

Folly Wood Members' Meeting, 4 February 2023

Present: Nigel Westaway (chair), Dominique Shead (minutes), Ruth Illingworth, Andy Freedman, Tom Sykes, John McLellan, Barbara Imrie, Ben Spencer, Jackie Rowanly, Pete & Helen Nightingale

Apologies: Nick Weir & Carol Mathews, Gabriel Kaye, Paul & Clare Sheridan, Graham Russell, Richard & Helen Keating, Wendy Gerard, Frances Dathan & Magnus Taylor, Mark Harrison

Welcome and apologies

Nigel wished to minute his thanks to Dom for doing a lot of work on the wood this past year during his chairmanship.

Matter arising from the last meeting

Andy tried to speak to Eddie at Wades Farm re his wood mizer, will try again. Ruth said the Uplands Community Hub would not be visiting the wood until the summer.

Report from social / events group

Tom, Frances and Andy have been working on producing guidelines for events that members can follow, and also pre-prepared templates for risk assessments for members to download. They have divided possible event/social bookings into four groups: large member gatherings (including non-members), small member gatherings (including non-members), wood management meetings (work days etc) and co-op events (celebratory events). The details will be passed to the ecology group for final discussion and then go onto the website.

Andy suggested a social gathering on Sunday 26 March, possibly including food, campfire, singing, some work, a wildflower survey, and the AGM.

Report from ecology group

1. Flower survey. It is intended to continue with the wildflower survey in the wood throughout 2023. These will be held (mostly) on the last Saturday of each month, and a list of dates will go out to members soon. Anyone is welcome to join in.
2. Bird survey. A friend of Helen Nightingale's who's an expert on birdsong might be persuaded to come down from Derbyshire sometime in the spring.
3. Pond. A suitable place has been earmarked for a large woodland pond, approx. 20 x 10 feet, below the campfire area (where lots of larch were felled and pushed down the hill). A few larch on the south side of it would need to be felled to create more light, plus maybe a branch or two off a nearby beech. A robust, long-lasting liner would probably cost about £500, and water storing ideas would need to be explored. The meeting approved the idea in principle. A report for all members to assess the project will be sent out soon.

'Growing Places'

Growing Places (see info sheet attached) is an arts-led project originated by Walking the Land, which aims to support farmers and landowners in working together to address climate change. Cotswold National Landscape, SCA, Oakbrook and Hawkwood are already signed up and it was proposed and agreed that Stroud Woodland Co-op should join as well. At present, funding is still pending. Andy will keep us updated.

AOB

1. Jackie has been involved in an arboretum project and has nurtured 12 hazel saplings, which she'd like to plant in the wood. It was suggested planting a circle of them in the clearing where there's lots of bramble.

2. A newsletter will be sent out soon to members re the following: the date of the AGM (Sunday 26th March); the guidelines and risk assessments prepared by the social / events group; the proposal of creating a woodland pond, with approximate costings, for approval by the membership; the dates of the 2023 wildflower surveys; and Ben's net (Ben Spencer has a large net for children to play on which he'd like to pass on to another family).