

FoNC AGM 2014

Held on Friday 13th February 2015 in Naphill Village Hall

Attendees: The AGM had been widely publicised in Naphill and was well attended by the FoNC committee and many members, with a total of 53 present. Apologies were given by Trevor Hussey (outgoing chairman) and the following members: Sarah Worthington, Fran Cooper, Judy Redrup, Monica & William Pratley, Lesley and Reg Horne, Pauline and Mike Poole and Florence and Mike Pinfield.

Welcome, Exhibition and Annual Overview of activities: The meeting was preceded by an opportunity to view local photographic, historic and artistic displays and Friends of Naphill Common information.

In the chairman's absence, Chris Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a short presentation on FoNC activities in 2014:

- **Working parties** - there had been 16 of these in 2014, with a total of 175 man-hours of work, mainly on path clearance, scrub removal and tacking the Japanese knot weed (a specific work plan to inject and remove some of the weed on 7/9 and one which the Estate had said it would continue in spring)
- **FoNC walks** - long and short walks had continued throughout the year, with Chris Miller leading the short walks on the 3rd Monday and Ron Collins the long walks on the first Wed of the month. These were to continue in 2015.
- **Pond survey** - 7 ponds were surveyed and the findings were imported into the FoNC Common Management Plan (see below). Trevor and Phillip Hussey had also become qualified great-crested newt handlers in order to be able to support those newts known to be in Pickup Pond.
- **Management Plan** - FoNC wrote a Common Management plan which had been circulated to stakeholders such as Natural England, the Estate and the Forestry Commission. Some cosmetic changes had been requested by Natural England and there had been no subsequent negative feedback. The plan was viewable on the FoNC website.
- **Tree felling** - Wessex Woodland had been contracted by the Wycombe Estate to undertake the first part of a 3 part project. They had been cooperative and keen to utilise FoNC knowledge, giving FoNC the time to mark trees, both those for saving and those suitable for felling (so as to bring greater light around the ponds for example).
- **Stand at NapFest** - FoNC had had a stand in the Fete marquee in June and would do so in 2015.
- **History walk** - a new activity for 2014 - a walk around the current and former pubs in Naphill proved popular on a warm June evening, led by Marion Miller.
- **Invertebrate Group** - the group once again investigated species on the Common on the 28 June.
- **Bat Walk** - this was led again by Bridget Parslow on 12/9 and well attended.
- **Fungal foray** - this October event was especially successful this year with new species recorded.
- **Website** - this had been maintained and updated by Peter Davis, who was thanked.
- **Twitter** - a new twitter feed was now @naphillcommon and people were invited to join in.

Chris ended by thanking everyone who had made the year a success, especially the outgoing chairman, Trevor Hussey, for his massive contribution and outgoing committee member Steve Rodrick, whose contacts and knowledge had also been invaluable.

Chris then introduced the first speaker, John Shaw of the Chiltern Rangers.

Chiltern Rangers

John explained about the work of the Rangers as a not-for-profit social enterprise, managing local reserves and woodland. John had obtained Friends of Naphill Common support to work with young people on the Common and the first project would be starting with the RAF and a community development group in half term. The general aim was to work with hand tools to clear scrub, undertake coppicing and pond clearance.

He was hoping for other groups to get involved in the future, e.g. Scouts and there was a general public open invitation too. Leaflets were circulated to interested members.

Chris then thanked John and then invited the Membership Secretary and Treasurer to make their reports.

Membership Secretary's Report

Lynn McMinn noted that 2014 membership had slipped by about 10 members over 2013 and invited everyone to renew for 2015 and to encourage new members. The 2015 new membership cards were more cost effective for FoNC and card holders would be entitled to 10% discount on cheeses and meat at *The Seasons* in North Dean.

Treasurer's Report

Peggy Ewart first thanked John Harrison for acting as independent examiner of the 2014 accounts and noted the following figures (the full accounts were available on request):

Income to 31/12/14: £1287.092.09 (+ b/f £1121.82)

Expenditure to 31/12/14: £1053.41.

Balance as at 31/12/14 £1355.50.

Election of new committee

Trevor Hussey was made a lifelong honorary committee member in recognition of his work as Chairman and co-founder member of FoNC. The current committee all agreed to stand again (except Steve Rodrick); John Camp volunteered as a new committee member (proposed by Lynn McMinn, seconded by Sheila Draper) and the new committee was re-elected en masse unopposed.

The committee for 2015 thus comprised: Peggy Ewart, Philip Hussey, Peter Davis, Lynn & Neil McMinn, Kevin Bennett, John Camp, David Greenwood, Ron Collins, Marek Pawlik, Chris Miller and Sheila Draper + honorary member Trevor Hussey. The committee would elect its officers' positions at its first committee meeting on 23 March.

Chris thanked everyone for attending and invited suggestions for activities etc. to be emailed/phoned to him or any other committee members.

He then welcomed and introduced Charles Kent, the second speaker.

Charles Kent of Beechdean Farm

Charles gave a fascinating talk about the history of his family's farming in north Dean and the surrounding area, well-illustrated with old and new photographs, anecdotes and hard facts. Both he and his wife spoke and also answered questions from the audience. Their website is at <http://beechdeanfarms.co.uk/>

Conclusion and AOB

Both speakers were thanked for their lively and informative talks and Chris then replied Richard Pushman's question as to potential harm to the Common from oak-die back, commenting that FoNC was maintaining a watchful eye on the situation.

The event concluded at 9.30pm.

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FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON *Distribution: Committee members and FoNC website*

Minutes prepared by: Sheila Draper 15/3/15

Minutes approved by: Chairman. Dated:.....