

GUNTON WOODLAND COMMUNITY PROJECT

Chairman: David Briggs Secretary: Barry Shimmield

MINUTES of the **21st Annual General Meeting** held at St. Benedict's Church, Hollingsworth Rd.
on **Wednesday 18th April 2018**, 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, Chris Chapman, Peter Smith.
Town Councillor Graham Parker
Rev. Trevor Reiss
Guest Speaker Mr. Tony Brown
A total of 46 members attended.

- **Apologies for Absence**

Members of Waveney District Council & Town Councillor Sue Barnard
Apologies from a number of other members as notified.

- **Welcome**

The chairman welcomed everyone and invited Rev. Reiss to say a few words.

After giving a brief outline of the facilities and functions available at St. Benedict's, Rev. Reiss said a prayer for all members of GWCP and the future of the group.

- **Guest Speaker.**

The chairman then introduced the guest speaker Mr. Tony Brown who gave an illustrated talk entitled "The Living Woodland".

The talk followed the seasons of the year with slides of flowers, butterflies, birds and animals from each season. The first butterfly in spring is the brimstone, which hibernates in trees in the winter. Summer butterflies and moths include the red admiral, white admiral, the purple hair streak butterfly, the buff tipped moth and the sycamore moth. There were some beautiful slides of autumn leaves, fungus and berries and lovely winter scenes of trees covered in frost and snow. Mr. Brown had numerous tales to tell of how he obtained some of the photos and of his many years experience as a naturalist.

At the end of the talk, the chairman thanked Mr. Brown for his very entertaining and informative talk and presented him with a cheque for £35.

- **Minutes of the 20th AGM**

The Chairman gave a short summary of the minutes from the previous meeting. Full copies were available on the web-site or printed copies at the front desk.
The minutes were approved and signed.

- **Chairman's Report**

GWCP has now been in existence for 21 years and is much appreciated by members of the public who visit Gunton Wood. The Chairman thanked the committee for their work, particularly Rosemary for all her help with organising the trips. He also thanked all the workers who have now completed over 46,000 hours of work!

During the last year the main path from the pond down to PwH has been re-surfaced.

The bird box survey showed 34 boxes had nests in them. Copies of the survey were available.

GWCP have completed all their work identified in the tree inspection, but Waveney Norse still has some work to do.

Almost 20 trees have come down in the storms already this year.

Last year's trip to the Cotswolds was very successful, as was the bingo/fish & chips evening.

Most people who went on the Christmas trip to Snape agreed that they would like to go again this year, so tickets have been reserved.

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

- **Treasurer's Report.**

The Secretary summarised the annual accounts, copies of which were given to each attendee. He thanked Carol for her work as Treasurer and Graham Lawson for auditing the accounts.

Deficit for the year £140.20

Balance at Y/E £8492.80

The secretary thought that, although the figures were slightly down on last year, it was still a very good result.

This year we have bought a third shed, which was needed to help store the 10 wheelbarrows and 4 lawn mowers that we now have. We have also purchased a leaf blower, which is used to keep the main path clear of leaves so that they don't rot down and form mud.

We had two first aid courses from the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

We received several donations from various people, as documented in the accounts summary and once again, we received £1000 from Pleasurewood Hills, who have also kindly agreed to continue supporting us this year.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mel Canham, seconded by Peter Smith and was carried unanimously.

- **Amendments to the Constitution**

Two amendments to the constitution had already been made and approved at a special meeting which was held on Thursday 20th July 2017 :- references to "BTCV" have been amended to "TCV", to reflect the change of name of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, to Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

The chairman then detailed several amendments to the constitution which the committee had suggested. The proposed amendments had been available on the GWCP web site and paper copies were available at the meeting.

There were no objections to the amendments and acceptance was proposed by Dave Banham and seconded by Steve Chilvers.

A copy of the proposed new constitution is attached as Appendix 2.

- **Election of Committee.**

The chairman, secretary and 2 other members were standing down this year.

No nominations for chairman had been received, but other committee nominations were accepted as follows:-

Secretary : Peter Smith, proposed by Andrea Crawley, seconded by Andrew Bretton

Treasurer : Carol Murray, proposed by Talma Windmill, seconded by Moira Amor

Merchandise : Rosemary Briggs, proposed by Beverley Fitt, seconded by Daphne Williams

Member : Janet Field, proposed by Betty Easey, seconded by Christine Tripp

Member : Andrew Bretton proposed by Ivor Drew, seconded by Mo Dickerson

Web Site : John Dickerson proposed by Chris Rayner, seconded by Edwina Jacobs.

Honorary Auditor : Graham Lawson proposed by Rosemary Briggs, seconded by Mike Field

The retiring chairman then suggested that it would be difficult for the new committee to function without a chairman, but that a position of Honorary President could be a possible solution. The president would be a contact point for other parties outside the group, would act as chairman at the AGM and would be a figurehead for the group. No one present at the meeting wanted to take on the new role, so the retiring chairman suggested that if there were no objections, he would put himself forward. This solution was accepted.

Mike Field asked if the constitution needed to be amended to reflect the new position. It was unanimously agreed that the amendment should be made and the amended constitution could be approved at a special meeting after a Thursday morning work party.

Christine Tripp queried the difference between a chairman and an honorary president – basically, the honorary president would not attend committee meetings or make decisions.

Work Plans.

Gunton Wood and Foxburrow Wood.

The usual care and maintenance of Gunton Wood will continue.

It has been agreed that, if possible, we will apply a top surface to the main path from the GCL gate to the pond. The cost will be around £3000 and we have applied to Tesco for an entry into their plastic bags of help appeal. If we are not able to raise enough extra funding, we could use some of our existing funds.

Waveney Norse are having problems fulfilling their work load, due to lack of workers, however, Waveney District Council still have an obligation to oversee the running of the wood.

John & Julie Moore are trying to reduce the amount of work they do in Moore's Lane, so the new committee will look at how to proceed with that area. Thanks were given to John & Julie for all the time and effort they have given to the wood during the last 21 years.

Gunton Primary Academy will be doing some pond dipping during the week commencing 21st May.

The new committee will decide if we should continue to maintain Foxburrow Wood in the future. However, there are some boards on the boardwalk that are in need of repair, so that needs to be done for safety reasons.

- **Social Events.**

The trip to Bury St. Edmunds on 18th July is full.

Tickets for the Snape Christmas show have been reserved – full details will be published later.

The annual workers dinner will be arranged by the new committee, but it was generally felt that the Victoria Hotel had been quite successful this year.

A request was received from the floor, for a trip to the Bury St. Edmunds Christmas market this year. This will be investigated.

- **AOB**

Mike Field started by thanking all those who had stood for election to the committee. He then thanked the committee members who were retiring for all their hard work, particularly Barry for his 21 years service firstly as chairman and more recently as secretary and Chris Chapman for his work in securing sponsorship from PwH.

Mike then went on to give a vote of thanks to David Briggs, the retiring Chairman.

He first met David 40 years ago when he started work at Lowestoft College and soon came to realise that David was the man to go to for information about anything and to get anything done – which is exactly the role he has continued during the last 21 years at GWCP.

He thanked David for his outstanding commitment to GWCP and, on behalf of the committee, workers and all members he presented a cut glass whisky decanter and glasses set, along with a bottle of single malt whisky.

David thanked the attendees and then presented a gift from himself to Chris Chapman and Mo Dickerson who were retiring from the committee.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9:45pm

Minutes Approved by _____ (Chairman) _____ (Date)

Appendix 1

Chairman's report 2018 AGM

This is our 21st AGM and therefore we have been a community Group working over the past 21 years. I must say it is a tribute to all our members and most of all those that have been on the work parties for without you all it would not have been possible to continue as long as we have.

You cannot walk around the woods without some one stopping you and congratulating and thanking you for all the hard work.

THANK YOU ALL

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

Thanks also to Mo for her excellent minutes. To Carol for her excellent book keeping.

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 46,500 hours.

The number of News Letters that now go out via email is 160 with only 50 now being printed and delivered by hand. Saving us valuable funds.

The rest of main path down from the pond to PWHs was surfaced with the help of the Councillors Locality Budgets, Grants from The Suffolk Foundation, Comic relief, Gunton Hall and Pleasurewood Hills and has proved an excellent success. As a result steps are being planned to top up the section of the main path from the pond to the main gate with the same material as was used on the bottom section. We have applied to the Tesco Bags of Help fund for a grant to do this work. You shop at Tesco and place the blue chip that you are given in the box allocated to Gunton Woodland Community Project.

The annual bird box cleaning was carried out earlier in the year and the results are published, there are copies available here and on our web site.

The annual tree inspection carried out in conjunction with the Arboricultural Manger from Waveney Norse in both woods was completed in September 2017 and resulted in a reduction of tree felling required. The work allocated to GWCP was completed recently and the work that we could not carry out was to be completed by Waveney Norse. But due to difficulties in staffing at WN there will only be a limited amount of work carried out.

The storms earlier in the year wreaked havoc and we lost about 20 trees of various sizes and had work parties to clear up the debris. Strangely enough almost all the trees identified in the inspection survived. Again there has been a little vandalism in the wood with some damage around the pond.

Our weekend trip away was to The Cotswolds and 47 members and friends had an action packed few days. Involving a visit to Adams Farm, The National Arboretum, and a visit to The Cotswold Steam Railway day. This year we have a full coach to the Lake District.

We 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. Thank you to all that provided raffle prizes.

In December we 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.

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 21 years.

Thank you once again.

GUNTON WOODLAND COMMUNITY PROJECT

CONSTITUTION

1 The NAME of the Group shall be the Gunton Woodland Community Project.

2. The AIMS of the Group are:

- To improve the condition of Gunton Wood for the benefit of plant life, wildlife and everyone using the wood for recreation purposes.
- *Maintain the wood as a Local Nature Reserve.*

To fulfil these aims the Group will undertake practical conservation work including clearing, replanting and maintenance of footpaths, in conjunction with other organisations, where appropriate. Before commencing such operations, prior approval for the work programme shall be obtained from the land owners, Waveney District Council and Gunton Parochial Church Council.

From time to time, following appropriate consultations and approvals, the Group may also carry out similar work on other locations in the area of North Lowestoft.

3. MEMBERSHIP of the Group shall be open to anyone interested in taking part in the work of the organisation.

4. FUNDING. It is intended that the necessary funds to enable the Group to carry out its work shall be raised from events organised by Members and from *donations, sponsorship and* grants received from Environmental Agencies and other Third Parties.

5. The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING shall be held within three months of the end of the financial year, i.e. between *31st January and 30th April*. A minimum of ten days notice shall be given in writing to all Members.

6. A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING can be called either by the Management Committee or at any time within three weeks of the receipt by the Secretary of a request signed by not less than 10% of Members, stating fully the reasons for such a Meeting. A minimum of ten days notice shall be given in writing to all Members.

7. QUORUM. No business shall be transacted at a General Meeting, other than that called under Rule 19, unless a quorum of 10% of the Membership is present.

8. VOTING RIGHTS. Each Member shall be entitled to one vote, in person or by proxy, at a General Meeting. Voting shall be on a simple show of hands. Proxy votes shall be lodged with the Secretary not later than 24 hours before the Meeting.

9. The MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and *up to six* other Members all of whom shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to four additional Members to help organise events etc.

10. AUDITOR. An Honorary Auditor, who must not hold any other position on the Committee, shall be appointed at the AGM to hold office until the next AGM, when he or she may be eligible for re-election.

11. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE. Written nominations for election of Officers and Members of the Committee shall be handed to the retiring Chairperson at least 24 hours before the AGM, the nominee's prior consent having been obtained. Election shall be by simple majority. Should a vacancy occur at any time in one of the Officer's positions, the Committee shall appoint a suitable replacement. *No Officer or Member of the Committee shall serve more than two consecutive years, unless exceptional circumstances prevail. (this sentence to be removed)*

12. SUB-COMMITTEE. The Management Committee may appoint Sub-Committees for specific purposes, provided a Member of the Management Committee is included. The Chairperson is entitled to attend all meetings of a Sub-Committee.

13. FINANCE. The Treasurer shall keep books of accounts to be available at Committee meetings. The financial year shall commence *1st February* and terminate *31st January*. Audited accounts shall be produced at each AGM. The Treasurer shall maintain a Bank Account in the Name of the Group, the account to have three authorised signatories (Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer), any two of which shall have to approve all expenditure. Accounts over *£100* must be approved by the Management Committee before payment, such approval may be given in advance at a prior meeting of the Committee.

14. INSURANCE. The Group shall maintain insurance for volunteers carrying out project work, for injuries to third parties and for damage to property.

15. SAFETY. All work shall be carried out under the control of a designated Work Party Leader in accordance with the Group's Code of Practice.

16. PRESS COMMUNICATIONS. Communications to the press on behalf of the Group shall be made only by the Chairperson or Secretary. *Where appropriate, prior approval of Waveney District Council shall be obtained. (this sentence to be removed)*

17. AMENDMENTS to the Constitution shall only be made with the consent of at least two-thirds of the Members present, in person or by proxy, at an Annual General or a Special General Meeting. The notice for such a Meeting shall set forth the terms of the proposed amendment.

18. AFFILIATION. The Group shall retain affiliation to the Trust for Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and shall observe the conditions of affiliation.

19. DISSOLUTION. The Group may be dissolved by a resolution passed at an Annual General or a Special General Meeting provided that (a) at least 28 days notice of the intention to dissolve is given in writing to all Members and (b) at least three quarters of the Members, present in person or by proxy, vote for the proposal. On dissolution, the Treasurer shall, after deducting expenses incurred, pass the assets of the Group to the TCV *or SWT, as voted for by the members present at the meeting*. A Statement of Account shall be deposited with the Auditor, who shall retain it for a period of not less than two years. Compliance with this resolution shall be a proper discharge for the Treasurer.

Notes

1. Original was approved at the General Meeting held on 19th March 1998.
2. Amendments which were approved at the AGM held on 22nd March 2001 and those which were approved at a Special General Meeting held on 20th July 2017 have been incorporated.
3. Proposed amendments shown in *italics* will be submitted for approval at the AGM to be held on 18th April 2018.