

Minutes of members' meeting 1/11/25

Present: Ben Spencer, Mark Harrison, John McLellan, Paul and Clare Sheridan, Chiz Harward, Oli Rodker, Adam Biscoe, Dominique Shead

Apologies: Carol Mathews, Nick Weir, Barbara Imrie, Andy Freedman, Ruth Illingworth, Tom Sykes, Nigel Westaway, Richard and Helen Keating, Julia Wade, Nick Mills

Update on Slade Wood

After a conflict of interest was uncovered by our previous solicitors, we have now taken on Loxley, who specialise in buying and selling land and were recommended by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. ID checks have been done, and Loxley are now waiting to hear from the vendors' solicitors. Progress is slow!

Meanwhile, we have had a tree survey done by an arboreal consultant to find out if there are any trees that need to be taken down or monolithed (top section removed and section of the trunk left standing for biodiversity benefit). The report mentions 8 higher risk trees, 3 medium risk and 1 low risk. It was decided to get quotes from Jason, Chiz and possibly others to see how much this work would cost. Ben will organise a group visit. Mark suggested it might be possible to collaborate with Martin Jakes if he's also having work done in Sladebank Wood.

Felling in Folly Wood

Ben, Mark and Dom walked round the wood with Jason in October, and agreed that Jason should plan 3 days of felling: mainly dead larch and elm, plus some low hanging branches over the road. He has already done 2 of these days; the 3rd is on Thursday 20th November, and if anyone is available to help Jason on that day, that would be great. In addition, he will be taking down the rest of the beech tree by the campfire on Saturday 10th January (leaving a 10m monolith). Please put this in your diary if you'd like to help as we'll need plenty of people there (Dom will also add it to the WhatsApp group).

We also discussed what use any felled timber could be put to. Chiz said he could mill small amounts himself, make shakes (wooden tiles) and Swedish candles (fires made from upright logs). John received a quote from Eddie at Wades Farm of £2,400 to take away and mill 6 larches. We wondered what the demand among members was for buying milled larch? Like the larch produced previously, this would be useful for e.g. fence and shed making and will be of much more consistent dimensions. If you're keen, please let us know.

Work day, then solstice celebration

The winter solstice this year falls at 3.03pm on Sunday 21st December, so we thought we would celebrate with a fire at 3pm. And those that would like to can do a couple of hours' work in the wood beforehand, as there are a few small dead trees near the road that members could despatch themselves, as well as a big branch that has fallen into the field on the side of the wood (near the bottom entrance), luckily without damaging the fence.

AOB

Mark wished to thank Ben for the work he's done with the solicitors.