

## FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON

### MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

held at 7.30pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 at The Wheel, Naphill

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Kevin Bennett, Peggy Ewart, Trevor Hussey.  
**Present:** Chris Miller (chairman) (CM), John Camp (JC), Peter Davis (PD), Ron Collins (RC), Neil McMinn (NM) and Marian Miller (MM).
- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and the special meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023** were agreed.
- 3. Treasurer's report:** Current bank balance is £2,503. Expenditure July to September was £2,351 (including purchase of the flail) and income for same period £1,565 (including donations for mower/flail and £250 from the Bradenham Blast).
- 4. Membership Secretary's report:** 96 paid-up members. NM asked CM to include notice of the increased sub for 2024 in his report for the Naphill Gazette.
- 5. Working parties:** PD reported that the summer work on Shipwash Pond has been successful. Most of the weeds have been removed from inside and around the pond as well as mountains of glass and iron. Two areas previously hardly wet are now full of water.  
Work on the Clumps is progressing and the flail has made short work of mowing the outside of the big Clumps. Brambles have been cleared from the second big Clump and the National Trust have strimmed the banks. Now working on the three smaller clumps.  
Pond work should resume in mid-October starting with Daisy Pond, then Lady Horse and finally Willow Pond. With major clearance already done a regular tidy-up should suffice.  
RC reported that his party has finished work on its area. Stumps are now being killed off. The flail is coming into its own with path-clearance. The path between Chapel and Forge Lanes has already been widened and the area between Little Oaks and the bridle path will now be targeted. There is scope for more path-widening in the woods (please report to JC where this would be beneficial).  
**Total working party hours** January to end of August 754 (compared to 624 for the same period in 2022).
- 6. Short and long walks and other events:** walks going well. There will be two short walks in October since the November walk has been brought forward to include the Chiltern Walking Festival walk.  
An enjoyable mini-beast safari in Vincents Meadow was attended by 8 children and 5 adults on 20<sup>th</sup> August.  
**Future events:**  
The bat walk will be on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September starting at 7pm.  
Fungal walk – Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October limited to 20 FONC members. To be booked on a first-come, first-served basis. NM can email all FONC members with bookings to be made through PD. PD and CM to act as guides.

- 7. Mower and flail update:** After the mower broke down during a working party a new ignition module has been fitted and is working well. Steve Smith from Stocking Lane has offered his mower to FONC free of charge. FONC currently has no space to store the mower and an appeal for a safe storage space, ideally close to the Common, will be included in the Naphill Gazette and Facebook. CM reported that Hughenden Parish Council has yet to decide on the grant application for the mower/flail.  
All agreed that the flail is already proving to be an excellent investment thanks to its superior performance as well as saving time.
- 8. Footpath marking:** PD has a map showing locations of the posts. CM and PD to walk the Common and assess condition and location of posts. Pending that we don't know how many posts will be required. JC has special digging implement.
- 9. AGM: now booked for Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, 7.30pm at the Village Hall.** David Brown to talk about the history and work of the RAF base. He has also offered to arrange a FONC tour of the "Bomber" Harris offices.
- 10. Any other business:** we may lose some members when the subs are increased next year. So more recruitment is desirable, especially with new (and some old) residents who may not be aware of what FONC does. A substantial membership maintains FONC's "clout". RC to give CM "before and after" photos of clearance work for the next Gazette report. He also suggested a photo of the Committee (human angle story).

Neil Harris of the National Trust has the bat boxes and owl box to put up at the Clumps.

Boondock Events, organisers of the Bradenham Blast were very pleased with our marshals and FONC received £250 (£50 per marshal) for their work. To be repeated in 2024.

**NEXT MEETING – THURSDAY 18th JANUARY 2024, 7.30PM AT THE WHEEL**