

Minutes of the Fairfield Association meeting held on 17 June 2025 at the Tite & Locke

Present

Andrew Brennand (Chair), Dave Brookes, Geoff Oliver, Hilary Short, Ian Diffenthal, Ian Procter, Jane Parker, Mark Tanner, Mick Short, Mike Stevens, Norman Gardner, Sharon Diffenthal, Sue Nieduszynska, Sue Pope

1. Apologies

Bethany Haughey

2. Minutes from the last meeting

- These were agreed

3. Matters Arising

- LGGS and Local Nature Reserve status – no progress

4. Treasurer's Report

Bank balance

Date		Amount (£)
20.05.25		140,213
17.06.25	Co-op	56,023
	Skipton	85,000
	Total	141,023

This includes the legacy of £54,760 received in 2023

General funds

£141,023

Balance

£141,023

Income

- £2896 interest from the Skipton

Payments

- £403 to Fraser for Festival food
- £836 More Music for the Gamelan
- £300 Beyond Radio for PA and music

- £330 Jon Hill's charity for Festival drink
- Due £7388 from Avanti for the cycle hub
- How much does it cost on a daily basis to keep the Fairfield nature reserve, orchard and playground running? Jane will investigate

5. FFOG

- Mosquitos article – see the end of the minutes
- Pony Wood is getting well established chiffchaff, stock doves, tree creeper, tawny owl are all nesting
- Wild Roots Nature Fest – walks were very well received despite several no shows. Andrew led the dawn walk and noticed 30 different species
- Fraser is hosting a group from Witherslack (Special) School soon
- Contractor is slow at repairing the paths
- The bunds at Alder Pond need repairing
- After two months of drought conditions along with cattle and deer damage, Ian P noted about 90% of the recently planted saplings have survived

6. Playground

- Lease renewal is still with LCC
- Thanks to all involved for repairing the grass
- Andrew has applied to Lancaster University Wind Turbine fund for replacement benches (approx. £10K). LCC is no longer able to assist with major works – we will have to pay for installations. LCC is continuing to undertake safety inspections and will purchase equipment on our behalf. Maybe worth contacting Lancashire Wildlife Trust who have undertaken a lot of work in Freeman's Wood.

7. The Triangle

- Nothing to report

8. IT, social media and newsletter

- iNaturalist – Fairfield Reserve project has been sent up – has enormous potential. Mark would like to attend FFOG and establish a small working group to progress. It could also be mentioned at the AGM and then followed up with a talk at the Storey.
- Website - a hedges page and a new section on Snipe have been added
- Would it be worth setting up a wildlife gardening blog building on Open Yards? People think it's a good idea, perhaps ask Jon Barry.
- PR – do we have someone who is responsible and can coordinate communications? Not at the moment. A one-pager about who to contact to publicise events and activities would be helpful. Andrew has some ideas about people he could talk to about this.

9. Education

- Andrew and Sue N met Dan Morris on Monday 2 June. He is keen to set up a pilot in the autumn. There is a follow-up meeting in the orchard on Friday 4 July for Tony, Dan and Andrew. Anyone else who would like to attend should contact Andrew since the venue could be weather dependent. The

woods by the orchard are overgrown and a haven for birds – Dan would like to use the area for Forest Schools although there was some debate about the suitability of this. Dan is talking with Graham who is one of our volunteers and a Forest School expert.

- Two recent visits from Dallas Road School.

10. Fundraising update

- Lucy Brook redevelopment – Elizabeth Morgan from LEF was very encouraging and helpful as there are now funds available for areas that aren't open access. Matched funding will be required. Should there be a consultation? Sue N will share the plans with FFOG at their next meeting. There are only two more rounds of LEF funding.
- Footpath repairs – Sue Holden has made enquiries about applying for grant funding. Hilary and Sue H are going for a walk of the paths tomorrow (18 June)
- QR code project – Mike Stevens will prepare a bid to the 3R foundation soon – on hold until the autumn
- New benches and Cromwell Rd notice board – we await feedback on the Wind Turbine application
- Fairfield Cycle Hub – Avanti bid was successful - £7388 for another hangar, bicycle stand, bicycle tools and pump, bollard and signage – tomorrow (18 June) Mike and Andrew will measure up to prepare the planning application
- Oral history – possibility of National Lottery Heritage funding for recording and presenting – Adrienne is garnering local support

11. Events

- Fairfield Festival on Saturday 24 May 2025 – attendance was roughly half the usual number. We closed early due to deteriorating weather. Overall loss this year of £503. Combination of bad weather, closing two hours early and economic downturn affecting third party sponsorship. Bethany has offered to help with organising future events. The Gamelan is a substantial expense – we need to find ways of cutting that cost, perhaps by asking they find a sponsor. Global Village Kitchen has to pay their staff, which is more expensive than pizza, which is staffed by volunteers. Some people have asked about produce and plant stalls. Need something for older children. Need to take care that we don't end up turning the Fairfield Festival into the Fun Day by the back door. Andrew was extremely grateful to all the volunteers, especially Mike and Jon. Den Barry from Prostrate Cancer may be worth contacting for sponsorship of loos in the future.
- North Lancashire Wildlife Group (NLWG) – Sunday 25 May – this was very successful
- Wild Roots Nature Fest – 14 & 15 June – nature walks around the reserve organised by Ros Jones – this was very successful
- Open Yards – 21 & 22 June – only 12 tickets sold so far. People can buy on the day. Approximately 500 hits on the website.
- Apple Day – Veronica Dunne has organised the last two events. Hilary will ask if she is prepared to do it again when she sees her later in the week.

12. AOB

- The wildflower flower boards are up in the Storey until Saturday to promote Open Yards
- The wildlife board has dropped and requires attention – Hilary and Ian P will mention it to Rebekah
- The gate by Pony Wood has had the rubber partly ripped off – Ian P will sort tomorrow
- Dog in Lower Sowerholme field barking at cattle today. We need to find out how it got in and make the boundary secure.

13. Date of next meeting

- The next meeting will take place at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 15 July at the Tite & Locke
- There will be no meeting in August
- AGM is Tuesday 23 September in the Auditorium at The Storey
- Subsequent FA Business meeting is Tuesday 21 October 2025

Mosquito surveillance and bird disease

▼ *Culex pipiens*,
a species known for
feeding on birds.



Following the detection of Usutu virus in Blackbirds (*BTO News* 351), the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) launched a national volunteer-led survey to monitor mosquitoes during 2024. The Snapshot Mosquito Survey, co-ordinated by UKHSA in association with Vector-Borne RADAR – a collaborative project involving BTO, investigating mosquito-borne viruses in wild birds – aims to gather data on mosquito species and local virus transmission, to further our understanding of risk to wild birds.

In 2024, mosquito traps were set in each 50-km grid square in England. Wetland habitats, key sites for both migratory birds that may be infected with Usutu and bird-biting mosquitoes that may be circulating the virus, were targeted for the survey. Volunteers across the country ran traps for two three-night 'snapshot' sessions, once in August and again in September. Habitats varied from bogs,

marshes, reedbeds, floodplains, lakes, and reservoirs. The project was widely supported by BTO volunteers, particularly in filling gaps in the south-west and the east of England. All mosquito samples were identified, and the females, which need blood to develop their eggs, were separated and screened for viruses.

A total of 867 mozzies was caught, many in locations that had not been surveyed before. Of England's 35 native species, Snapshot caught 12 of the more common and widespread. The majority were species associated with wetlands and known for their preference for feeding on birds. The project also provided evidence that Usutu is more widely distributed than previously confirmed and future work is planned to further investigate.

To learn more about the Snapshot Mosquito Survey and take part this year, please visit:
www.vb-radar.com/mosquito-map