

Friends of Naphill Common 2012 AGM: Minutes

Held on Friday 25th January 2013 in Naphill Village Hall

Attendees: The AGM had been widely publicised in Naphill and the surrounding area. Considering the snowy weather, it was well attended with 48 people present, including all the outgoing committee (except Marek Pawlik, who sent his apologies).

Welcome and Exhibition: The meeting was preceded by tea and coffee and an opportunity to view a display of photography, art and conservation information.

Chairman's report: Chairman Trevor Hussey thanked everyone who had helped both that evening and those who contributed to the work of Friends of Naphill Common over 2012, especially the Treasurer and Membership Secretary, and made his report on the various activities of 2012 (most of which had been undertaken in rain), as follows:

(1) Feb: The Clumps: FoNC met with the National Trust's Neil Harris, who had agreed to help restore the Clumps, by removing the holly and young saplings. [No-one at the meeting objected to any fellings when asked.] Hopefully, the increased light would then facilitate the grassing-over of the banks once more. It was uncertain whether replacement of diseased trees, such as horse chestnut, would be permitted, given The Clumps' archaeological significance.

(2) March: Romano-British Farmstead: FoNC and the Risborough Group jointly undertook a geophysics survey of the Romano-British farmstead, which had now been partly traced as a D-shape, the entrance to which remained unclear.

(3) April: Archaeological visit: John Morris, a woodland archaeologist, undertook an educational survey of the Common with interested FoNC members.

(4) May-June: Geological survey: Dr Jill Evers, a geologist, led a FoNC survey and discovered that the current maps were inaccurate as to the distinctiveness and variation of local soils and the Sarcen stones, located in Willow Pond, had now been estimated to be 50 m. years old rather than 30m.

(5) June: Bat walk: the walkers had found evidence of the following: pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat and Natterer's bat.

(6) June: Naphill Fete: FoNC's stall had raised awareness and money for the VH and had gained a few new members.

(7) July: Flora and fauna walks:

- Butterfly walk: Dennis Dell, a butterfly conservationist, had led a walk, but the rare purple emperor butterflies proved elusive.
- Mini-beast safari for children: John Tyler, an entomologist, had showed youngsters various insects etc and found a slow worm.
- Discovery of a Yellow Birds-nest saprophyte: found on the Common for first time.

(10) August: Tree damage and loss:

- An energy provider had damaged paths and an oak used by purple emperors and, following complaints, had agreed to consult before carrying out any works in future.
- A major limb on the 300 year-old Great Beech at Dew Pond had been lost, rendering the tree lop-sided and thus unstable. The limb that hosted the rare fungus *Hericium* was undamaged. [A questioner from the floor suggested support, which would be investigated.]

(11) Oct:

- Annual Fungus Foray: *Galerina sideroides* found - a first in Bucks.

- Chiltern Commons Forum visit and walk to Downley.

(12) General/on-going into 2013

- Walks: thanks to walks' leaders Ron Collins, for long walks (5 miles, 3rd Monday of the month), and Chris Miller for short walks (2-3 miles, first Wed of the month), both continuing in 2013.
- Path clearing: volunteers provided 152 man hours over 12 working parties in 2012, continuing in 2013 on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at the end of Chapel Lane at 10 am; hopefully a newly acquired mower would assist in keeping paths clear. [There were no objections to the use of a mower.]
- Re-labelling trees: there was an on-going survey to record trees (400 to date), in order to safeguard important trees in preparation for proposed fellings by West Wycombe Estate in October 2013.
- Pond Survey: This on-going survey, by Tony Marshall, would be using mats around the ponds to ascertain amphibian activity, which should be left undisturbed please.
- Finds: two pieces of pot, probably Iron Age which might further assist date the R-B Farmstead; iron slag of uncertain date, possibly medieval.
- Reintroduction of juniper cuttings: it was hoped that the West Wycombe estate would permit this, as 86% of junipers in the Chilterns had been lost.
- Moth trappings: FoNC hoped to have several trapping sessions, to which all were welcome.

Membership secretary's report: Stephanie Morgan, the membership secretary, reported the following:

- 2012 membership: there had been a total of 280 members since the FoNC launch, with approx. 150 renewing on an annual basis, but with a dip in 2012 to 124; some decline had been caused by members leaving the village.
- 2013 membership: 66 members had now renewed and Stephanie would be letter-box dropping renewal reminders and encouragement to members.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Peggy Ewart thanked John Harris for his auditing of the 2012 accounts; headlines were as follows (the full accounts are attached):

- Income 2012: £1,140, predominantly from membership subscriptions;
- Expenditure 2012: £1,561 - this included some unlikely-to-be-repeated experts' fees; the reserves carried forward from 2011 covered the excess expenditure over income, but this level of expenditure would be unsustainable in future if subs. continued to decline;
- Current Cash in hand: £921.73

Election of New Committee

The current committee had all agreed to restand and there was only volunteer from the audience: Sheila Draper, who was duly proposed (Ron Collins) and seconded (Kevin Bennett). The committee for 2013 thus comprised; Peggy Ewart, Philip Hussey, Peter Davis, Trevor Hussey, Stephanie Morgan, Kevin Bennett, Steve Rodrick, David Greenwood, Ron Collins, Marek Pawlik, Chris Miller and Sheila Draper. The committee would elect its officers' positions at the first committee meeting on 4th February.

There being no AOB, the formal part of the Meeting closed and was followed by a talk, "Common People", by Rachel Sanderson of the Chilterns Conservation Board. She was duly thanked by the chairman for a very interesting presentation.

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Distribution: Committee members and FoNC website

Minutes prepared by: Sheila Draper 28/1/13

Minutes approved by: Chairman. Dated **FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON**

Income and expenditure for the financial year 1/1/12 to 31/12/12

B/fwd from 2011 **£1302.40**

Income

Membership fees **£608**

Grants and Donations **£402**

Fees from members for training day **£130**

Income 1/1/12 to 31/12/12 **£1140**

TOTAL **£2442.40**

Expenditure

BTCV insurance **£254.69**

Fees to specialist speakers and walk leaders **£400.00**

Naphill Common geology report **£450.00**

Admin. expenses **£182.76**

Donation to CCB for Commons Project **£125.00**

Donation to Village Hall Council (fete) **£ 25.00**

Hire of Village Hall **£124.00**

TOTAL **£1561.45**

BALANCE **£880.95**

Cash at bank on 21/12/12 **£921.73**

(cheques not yet cleared) **£40.78**