

Folly Wood AGM, 7 April 2024

Present: Nigel Westaway (acting chair in Tom Sykes' absence), Dominique Shead (secretary), Mark Harrison (treasurer), Paul & Clare Sheridan, Ruth Illingworth, Andy Freedman, Ben Spencer, Richard & Helen Keating, John McLellan, Barbara Imrie, Carol Mathews, Nick Weir, Angie & John Hill, Helen & Pete Nightingale.

Apologies: Tom Sykes, Martin Benson, Jackie Rowanly, Frances Dathan, Graham Russell, Adam Biscoe, Wendy Gerard.

Minutes of 2023 AGM

Last year's minutes were distributed and approved (prop. Barbara, sec. Nick).

Finance Report

Mark summarized the accounts (see attached). We made a £377 surplus over the year; the costs for the pond will be in next year's accounts. 60% of members paid the voluntary annual donation of £20 (up from 50% last year). Helen Keating will be sending out an email about this shortly and it was agreed that Mark/Dom would send out reminders to those who hadn't donated, encouraging them to do so! The accounts were approved (prop. Andy, sec. Clare, no objections; if any member wishes to check them, please get in touch). HMRC has agreed to register us as a dormant company and as such its regulations do not require us to be audited. The meeting agreed an audit was not needed (prop. Nick, sec. Andy, no objections).

Secretary's Report

Dom read out her report (see attached).

Election of directors

Tom has agreed to do another year as chair. As per the rules, which state that a third of the directors (i.e. 2 people) should stand down each year and then stand for re-election, Paul and Barbara stood down and Paul was re-elected (prop. Carol, sec. Andy, no objections). Barbara did not wish to be re-elected, and she was thanked by the meeting for all her past work. John McLellan was elected in her place (prop. Barbara, sec. Pete, no objections). Dom was thanked for her work. We now have the following 7 directors: Tom, Dom, Mark, Nigel, Paul, Ben, John.

AOB

1. Monthly wood inspections. Carolyn Buckley, who organized the monthly inspections by sending out reminders and forms to people on her list, has now sold her share (many thanks to her for all her past work). Adam Biscoe has kindly agreed to take over from her. Dom suggested starting the list from scratch again, to give members the opportunity to change months if they want to, or stop doing them, and for new members to join in if they'd like to. Pete & Helen Nightingale, Angie & John Hill, and Carol & Nick expressed an interest. It was agreed that Dom would email everyone soon to get this set up, and also attach a form to her email so that everyone knows what to look out for when they're in the wood.
2. Nick Weir informed the meeting about a new group called Stroud Commons, which aims to bring together, as an umbrella organization, similar-minded groups to share information on upcoming land sales and apply for funding. They are having a meeting on 19 May and Nick asked if 2 members could attend on behalf of Folly Wood. Ben and Mark volunteered.
3. Growing Places. Richard and Andy gave a progress report on the Growing Places project (discussed at previous meetings). Larch felled in the wood will be going towards building a new compost facility at Stroud Community Agriculture and towards building a gingerbread house which will move from place to place and act as a centre of creativity. The latter is unlikely to be situated in Folly Wood because of the terrain, but workshops might take place in the wood.
4. Ben had a surplus number of Small Woods magazines, which he distributed to members.