees in the PwH meadow and the lower end of the main path.

Other income came from the CIRCA64 gig, the bingo evening, calendar sales and various other one-off donations.

The secretary then gave brief details of some of the expenses, including the purchase of a second hand tractor and new wheels and tyres. There is always a need for timber, tools and fencing posts etc. There was also the cost of safety clothing and travel for John Dickerson's chainsaw course. The course itself was paid for by Waveney Norse.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Daphne Williams, seconded by Val Shimmield and was carried unanimously.

- **Guest Speaker.**

The chairman then introduced the guest speaker, Mr. Simon Partridge, who gave a very entertaining talk, with slides, about the How Hill nature reserve at Ludham.

He gave a brief history of the house and surrounding area. Mr. & Mrs. Boardman built the house in 1905, as a holiday home, but with the outbreak of World War 1, the house was doubled in size and the whole family moved to How Hill. Mr. Boardman died in 1950 and then when in 1960, Mrs. Boardman died, the eldest son sold the house and 360 acres of surrounding land, to the Norfolk County Council Education dept. A residential Environment Centre for Norfolk school children was created. In 1980 it was sold again, to Norwich Union and in 1984 the How Hill Trust was created. Courses for children are held almost every week during term time and the children stay for a week. Activities include pond dipping, laboratory research and lessons in reed thatching. The main purpose of the centre is environmental education, but the grounds are open to the public and guided tours are available. During school holidays, the lecture room is turned into a visitor cafe and other fund raising events include wedding receptions, Christmas meals and music concerts.

At the end of his talk Simon answered questions and confirmed that the Swallowtail butterfly can be seen in June; 80% of the children who attend courses come from Norfolk schools, but there are some that come from Suffolk; the Boardman family still own a large acreage of land around the reserve, and still give a lot of support to the trust.

The chairman thanked Mr. Partridge for his very interesting and entertaining talk and gave him a donation of £30 for The How Hill Trust.

- **Election of Committee.**

There was only one nomination for each position and all existing members of the Committee were willing to stand again for re-election so a vote was taken en bloc, proposed by Dave Banham seconded by Ivor Drew. The vote was unanimously accepted.

- Chairman : David Briggs, proposed by Colin Fitt, seconded by Mel Canham.
- Secretary : Barry Shimmield, proposed by Jean Muir, seconded by Geoff Dyson.
- Treasurer : Carol Murray, proposed by Talma Windmill, seconded by Moira Amor.
- Merchandise : Rosemary Briggs, proposed by Beverley Fitt, seconded by Daphne Williams.
- Minutes Secretary : Mo Dickerson, proposed by Brian Charge, seconded by Kath Charge.
- Member : Janet Field, proposed by Eileen Pembroke, seconded by Betty Easey.
- Member : Chris Chapman, proposed by Ivor Drew, seconded by Richard Friend.
- Web Site : John Dickerson proposed by Chris Rayner, seconded by Edwina Jacobs.
- Honorary Auditor : Graham Lawson proposed by Doreen Dally, seconded by John Moore.

- **Work Plans.**

- Gunton Wood.**

- The chairman reported that we have had many favourable comments from people using the wood, particularly recently, when the new main path seems to have made a big difference. We have just had a large delivery of chippings, so work can now continue on the side paths.

- We have 140 new trees in the nursery, which will be planted out later in the year. We have bought new shields and stakes, which we are using to replace the old ones.

- The chairman stressed that we are all volunteers and no-one should feel pressured to do any jobs they don't really want to do and also everyone can suggest any work that they think needs doing.

- Foxburrow Wood.**

- It is probably going to be too expensive to install any new boardwalks, but we could possibly put down some 'type 1' stones in areas that are becoming difficult to walk because of the muddy paths.

- **Social Events.**

- The annual away trip will be to Windsor in May and is fully booked.

- There will be a trip on the river Orwell in July, which is also fully booked.

- Hopefully there will be another fish and chips evening later in the year

- Terry Balls has offered to do another evening with CIRCA64.

- The annual visit to the Snape Christmas show will be arranged soon.

- Two possibilities for next year's away week-end are The Cotswolds or the Lake District

- **AOB**

- David Barwick proposed a vote of thanks to the committee and in particular to David and Rosemary.

- Harry Hill expressed his thanks to GWCP workers for all their help with the burial park, particularly Barry Shimmield who has devoted an enormous amount of time and effort to the project. Harry also thanked the councillors for their help and support.

- There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9:15pm

Minutes Approved by _____ (Chairman) _____ (Date)

Appendix 1

Chairman's report 2016 AGM

Once again my thanks to my committee who have all worked extremely hard through out the year making my job much easier.

Thanks also to Mo for her excellent minutes. To Rosemary for all her work handling most of the organisation of the trips and for making the refreshments except when we were away on holidays. Thank you all for the cakes for all the coffee breaks.

We have now completed over 40,000 hours on nearly 2000 work parties and with out all the hard work carried out by you the volunteers GWCP would not still be in existence. Thank you.

The number of News Letters that now go out via email is 75% of our total of 200. Saving us valuable funds.

The very wet winter has taken its toll on the wood and the main path was about 18 inches deep in mud at times. So we took the decision to get quotations for the re- construction of the surface from the main gate to the central area. The Big lottery fund could not award us the grant because the project did not meet the criteria that were required. So Councillor Keith Patience came to our rescue with a grant from his locality budget. The work was completed below budget by Alan Nobbs who did the path works on the Green Burial site.

So it was decided to try and continue the work up to the pond area.

Part of this work was funded by Councillor Janet Craig from her locality budget using the surplus money of the first grant. We offered to fund the remainder of the money required but the Rights of Way Officer from Suffolk County Council said that they would cover the shortfall.

The work is now finished and we all appreciate the result that this has made to the main path.

An early start cleaning out the bird boxes was necessary because of the mild winter when the birds showed signs of early interest in nesting. The results were consistent with previous years. If you are interested there are copies of the results at the rear of the hall and you are welcome to help yourself.

The annual tree inspection carried out in conjunction with the Arboricultural Manger from Waveney Norse was completed in October 2015 and resulted in a reduction of tree felling required. The work allocated to GWCP was completed recently but the work that we could not carry out is still outstanding and should be completed by Waveney Norse early in May 2016.

Our weekend trip away was to Kent and 47 members and friends had an action packed few days. Involving a boat trip, a steam train ride. a ride to Folkestone with a cream tea then to Penshurst Place where we had a guided tour of the house followed by an interesting and entertaining tour of the gardens by the Head Gardener. On our way home we visited Chatham Dockyard to see the many exhibits on display there. This year we will visit Windsor in May.

In June we visited Framlingham Castle and then onto Shawsgate Vineyard to tour the vineyard and learn about the way an English wine is made from the grapes grown there.

We then sampled several wines in a large marquee

Thanks to Mo and John who organised this trip for us.

We once again held a Fish and Chip Bingo night at St Benedict's Church Hall. The bingo caller was the cheeky Cockney who helped make it a most enjoyable evening.

In January, Terry who works with us on Thursdays organised his group Circa 64 to play (again at St Benedict's) to raise funds for us .It was a most entertaining evening with plenty of dancing by all. It was a little different the next day for us oldies who showed signs of our aged joints not working to well.

In December we once again visited Snape for the Christmas Show but numbers were slightly down on

previous years, it was thought that we should give it a miss next year but those that came with us said that they would probably like to go again. It is a lovely start to Christmas.

Again there has been vandalism in the wood with damage starting at the Church then through the wood. Nearly every bird table was destroyed and seats torn apart by mindless vandals.

The Gunton Woodland Burial Park is now up and running many of the woodland volunteers helped plant over 6000 trees helped by members of the community.

A fence and gate was erected on the south side of the park and the work still continues.

The first burial took place earlier this year.

In February once more we were invited to attend the presentation of the RHS- Anglia in Bloom Its' Your Neighbourhood awards. Where we were awarded a certificate Outstanding for our work as a community Group.

So well done all of you volunteers.

In all it has been a most successful year and thanks to all that have volunteered for without you GWCP would not have been around for the past 20 years.

Thank you once again.