

**MINUTES of OLIVER'S BATTERY COUNTRYSIDE GROUP AGM held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at 7.30p in the Conservation Area**

**Present** – Norma Goodwin, Alison Hull, Helen Short, Martin Keys, Peter Land, Clare and Brian Shorter, Wendy Bramall and Joy Morgan.

**Apologies** – Celia Cox

**Minutes of 2011 AGM** – Correct, proposed by CS and seconded by Brian S. All in agreement.

**Matters Arising** – All matters are within the Chairman's and Treasurer's Report.

**Chairman's Report (May 2011 – May 2012)**

This annual report of the activities of this small but dedicated group continues to surprise me each year on two counts:

- 1) we seem to spend more time each year concerned with trying to encourage local people to enjoy the wildlife in this small area and presenting at events than we actually spend caring for it, and:
- 2) the number of activities we DO organise in the CA are generally poorly attended by OB residents yet we receive encouragement from the Parish Council.

From this I can only conclude that OBPC and local people are happy with how we are managing and developing the wildlife conservation area and that they enjoy it in their own way in their own time. However we do want more members so we can tell more people about events so they are better supported, otherwise we are on a downward spiral. Ideally we would like younger, fitter members to help with occasional heavy work such as strimming, hay raking and eventually in the fullness of time to take on the management. To this end we recently reduced the membership fee to only £1 as an experiment for one year as our running costs are currently low whilst the PC pays out for BTCV membership and insurance. The public events we ran were:

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> June Moth Trapping with Tim Walker who brought his equipment and expertise from St Cross. Good turn out of both members and non-members of all ages. Strimming of grass continued this month.

Weds 27<sup>th</sup> July Night walk at Shawford looking for bats (seen) and glow worms.

Sat 30<sup>th</sup> July joint meeting with Butterfly Conservation at Yew Hill. For various reasons only one member could attend but 21 species were seen and members tend to visit Yew Hill at other times. Big Butterfly Count posters were displayed at CA to help visitors recognise native butterflies.

28<sup>th</sup> August Haymaking Picnic actively supported by Charlotte Bailey, County Councillor, who has access to funds! Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August Moth Trapping with Tim again. Two grass strimming sessions. Paths cut through grassy area.

10<sup>th</sup> Sept OB Fete. We had a stall called "Hidden Neighbours"

23/24 and 25/26 September two mammal trapping sessions. Caught wood mice.

10 & 11<sup>th</sup> October area inside gate cleared in preparation for new wild flower meadow. . New wild flower meadow sown with chalk grassland seeds and over sown with annual meadow mix. On the 20th a new Blackboard was installed for people to chalk up wild life sightings. David Askew kindly made it and installed it for no cost to the group. Thanks David! Three members selected 2 traditional Hampshire apple trees and a plum tree to be grafted by Chris Bird of Sparsholt College, hopefully to be planted in Spring 2013.

21<sup>st</sup> December members get together in the Bell pub.

29<sup>th</sup> January 2012 Big Garden Birdwatch. Despite the cold we were joined by 2 members Mark and Andrew.

Weds February 8<sup>th</sup> Presentation to Winchester Group of Hampshire Wildlife Trust about the whole project. This was a valuable and worthwhile event and the committee members enjoyed reflecting on achievements. Norma, Martin and Clare enjoyed talking to the photos organised by Peter, with Brian and Alison's help.

March 17th wildflower meadow finally belatedly "mown", buddleia pruned and brambles removed, blackthorn removed & general spring tidy up. For three days in April Peter continued his war on Spanish Bluebells and is winning!

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May, Presentation to OBPC at their AGM, 15 minutes only so a rapid resume was given by Martin & Clare. Recognition given to PC support at initial stages of project and now by paying our BTCV membership and insurance (from profits of the OB fete).

### **Treasurer's Report (1/4/2011 – 31/3/2012)**

Balance at 31/3/2012 was	£1019.23
Income from membership fees	£ 75
Donations	£ 40
OB Parish Council(insurance)	£ 228.01
Total	£ 343.01

#### Expenditure

Insurance and BTCV membership	£228.01
Website	£ 32.40
Petrol for strimmer	£ 7.00
Laminator pouches, linseed oil and white spirit	£ 23.85
Speaker's expenses	£ 10.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>£301.26</u>

Balance in current a/c £1060.98

A proposal to support the reduction in membership fees was made by MK and seconded by AH.  
A proposal to go for a recruitment drive was made by NG and seconded by BS

## **Election of Officers**

CS was willing to continue as chairman and proposed by MK and seconded by PL.  
NG was willing to continue as secretary and proposed by CS and seconded by JM.  
MK was willing to continue as treasurer and proposed by BS and seconded by AH.

PL agreed to continue as website manager.

AH and BS wished to continue on committee.  
WB as a member and as artist in residence.  
JM as link with WI.

## **Future Action for consideration**

Starter pack for new members.  
Interpretation board. NG to follow up.  
Another bench  
Arrange an Olympics green walk locally.  
Jubilee celebrations?  
Parish Fete – take part. Possibly a colouring picture for children?  
Joint events with Butterfly Conservation – MK to contact Jane Chapman. Possibly grasshoppers as a theme.  
Facebook.  
Sell bowser

## **Future Work in the Conservation Area**

Free trees – community event following the fete  
Monitor and record  
Strim paths and grass.  
Fruit bearing plants – from Sparsholt College?  
Bats event end of August

## **Any Other Business**

The chairman of OB Parish Council had not responded to CS's email ref. the wording of the signs at the entrances to the CA.

NG was now the parish tree warden.

Fundraising was necessary to maintain the financial viability of OBCG. Possibly could start with a talk to the OB WI for a small fee. WI meets on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday and speakers usually do a 45 min presentation.

*Norma Goodwin*