

FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at 7.30pm on Friday, 10th January 2020 at Naphill Village Hall

Welcome and Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed the audience (of around 45 people).

The minutes of the 2019 AGM were approved without amendment.

The Chairman gave an illustrated (courtesy of Peter Davis) round-up of FONC's activities during the previous year.

Working parties: The two working parties spent the equivalent of 729 man hours, mainly in scrub and pond clearance. The non-mechanised group led by Peter Davis meets generally on alternate Sunday mornings whilst Ron Collins's "mechanised" group meets on Thursdays. More volunteers would be very welcome, especially younger people. It was heartening to have a teenage volunteer whose efforts will count towards his Duke of Edinburgh award.

Walks for pleasure: Ron Collins leads the long walks (9.25am 3rd Monday of each month) usually setting off by car and including a pub-lunch. Chris Miller leads short circular walks from the village hall (10.30am 1st Wednesdays) ending with an optional cuppa in the Bon-Ami. The walks are open to all, not just FONC members. Additional walks included Ron's in aid of Children in Need which raised £390 this year. A total of £1,071 has been raised over the last three years for that charity. Chris led a "Beating the Bounds" walk on Rogation Sunday as part of the Hughenden Parish Council 125 celebrations, and as usual two of the short walks featured as part of the Chiltern Walking Festivals.

Village fete 2019 Many thanks to Neil McMinn and Ron Collins for organising the silent auction, which raised almost £2,000 – slightly less than the previous year, probably owing to the lower attendance thanks to poor weather. Half of this was given to the Village Hall.

Other activities: The annual Bat Walk with Julie Hopton of the Bucks Bats Group was well attended despite having to be rescheduled owing to heavy rain on the original date. The annual Fungal Foray organised by Bucks Fungus Group continues to be a highlight for keen mycologists. The event on 29th September attracted over 100 people who were split into three groups each led by a nationally-known expert.

Social media: For up-to-date information members were encouraged to consult the FONC website <http://www.naphillcommon.org.uk/>

The Chairman will look into reviving FONC's Twitter account.

Membership report

Membership has decreased slightly to 121 from 130 last year. Payment can be accepted by BACS – details are on the website.

Treasurer's Report

Because this AGM was being held earlier than usual the accounts have not been audited. The accounts will be put online once audited. FONC has a healthy bank balance of £3,200. At £679 expenditure exceeded the subscription income of £605 so a loss would have been made without the proceeds of the silent auction. Expenditure should not be so high this year since we now have a good supply of parts for the working party machinery.

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Selection of Committee

Special thanks were due to Peggy Ewart who is standing down as Treasurer after many years sterling service. Philip Hussey is also standing down from the Committee. The Chairman thanked all the Committee members. Neil McMinn has volunteered to replace Peggy as Treasurer. Marian Miller, who has been acting as stand-in Secretary has volunteered to take on that role. The existing Committee, with those two additions, was re-elected unopposed and is as follows:

Chairman – Chris Miller (also leads short walks)

Secretary – Marian Miller

Treasurer – Neil McMinn

Membership Secretary – Lynn McMinn

Peter Davis – Webmaster and working party organiser

Ron Collins – working party organiser and leads long walks

Committee members – Trevor Hussey, Marek Pawlik, John Camp, Kevin Bennett.

Suggestions for future activities

1. Bat boxes (made by the local Brownies) and an owl box will be installed.
2. Improving signposts on the Common where they have rotted and fallen over – the Chairman will chase-up the Chiltern Society and the Chilterns Conservation Board for help/advice.
3. Possibly a mini-beast safari – the last one was two years ago.

Any other business

Felling: The third phase is due to start in Autumn 2020. The Chairman expected FONC to be consulted, as before. The Romano-British farmstead is in the felling area so it will be important to ensure that this important archaeological area is not damaged.

Trevor Hussey pointed out that significant trees which should be preserved will be marked in green by FONC as before. Anyone who knows of any particular trees which they think should be retained should contact FONC.

Following the AGM the audience enjoyed a talk by Tom Way, a professional wildlife photographer, and a most entertaining speaker.