



Pershore's Community Wetland & Local Nature Reserve

AGM MINUTES

Meeting held at Pershore Civic Centre on Wed 20 July 2022 at 6.30 pm

Committee Members Present: R. Stott, K. Pomfret, R. Gillmor, V. Wood, T. Hutton, D. Wilson, L. Etheridge, J. Burgin

Friends present as per attached list.

1. **Apologies:** Peter Avis, Jane Bugg, Kirstie & Peter Chippendale, Sue Comely, Paul Jenkins, Andrew Keener, Roger Mason, Charles Tucker.

2. **Minutes of last AGM meeting on 10 November 2021 agreed as a true record.**

3. **Chairman's Report:** as per attached.

4. **Treasurer's Report** (2021) as per attached.

5. **Election of Trustees**

According to the Constitution [Clause 11(1)(b)], $\frac{1}{3}$ (3) trustees should step down by rotation each year for re-election by members.

a) Election of Trustees:

Trustees stepping down by rotation but eligible for re-election:

Val Wood (currently Secretary)

Tim Hutton (currently Membership Secretary)

Both trustees proposed for re-election by Jean O'Loughlin and seconded by John Boon; unanimously agreed.

b) Trustees stepping down by rotation not seeking re-election:

K Pomfret (currently Vice Chairman)

c) For information:

Other committee members are either trustees not eligible for re-election or members co-opted by the trustees [Clause 16(1)]. These do not have to be elected by members.

Trustees: J. Burgin, S. Comely, Bob Gillmor, Richard Stott (Chairman), C. Tucker

Committee Members: L. Etheridge, D. Wilson.

6. **Queries:**

i) John Boon suggested that all officers should provide a list of responsibilities to be passed on to future potential replacements.

Chairman Richard Stott assured him that this is already in hand.

- ii) John Lynch queried whether a new trustee will be appointed to replace Ken Pomfret.

Reply from Chairman that this would be done by the trustee board and there is a limit of 15 with a minimum number of 3. There are now currently 7.

7. AOB:

Website: RS reported that Geoff Moore from CISCO SYSTEMS had been allowed by his company to assist a charitable organization such as ours for a year.

The website was now up and running but needs some adjusting to the design to enable use and input by other members. Any volunteers would be welcome.

8. Date of Next Committee Meeting:

Tuesday, 16th August 2022.

Meeting closed at 7pm to be followed by a photographic presentation by Jeff Steady.

Chairman's Report for 2022 AGM

Presented to the AGM held in Pershore Civic Centre on Wednesday 20 July 2022

Welcome to this, the 12th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Avon Meadows.

Introduction: As the pressing threat of COVID recedes, life for the Friends of Avon Meadows approaches something like normality. As most of our group events are outdoors, the risk of infection is indeed low, but it is still present, and I am sure we all know friends who have been laid low by the disease.

Once more I would like to give personal thanks to the Committee for their support and hard work during the year. Nothing changes; the workload falls most heavily certain committee members; Treasurer, Bob Gillmor, Secretary, Val Wood, and Membership Secretary, Tim Hutton so particular thanks to them. Continued support from the landowners, Wychavon DC and Pershore TC, and particularly their representatives on the Committee, Jim Burgin and Liz Etheridge, is greatly appreciated and many thanks to them too.

I would also like to thank Peter Dann of Clifford, Crick & Sharp for inspecting our annual accounts once more.

It would be wrong of me to let this moment pass without giving huge thanks to our Vice Chairman and Project Coordinator, Ken Pomfret, and his work party volunteers who cut reeds and keep the paths trim among many other things.

This year, I would like to give particular thanks to Ken for his considerable effort in organising the work parties ever since we started, and also keeping work parties going throughout pandemic. Additionally, he has masterminded most of the construction projects we have carried out over the last 12 years. During this time, he became a Floodplain Meadows Ambassador and has been a driving force behind the wildflower re-introduction programme. As if this was not enough, he carries out countless maintenance tasks both keeping machinery going and fixing all the little things that break or go wrong about the place. You may have guessed by now that this is leading up to something, as indeed it is. Ken and Gwen are to move away from the area shortly to live near their daughter and in so doing will leave a huge gap both on the Committee of Avon Meadows and among the many friends they have made during their time here. It is true to say that Avon Meadows would look very different without Ken's drive and determination to get things done. All it is left for me to do now is to hope their move goes smoothly and their new life is all they hope it to be. I should add my personal thanks to Ken for his help and friendship over the dozen years or so that I have known him. He will leave a huge gap the size of which we will only be fully realised after he has moved away.

Site Management and Development: This year has been another year of extraordinary plant growth, with almost certainly a higher than average hay crop and the footpaths would have become rapidly overgrown without the efforts of the work parties. The Common Knapweed I commented on last year is going from strength to strength with the number of plants doubling over this period and new plants appearing in the North Meadow for the first time. Yellow-rattle is becoming more established which, as it weakens grass growth, is necessary for wildflowers to flourish, another benefit. All this is excellent news as it is a clear demonstration that the efforts of Liz and Ken with the re-introduction programme are beginning to show results.

Most of you will know that Avon Meadows was the subject of two arson attacks earlier in the year whereby two large areas of reeds were burnt to the ground. The reeds that burned were last year's growth which, warm weather and drying winds, had rendered tinder dry. Worse damage would have occurred were it not for the efforts of the Pershore Fire Brigade to which we give our thanks.

As anticipated the reeds grew back vigorously as their regrowth relies on rhizomes lying 50 centimetres or so below the surface which were not affected by the flames. However, we do not know what effect the fires had on ground nesting birds such as Moorhens and Water Rails for, at the time of the fires, they would have started nesting. There appears to be a much more marked decline in nesting Sedge and Reed Warblers both of which build their nests in the previous year's reeds. In preparing this report I checked the records from last year and comparing the year so far with the year to this time in 2021 I was shocked to discover that there has been a 32% decrease in records of these warblers. So, while everything is superficially fine, in reality this is not the case.

After a COVID induced delay I am pleased to say that much of the contractors' work that has been delayed for the last 2 years has gone out for re-tendering and is planned to start up in September.

Funding: Funding is always an issue and at present we still obtain Government funding from the Higher Tier Stewardship Scheme. Given the complexity of the Government's new Environmental Land Management Scheme it is no surprise that its introduction has been delayed. In the meantime, the old Higher Tier Stewardship Scheme has been rolled over to provide essential funds for our work on Avon Meadows.

It is encouraging to learn that Avon Meadows is involved in a regional scheme aimed at the new Environmental Land Management Scheme which is being coordinated by the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. The purpose is to gain a higher level of funding under the new scheme. Work is in progress to justify this, in part, by measuring the amount of carbon sequestration in wetlands such as Avon Meadows. Members (including Ken) have been working with the Floodplain Meadows Partnership in plant monitoring and soil analysis to justify the claims quantitatively.

On a different tack, our membership continues to rise, and our Newsletter now goes out to over 400 members. Although it is one of our principles that we do not ask for subscriptions to become a member there is no doubt that your subscriptions are extremely useful. We have 40 life members and a good many Supporting Members who make an annual donation of £5 each, some more than that. Of course we are delighted when a member is so enthused by Avon Meadows and the work carried out there that they elect to make a donation, but we are even more delighted if this can be done by means of a Standing Order as it does so much to simplify our administration.

There are a lot of new people moving into Pershore some of whom must be membership material. Remember, all I need to enrol someone as a member is a name and eMail address. Regard yourselves as ambassadors for Avon Meadows and draw them in!

Forum:

Plans are afoot to hold the promised forum this autumn. Notification will be sent out to you in good time. We are expecting that this will be an interesting and useful (to us at least!) event so I do encourage you to take part.

Records: Just four more species were added to the species count for Avon Meadows since the last AGM, the total now stands at 1,164 species. Perhaps the most exciting and surprising addition to the species list this year was our first orchid, a single Pyramidal Orchid found in the South Meadow. Nobody understands how it came to be there, perhaps it has been there for years lying dormant and conditions in mid-2022 were just right for it, so it flowered.

The dragonfly transects have been carried out again by Paul Jenkins and Kirstie Chippendale the butterfly transects, and I would like to thank them for their continued work in these areas. Numbers of both are a little down on last year although it is too early to say more at a July AGM which is still quite early in the season for these species groups.

The Bird Group continues to monitor on Thursday mornings with enthusiastic observers now able to count as a group with the reduction of the COVID risk. The species variety is down on recent years with the present count standing at 88 species for 2022 and no new species for Avon Meadows so far. Part of the reason may be that the scrape dried out much earlier than in recent years so spring water-birds were not tempted to call in and be recorded. There was excitement though as a Barn Owl occupied one of our owl nest boxes and provided the spectacle of it hunting over the North Meadow in late evening and early morning. This is our 54th breeding bird species on Avon Meadows.

Moth trapping sessions are back to normal although there have only been 2 so far this year. One species, a Slender Pug, has been added to the Avon Meadows moth list which now stands at 399! As with other insect groups it is too early to say whether this is a good or bad year for moths although the present counts have been well up to average.

Recording is a really important part of our activities on Avon Meadows, I would even go so far as to say essential. As the volume of records increases over the years, they provide an important historical record of what went on, which, in turn, can be used to help us get funding to further our activities. I would encourage you all to join in with our recording activities, either with an established group or you could start your own spider group! Each year we get a number of interesting records from people who keep their eyes open and photograph things that they think are odd or unusual. Please do this and send me the photographs together with a date and time and a short comment on where it was found. While I certainly cannot identify everything that gets sent in, I often know someone who can! In that way, I can let you know what you have found and also add it to our records.

So, the year on Avon Meadows has been, like the Curate's Egg, good in parts.

It is your Wetland to use and enjoy and our goal is to help you do that.

Richard Stott
Chairman
20 July 2022

FoAM Treasurer's Report for 2022 AGM

Presented to the AGM held in Pershore Civic Centre on Wednesday 20 July 2022



Receipts and Payments Account 2021 - 2022

£	£		£
2019-20	2020-21	Receipts	2021-22
300.00	250.00	Pershore Town Council Grant	0.00
500.00	0.00	Severn Trent Water donation	0.00
290.00	0.00	Waitrose donation	0.00
465.00	0.00	Guided Lilies donation	0.00
0.00	250.00	Pershore Rotary donation	0.00
670.00	1985.00	Members' donations	880.00
1000.00	0.00	Pershore Round Table for Dipping Platform	750.00
0.00	0.00	Worcestershire County Council grant (1)	700.00
136.22	0.00	Sundry donations	1.00
3361.22	2485.00	Total	2331.00
Payments			
515.74	515.74	TCV Membership & Insurance Premium	515.74
321.06	0.00	Boat project (funded by Waitrose donation)	0.00
0.00	0.00	Plug plants (funded by Worcs. County Council) (1)	799.79
0.00	0.00	Notice Boards	66.04
388.16	22.94	Machinery Servicing and Repairs	113.23
352.10	193.56	Work Party supplies	347.99
37.67	29.35	Conservation and Recording project costs	67.19
18.00	32.93	Stationery, postage and administration	116.78
1632.73	794.52	Total	2026.76
1728.49	1690.48	Surplus/Deficit for the year	304.24

Note to the accounts

1. WCC Grant specifically for wild flower planting - actual cost slightly more than grant amount.

Prepared from the Books of Account and supporting vouchers supplied by Officers of the Group.

Approved by Committee

R.D.E. Stott (Hon. Chairman)

R.J. Gillmor (Hon. Treasurer)

Date

[Signature]
[Signature]
19 JULY 2022

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

I have examined the attached accounts for the year to 31st March 2022 and confirm that they are in accordance with the records and information supplied to me.



Peter Dann FCA
Chartered Accountant

Date

[Signature]
19 JULY 2022

BALANCES at 31st March 2022

£ 2019-20	£ 2020-21		£ 2021-22
0.00	0.00	Restricted Funds	0.00
2129.14	3819.14	Designated Funds (1)	4740.14
1681.99	1682.47	Unrestricted Funds	1065.71
3811.13	5501.61	Represented by: Bank Account	5805.85
0.00	0.00	Cash in Hand	0.00
3811.13	5501.61	Total of restricted and unrestricted funds	5805.85
1728.49	1690.48	Net Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	304.24
2082.64	3811.13	Opening balance	5501.61
3811.13	5501.61	Closing balance	5805.85

Notes to the Balance Sheet

- Designated funds are Machinery Reserve £414.93, Dipping Platform Fund £2714.21 and Life Memberships Reserve £1611.00
- The Friends own equipment funded by Awards for All which cost £1992.84 in 2011-12 and £4506.98 in 2013-14; funded by Welcome to our Future £3784.41 in 2015-16.
No value is shown in the accounts as it may not be sold without the donors' consent.