

Minutes of the Fairfield Association Annual General Meeting held on 19th June 2019 at the Friends Meeting House.

Hilary Short, Chair, David Austin, Clare Austin, Mandy Bannon, Dave Brookes, Ken Capewell, Patricia Clarke, Mary Eckersley, David Elliott, Oliver Fulton, Henry Hicks, David Mottram, Sue Neiduszynska, Geoff Oliver, Jane Parker, Cathy Parr, Dorothy Phillips, Gordon Phillips, Suzanne Procter, Louisa Reynolds, Julia Salmon, Mick Short, Susan Wylde, Shirley Rawsthorne, Secretary.

1. Welcome

Hilary welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Tony and Jaqui Finn, Ruth Haigh and Sue Pope.

3. Minutes of 2018 AGM

The minutes were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

The 'Local Memories' project is ongoing. Hilary advised members to contact Ruth Haigh if they had Fairfield memories to share.

Hilary advised that there had been no further updates from the City Council on the 'aspirational' cycle track which they had suggested as a replacement for the Long Pads footpath.

It was reported that some of the birch trees close to Sunnyside lane were in poor health, and the Tree Protection Officer had given permission to fell one of them. Sue advised that it might be possible to preserve the ancient sycamore; however, the tree surgeon is currently very busy. He had recently managed to fell a damaged ash tree at short notice, and had given assurances that the trees overhanging the new path were safe. Sue advised that trees suffering from Ash Dieback would be left to deteriorate.

5. Chair's Annual Report

Hilary delivered the Chair's report. In summary:

- The Pony Wood footpath was now open, and will be officially opened by Jon Barry in the autumn.
- The Trustees have worked well together all year, ensuring that many projects were completed.
- Existing footpaths had been resurfaced and improvements made to drainage around the reserve.
- Whilst the contractor was on site upgrading the footpaths, he had also been asked to create a new scrape in West Field, which had immediately attracted wading birds.
- The FA had been recognised with a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.
- Fun day 2018 had been very successful, and had included a fun run for the first time. Thanks were extended to Lauren and Billy for organising the run.
- Wassailing was revived in 2018, led by Mark Reynolds, and accompanied by Gladly Solemn Sounds choir.
- Christmas Eve carol singing had raised £272. Thanks were extended to Steve Hoyland, who is standing down after twenty years.

- The Easter Egg Hunt was a resounding success, with feedback indicating that it was a great event for all ages. Thanks were extended to Tony and Jaqui Finn, who will be standing down. A request was made for volunteers to organise the event in future.
- Thanks were extended to everyone who baked cakes in support of all the year's events.
- It was hoped that, following a successful round of fundraising, a small goalpost could be installed at the bottom of the playground. Thanks were extended to Ken Capewell for his work in maintaining the play equipment all year.
- The Association awaits Local Nature Reserve status
- It is anticipated that a handrail will be installed along the path from Towneley Close.
- Friends Funding continued to be a large source of regular income. Supporting the Association in this way assisted with financial planning.
- The funding agreement with Natural England will end in March 2021, with the future uncertain due to political changes.

See full report at Appendix A

6. Imminent Events

- Open Garden at Carr House Farm on 22/23rd June 2019
- Triangle Summer Fair on 6th July 2019
- Canal and River Trust bicentennial celebration
- Apple Day in the Orchard on 21st September 2019.

7. Treasurer's Report

Jane explained the accounts and advised that examiner's report revealed no problems. She advised that the accounts continued to look healthy, with the bank balance standing at £51,293 at year-end.

Comments on the Treasurer's Report were invited:

- David Austin enquired whether the City Council would be prepared to contribute to the upkeep of the playground.
- Hilary advised that the goalpost had been funded by a parent who had undertaken to raise the money from interested locals. There was a discussion about the siting of the goalpost; some local residents expressed their concern about its proximity to back gardens, and the potential for noise nuisance. Mick advised that a consultation had taken place, with no serious objections being raised.
- In response to an enquiry about support from the RSPB, Mick advised that the organisation is currently focussing its efforts on its own reserves, and were unlikely to be in a position to help.

The 2018/19 accounts were adopted.

8. Election of Trustees and Officers

Hilary advised that advance notice of the election of trustees and officers was given in the most recent newsletter and the website.

Andrew Brennand, Dave Brookes, Michael Sheppard, Hilary Short and Mick Short were re-elected and Sue Nieduszynska continues to serve as a trustee.

Hilary was re-elected as Chair, and Jane and Shirley were re-elected as Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

9. Standing Item for Notification of third parties of change to trustees.

Nothing to report.

10. Short Flora, Fauna and FA report

Sue reported that three surveys had taken place. During the bird survey, 32 species were observed, and 30 breeding species recorded, three of which are on the red list. Unfortunately, there were no grey partridges seen, and it was thought that they might have been predated. There were large flocks of winter migrants, including thrushes and linnets, and redshank had been seen in the new pond in West Field.

A wildflower survey, carried out by Graeme Skelcher, was underway. Plants found were typical of lowland meadows, but there were currently too few to qualify for formal classification. Planting at the margins of the arable field had resulted in an abundance of wild flowers. Seed heads will be used for winter birdseed, and nettles are to be cleared from the woodland.

The butterfly and bee count revealed 18 species of butterfly and 4 species of bee.

The mammal survey recorded Roe deer, brown hare and a couple of foxes.

Ian Procter made an appeal for volunteers to help with the volunteering, which takes place on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.

10. Short FOTT Update

Dave reported that new, more secure doors had been fitted to the workshop, and the compost bins have new lids. The tool chest had been replaced. He advised that there would be a fundraising art exhibition, with a canal theme, in August. Thanks were extended to the Triangle volunteers.

11. Any Other Business

Hilary explained that, since an ice-cream van had reversed into the playground, a bollard had been fitted. Local residents considered it unsightly, and a decision was made to replace it with a wooden one.

Mick appealed for mature local men to assist a visiting Japanese professor with a language research project.