

FRIENDS OF KNOLLS WOOD
AGM JUNE 9, 2010

PRESENT:

V Jones, M Cook, J Creasey, J Monk, J Kiddle, F Grover, T Green, C Atkins, T Seldon, S Williams, G Monk, E Griffith, W Griffith, J Taylor, P Fisher, M Fisher, P Kiddle, J Williams, L Burnett, J Pick, C Pick, J Halstead

APOLOGIES

John Cook, Jackie Grover, Jack Owens

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The chairman, Victor Jones, introduced the FOKW committee members. He went on to outline the FOKW objectives and achievements 2010 (copy attached) and emphasised that we now have 13 links with our website. Victor urged people to visit the website. He showed a few pages to point out that the photographic side is improving. He praised John Foreman for his continuing work on our website. The chairman then outlined the plans for the next year and invited comments on our newsletters and general ideas for improvement. He thanked everyone for attending and mentioned the P3 GROUP Walk on the 26th June.

MINUTES OF AGM 2009

These were accepted

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Clive Atkins, presented his report. The expenditure this year has been nearly £2000. Website improvements have been carried out by John Foreman for less than £10 a month and 360 double sided colour newsletters have been distributed to members three times a year. Our Coop Bank account statement now shows a balance of £1600. The committee is not expecting to receive any more money, but a bill for trees is imminent, so a balance of £1200 – £1300 is more accurate.

If we decide to pay for new gates, then we could do a collection for that purpose. We have taken photos of the old gates and the cost of new ones is around £1000 each. We are trying to maintain the woodland for the next 100 or so years

Do we want to ask for more donations? If we go to members with a particular plan in mind, people will be more likely to donate. It was suggested that a redwood would be nice to plant and John Creasey has costed them at about £60 each. The silver birches are coming down and need to be replaced.

The Treasurer concluded by asking what else members would like the committee to do. He urged members to contact the committee to let us know their views.

RESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE

The committee stood down

RE-ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE

Victor said that, since he is not here for much of the year and this is not fair on the other committee members, he intended to stand down, but would like to remain as a committee member.

The following members expressed their willingness to stand again: Clive Atkins (treasurer), Maggie Cook (secretary), Jenny Monk, Toni Seldon, Sylvia Williams, Jack Owens, Joan Kiddle, Frank Grover.

Tony Green, who is planning to leave the area, said that he will stand as long as he is in the neighbourhood. The committee thanked Tony for the brilliant work he has done, particularly his input to the website and newsletters.

It was proposed that Victor continue as chairman on a part-time basis. Victor was voted in as chairman for the year 2010 - 2011

TALK BY JON BALAAM

The business of the meeting having concluded, Victor welcomed Jon Balaam, Director of the Greensand Trust in charge of Fundraising and Development, who talked on the subject of The Developments at Rushmere.

Jon Balaam thanked everyone for his invitation to speak and for looking after one of the GST's green spaces.

He went on to outline The Rushmere project - the history, where we are now and what the future plans are. Stockgrove, Rushmere and Oak Wood are 3 adjoining sites, 400 acres in all, and the whole area can be considered to be in the same league as Dunstable Downs and other such sites.

After his talk, Jon took questions. He offered to find out answers to those questions which he was unable to answer.

Q: Access road and dangers of the road near the lake.

A: We need to plan ahead - maybe install a roundabout or a protected right turn; managing car parking and encouraging people to use public transport.

Q: What about the involvement of schools and the children who will become stakeholders?

A: This is a very good point. Jon said that he will change his presentation to include slides about the potential educational benefits. By engaging children this will give the GST feedback. The GST would like to create a base for educational activities. Stockgrove is ok, but the café is limited in terms of a venue for educational children's activities. At the GST it is very important to engage children and the principal of building a base for educational activities is very much at the core of the plans. It will be good if there is a site for such things as the bug lab.

Q: Will there be links with schools?

A: The rangers do talk to Heads of Science and schools

Q: There are concerns among the allotment holders at Heath and Reach regarding the rumour of a paved path right through the middle of the allotments. There is already a great deal of vandalism there and, while the allotment holders are in favour of the project, they are worried that their views may not be represented

A: The views of the allotment holders are very important and they will be consulted.

Q: In next six months which paths will be opened?

A: 2 potential routes - one linking the Greensand walk; there are a couple of new routes planned over the next 2 months. Jon said that he will let us have more information when he has it.

Q: Notices say that dogs should be on leads. Is it intended that dogs should be on leads?

A: Jon said that he appreciates worries about dogs off-lead. If we are to preserve the birdlife, a lot of them are ground nesters and dogs would scare them, so it will be necessary to have dogs on leads in some areas. We need to appreciate that there are a great number of dog walkers. But we need to manage the dog control quite strongly. At Stockgrove on the whole it is well managed.

Q: Is paintballing going to be included?

A: When the site was bought there was paintballing in place and if we want to get rid of it, it could be very expensive. One would have imagined that it is a profitable thing but it is not as revenue-creating as possible. It is a legitimate business and has a right to be there. But at the moment it is not fully contained and it needs to be segregated more. It wouldn't be fair to exclude the paintballing, but it may be possible to move it to another site. If it hadn't already been there, then it would probably not have been one of the things in the plans. It takes place in one of the less attractive parts so it's not such a problem.

Victor thanked Jon for giving an excellent talk. He also thanked everyone for coming along and urged people to keep the communications up. He advertised the work party on 27th June (11:30am) followed by a bbq opposite 55 Redwood Glade (2pm) and closed the meeting.