

THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF FRIEZE HILL COMMUNITY ORCHARD HELD ON THURSDAY 9 MARCH 2017 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Mary Bagshawe, Chris Ball, Fran Brenan, Pauline Clarke, Linda Conway, Ross Friend, Margaret Gibson, Rob Hartley, Pete Lofthouse, Jeff Mohun, Peter Morris, Susann Parker, Joyce Thomas, Caroline Turner and Richard Turner.

Margaret welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed them that we would be joined later by Crispin Reed, Director of the new Taunton Cider Company.

APOLOGIES: Ian Bailey, Christine Broad, Sue Goodman, Anne Lashmar, Liz Mohun, Rod Porter, Christine and Neil Procter, Freda Storey and Tony Trott.

The minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

Ross had made a lovely new sign and thanks were given for this.

The Hazels had been coppiced but would regrow.

The unveiling of the parrot's grave had not happened due to other commitments and the illness of its owner.

ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee had met 6 times between January and December initially every 2 months but it was felt that this was too infrequent so now the meetings were every 6 weeks. There had also been sub-Committee meetings to discuss the Wassail. There had also been work-in mornings including the tree planting session in November.

Membership of the Committee had remained as before.

MAINTENANCE

Mary gave the background on what happens when someone makes an initial enquiry about donating a tree to the actual planting. There were already 3 requests for trees for November 2017. The cost was £40. There was still room for more trees. Pruning had recently been carried out.

The hedges had been cut and paid for by the Routes to the River Tone Project. A good job had been done. Chris raised concern about the young blackthorn being cut which may have had Brown Hairstreak butterfly eggs on. The Committee apologised for not checking if this was in fact the case.

PROPOSED BUSINESS PARK ON ADJACENT FIELD

Outline planning approval had been given for a business park on the next field. The Committee had submitted its views. We will comment on the more detailed application when that is submitted.

CENTENARY FIELDS IN TRUST STATUS

Fran gave the background to the bequest of the orchard land by Henry Gribble Turner. There will be an unveiling of the sign in the coming months after siting discussions with Councillor Catherine Herbert and the DLO.

NOTICE THIEF

There was a notice thief in the orchard who regularly removes any notice we put up. If anyone sees this happening please let us know who it is.

MEMBERSHIP

Caroline reported that the membership stood at 84. Members had received one newsletter this year. The website would be up-dated so that people apart from Margaret could up-date it. Facebook had really taken off and currently had 141 followers.

It was felt that when recruitment of new people was taking place people shied away from being members because they felt they would have to do a lot of work which is not the case. Agreed that we would now call members “friends” of the orchard which felt more relaxed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

2016 had been a good year with a £200 surplus. The membership was up. We had bought a new gazebo for our events and other equipment.

We no longer have to pay for membership of the FCFCG.

There was £1,665.47 at bank with £538 coming out shortly for another new gazebo.

Jeff was thanked. Tony Trott was thanked for auditing the accounts.

ELECTION OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee would consist of the same people with the same officers in post. New people were welcome to join if they wished.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Linda asked if some of Nina Cox’s ashes could be placed by a tree. This was agreed and it was agreed that the Committee would purchase a tree for Nina as she had been an original member.

Joyce thought that the orchard was looking like a cemetery. Agreed that this would be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

Thanks were given to Chris for allowing us to store our equipment in his garage.

Margaret thanked everyone for coming. She thanked Caroline and Jeff for their hard work through the year.

There then followed a very enjoyable talk by Crispin Reed.