

Minutes of the Fairfield Association AGM held on 18th October 2022 at Friends Meeting House

Present:

Hilary Short (Chair), Dave Brookes, Andrew Brennand, Graham Brandwood, Sue Nieduszynska, Jane Parker, Sue Pope, Ian Procter, Suzanne Procter, Helena Murphy, Oliver Fulton, Hilary Smith, Michael Sheppard, Mick Short, Shirley Rawsthorne (Secretary)

1. Apologies

Tony Finn, Ruth Haigh.

2. Minutes from the last meeting

In the Chair's Report: Tony Finn (corrected from Toy Finn).
Lancashire Wildlife Trust (corrected from Lancashire Wildlife Fund)

3. Matters Arising

- A problem with Towneley Close handrail has been reported, and will be rectified by volunteers.
- In-person FA meetings have resumed, following the pandemic.

4. Chair's report

Open Gardens and Apple Day were appreciated, and well-attended, following lockdown. Thanks were extended to Patricia Clarke and Carole Martin.

There will be a pop-up shop in the shed in December, to sell calendars, FA stationery, and a new book about local walks, accessible using public transport.

Thanks were extended to Toy Finn for his work with local schools.

Wassailing will take place on 15th January in the Orchard.

There will be a Meadow Exhibition in the Storey, 9-20th May.

Membership currently stands at 400.

A bee-friendly window box project was funded by TransPennine Express. Tools and a marquee were purchased from a Tesco grant.

Our Friends scheme raises around £5000 per annum. Thanks were extended to all for their generosity, and to Geoff Oliver for running the scheme.

The shed requires a new roof.

Playground equipment needs replacing and a sub-group of parents has been set up to raise funds.

5. Treasurer's Report

The report was adopted, and thanks extended to Jane.

6. Events

See Chair's report.

7 Elections.

Sue was re-elected as Trustee; Hilary, Jane and Shirley were all reappointed as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. Thanks extended to Hilary for her work during the pandemic.

8. Playground

Andrew is coordinating an attempt to raise funds for upgrading the playground equipment; a parent's sub-group has been established to take the work forward, and children will be consulted. Swings will be replaced free-of-charge by the City Council. It was acknowledged that the project required someone with experience of applying for grants, a safety services expert, and means of communicating with other parents.

9. Nature Reserve

- The agreement with Natural England has been renewed until March 2023. After 2024, other funding schemes will need to be considered.
- FA is now in partnership with Lancashire Wildlife Fund as part of Great Crested Newt project which will run for 25 years.
- Cattle grazed the meadows this year.
- Additional seedling and wildflower plugs were donated by Bowland AONB group in exchange for yellow rattle seed.
- No further deterioration has been found in the Ash trees.
- Lancaster and District Birdwatching Society donated feed, which attracted reed buntings, amongst others.
- The sightings board was vandalized during the summer, and will be repaired.
- Further planting will take place to complete Pony Wood. New hedges will be planted along the Fauna footpath. These will be spaced to preserve the view from the boardwalk.
- Thanks were extended to Emma and Ian for the successful volunteers' picnic.
- Ian will undertake a review of conservation activities in February 2022.

10. Triangle

- Activity was reduced during the pandemic, but the area was popular with groups meeting outdoors.
- The pergola's rotting posts were replaced.
- Strands of knitting will be fixed around external structures during the winter. Dave suggested that this was a therapeutic activity.

11. General Consideration of Charitable Objects

These were read out. It was remarked that the Constitution, now two decades old, no longer reflects the work being currently undertaken on the Reserve, and a suggestion was made that part 1 of the Constitution should be amended to reflect this, as follows:

‘To work with local and national partners to create areas rich in wildlife and biodiversity’.

It was noted that the suggestion would need to be discussed by the Trustees, and any changes ratified at an AGM. It was also suggested that the original charitable objects could be re-examined as part of the process. The Chair agreed to look at this during the coming year and allow time for wider consultation at future FA meetings.

12. AOB. None

13. Date of next AGM to be decided at a future FA meeting.