

FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON
MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING No. 44
Poland House, 7/1/16

1. Present and apologies

Present: Chris, John, Marek, Neil, Peter Peggy, Phillip, Ron, Sheila and Trevor.
Apologies: Lynn, Kevin.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The previous minutes were agreed, noting that the minutes were no 43. There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

3. Treasurer's report

Peggy reported 2015 income total for 2015: £644.20 from subs (+ b/f £1355.50) and expenditure £517.15. She had finished the accounts, which were being audited by John Harris ahead of the forthcoming 2015 AGM. Income in 2015 had been derived purely from subs (no grants or other donations), and subs were down on 2014, but expenditure was also less.

4. Membership Secretary's report

Lynn noted via Neil that she would be advising members of renewals soon and would have membership forms available at the AGM.

5. Working parties & Common activities

- (i) The NT had not yet replied to our proposal to site some of the juniper saplings near the "umbrella" trees. **Action: Trevor ongoing.**
- (ii) The current national tree survey had no deadline; the Hussey's own ongoing survey was still being hampered by the removal/disintegration of labels. It was hoped that we might obtain a grant for more secure, tougher labels than ours, via Ted Green (see (iii) below). **Action: David/Peter/Trevor.**
- (iii) Sadly, the Great Beech at Dew Pond had fallen in November; talks were underway with the Estate to remove/clear some of it, but these had been suspended whilst the surveys of *Hericium erinaceus* fungus, a protected species growing inside the hollow tree, had been examined. This took place on 9th Dec 2015 with FoNC, Bucks Fungi Group and Prof. Lynne Boddy (and her PhD student Emma Gilmartin) of Cardiff University. Lynne also brought with her Ted Green with whom she is working with at Windsor. Ted appeared very knowledgeable about ancient trees and said he had carried out a survey, of ancient trees, some years ago, on Naphill Common and made a video of the Great Beech. He agreed to give us a copy in due course. **Action: David to follow up.** The team spent some time at the Great Beech examining what was visible. They took away some wood on which the *Hericium* was growing and will also take the opportunity to look at its DNA. This is a fungus which can easily be grown in the lab and will even produce fruiting bodies. This fungus produces spores which can remain in a habitat (tree) for many years (may be a hundred) before growing when the conditions are right. This means the fungus could be in many trees around Dew Pond waiting for the right conditions. There was also a discussion about what to do with the fallen beech. The general feeling was to remove as much as possible of the small branches from the pond but to leave the main trunk and large branches. This will provide a great habitat for fungi in the future including our *Hericium* (a win situation). We now await to hear about any development regarding the fungus, which could take some time. Some FoNC members had taken some small pieces of wood, branches in bud and seedlings in the hope of nurturing these and growing them on.
- (iv) Hannah Worker of the Freshwater Habitats Trust, also visited the Common at the end of 2015. She was planning a national pond survey for Great Crested Newts in 2016. She thought she could provide two testing kits (they only have 200 for the entire project) sometime around May if all goes as planned (she will confirm early in 2016). Sampling will be done by dipping a test

tube around a pond in 20 locations (no need for waders!), mixing the sample in a bag and taking 5 samples from the resulting mixture, which can then be sent off for environmental DNA testing in order to establish the presence or absence of the newts.

6. Walks

The walks' lunch at the Red Lion had been very successful, as had the December walk and lunch, (latter thanks to the hospitality of John Adsetts). It was agreed that walks would continue to be free in 2016, but that non-members would be encouraged to join FoNC where possible. Both walks' leaders had walks planned for 2016 and the committee thanked them for their leadership.

7. AGM 2016

- (i) The date of the AGM would be Fri 12/2/16 in the village hall starting at 7.30 pm (doors open 7.15) with a talk by Ian Mason of the Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. Peter had agreed to create a PowerPoint of slides showing 2015 activities and the chairman's presentation as in previous years. Peggy would make a donation to the dogs' charity on behalf of FoNC.
- (ii) Sheila would do the agenda, have copies available and take the minutes at the evening.
- (iii) Publicity: Neil agreed to ask Lynn to email members reminding them of the AGM. Chris had put up posters in the village and would ask Janet Idle of Bucks Free Press to mention it in her village column. Chris' wife Marian had kindly agreed to tweet about it and it would also get a mention in the Naphill and Walters Ash group Facebook and Trevor was covering the Gazette with an article.
- (iv) All the current committee agreed to stand again for re-election.

Action: Peggy, Neil, Peter, Trevor, Sheila and Chris

8. AOB

- (i) "Clean for the Queen", a countryside initiative around the 2016 90th birthday of the Queen, was going ahead w/b 11/4 initiated by the WI, which would clean the VH and Crick area. We thought we might tidy the Common and this would be discussed at the next meeting.
- (ii) Canisters found on the Common had contained laughing gas.
- (iii) Ron reminded everyone of the FoNC offer to hold a silent auction as part of the 2016 NapFest and hoped that everyone would persuade their contacts to offer services e.g. Neil had offered 2 "tickets" to the Rebellion brewery with free beer. Action: ALL

9. Next meeting

MONDAY 21st MARCH at 7.30 pm in Poland House (thanks again to Marek for the venue).