
FRIENDS OF PETERSFIELD HEATH
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 3 MAY 2016 AT 7.30pm
IN THE ROSE ROOM, PETERSFIELD FESTIVAL HALL**

Present: Richard Warton (Chairman), V. Pike (Secretary), D. Bailey, J. Barrow, D. Burstall, D. & R. Duffy, Cllr. L. Farrow (Mayor), B. & J. Glass, J. Gummerson, F. Harvey, B. & S. Lowe, M. Morgan, M. Oxley, M. Page (Speaker), S. Parnell, J. Pike, E. Pilliner, R. & T. Roberts, A. Robinson, A. Smallbone, A. Smith, G. Thomas, H. Warton, M. Watkinson, K. Wilson, M. Wolfe-Barry.

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from I. Baker, N. Brooke (Treasurer), J. Francis, D. & M. Greef, R. Hart, A. Luggier, Mr and Mrs D. Mantell, J. Mitchell, Cllr. V. Morgan, H. Pickles, C. Smith, and Cllr. P. Strawbridge

2. Minutes of 16th Annual General Meeting held on 28 April 2015

2.1 The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman

3. Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

4.1 The Chairman's Report is attached to these minutes.

5. Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016

5.1 In the absence of the Treasurer, the Chairman presented the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016, copies of which were circulated at the meeting. He highlighted the following:-

5.2 Income and Expenditure

Income of £1150 this year increased by £39 with 133 paid-up members compared with 136 last year. Donations of £545.85 this year were substantially up due primarily to a major donation of £450 from the Colles Trust. Total income was therefore substantially higher than 2015 at £1695.85.

Expenditure totalled £858.93 this year compared with £1568.92 in 2015, the key differences being:-

- No AGM speaker fee;
- No donations made this year;
- Increased printing cost at £330.65 due to printing a further 2500 FoPH leaflets;
- Leaflet design for additional leaflets amounted to £90;
- Postage at £25.92 was well down on last year thanks to less "snail mail" and more members on email;
- No hedging stake cost this year compared with £237.60 in 2015;
- New website domain names added this year
- Tools & Maintenance much lower this year by £172.62;
- Smart cart purchase in 2015 of £384.37 was a major contributor to last year's higher expenditure; (in response to a question from the floor, the Chairman explained that the smart cart is a labour-saving piece of equipment used by Work Party members for moving tools and bulky/heavy materials around the Heath);
- Social costs in both years related to FoPH contributions to the Xmas meal at the Plump Duck for volunteers and committee members – attendees personally paid an additional £2.50 each this year.

5.3 Balance Sheet

The Chairman drew attention to the following:-

- A higher cash balance this year-end primarily due to the "surplus" of Income over

Expenditure of £836.92;

- A new Reserve Fund arising from the donation of £600 from the East Hampshire Environmental Network (EHEN) who asked that the funds be specifically allocated to environmental activities. £501 was used to purchase chestnut stakes for dry hedging leaving a closing reserve balance of £99;
- The existing Reserve of £1000 from Petersfield Town Council for the maintenance of footpaths remains unused.

5.4 Gavin Thomas proposed and Mrs. Pilliner seconded the approval and adoption of the Accounts and this was agreed unanimously by a show of hands.

5.5 The Chairman thanked the Treasurer in his absence for the preparation of the Accounts and a vote of thanks was given to Mr. Alistair Stewart for again auditing the Accounts.

6. Election of Officers and Committee Members

6.1 Election of Chairman and Treasurer

Both Richard Warton and Nevill Brook were willing to serve again. Their re-appointment was proposed by Cllr. Farrow, seconded by Bruce Glass, and approved unanimously by a show of hands.

6.2 Secretary

Vivien Pike had indicated her wish to retire as Secretary. John Gummerson was proposed by Heidrun Warton, seconded by David Burstall and approved by a show of hands.

6.3 Committee Members

The following Committee Members were willing to stand again for the coming year: David Burstall, Mark Greef, Robin Hart, Melanie Oxley, John Pike, Vivien Pike, Peter Price (Newsletter Editor), Alf Smallbone, Gavin Thomas, and Heidrun Warton (Membership Secretary). In addition, Drake Hocking, who attends the Committee meetings as representative of the Petersfield Society was also willing to serve in his own right. The election of all of the above was proposed by Vivien Pike, seconded by Anne Smith and approved unanimously by a show of hands.

7. Any other business

7.1 There was no other business

8. Talk on Butser Ancient Farm by Maureen Page, Director

8.1 Maureen gave a presentation, interspersed with photographs, on the role, history and buildings of Butser Ancient Farm, which was set up over 40 years ago to test archaeologists' theories about life in the past. The farm displays on-going constructions of Iron Age and other buildings based on real sites, crops from pre-history and rare breeds of animals such as goats, sheep and chickens. The buildings include five round houses, a Roman villa and a Saxon house based on the remains of one found in Chalton.

Activities (essentially experiments) have included the making of a log boat which was used on the Heath pond, the construction of a trebuchet (a Roman catapult), and metal-working producing such things as a replica of a knife found by the People of the Heath Project. The farm hosts numerous events including Celtic festivals, workshops on Roman cooking, and educational visits for schools embracing aspects of the national curriculum. The presentation was followed by a lively and informative question and answer session. Melanie Oxley drew the talk to a close, thanking Maureen for an interesting and stimulating presentation.

9. Presentation to the retiring Secretary

9.1 Richard Warton thanked Vivien both personally and on behalf of all the Friends for her 14 years dedicated work as Secretary, and expressed his personal gratitude for the invaluable support she had given him in his time as Chairman. On behalf of the many Friends who had contributed, he then presented Vivien with a gift of flowers and a weekend break in the New Forest.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm, followed by refreshments and informal discussions.

DJG - 13 May 2016

FoPH Chairman's report 2015/16

It has been an interesting first year for me as your new Chairman with the Friends having had a very productive and successful season.

Our membership has steadily increased over the year and now stands at 154 helped by the redesign of our leaflet and better liaison with the press. This, and our new banner flag kindly donated by Melanie, has enabled us to make more people aware of the Friends and the work the volunteers undertake.

We have plans to develop this further with a new web site that John and Melanie are working on in the hope it will modernise the present one, making it more accessible and vibrant and covering wider subjects of interest.

Looking back over the year I recall a successful People of the Heath event in which our stall recruited new members and successfully sold many jars of donated home-made jam.

Early in the spring Robin and Mark, with funds donated by the PTC, undertook the rejuvenation of an old seat on Music Hill. This bench from the old golf course days overlooked the Pond and was dedicated to the memory of John Parnell.

David has continued to be our link with Churcher's College who generously provided the funds and student workers to construct the important Pond path improvements along Sussex Road. We are most grateful for this support especially as Churcher's have again offered to provide these funds and volunteers for further improvements this year.

Petersfield Museum's project People of the Heath finishes next year and we have continued to liaise with them over the process of clearing the chosen barrows they wish to explore, help decide the best time to clear vegetation and supervise the Community Offenders Scheme who do the clearing.

The summer of course has traditionally been the Friends down time with the winter season being when most activity takes place, although both Robin and Alf keep a year round eye on the flora and fauna and report back any particular sightings or concerns. The finding of fresh water Swan Mussels in the pond was exciting and implies the pond is in good heart. As a result of a survey organised by SDNP signs of possible Dormouse activity have been found close the cricket pitch. There are plans being laid to consult all the organisations that have an interest in the Heath and to draw up a new plan for the future management of this important area.

Our winter work party volunteers have had a very successful season. Earlier in the autumn they cleared birch saplings from the open areas and collected heather seed to sow on bare patches to encourage the heather spread. After Christmas material from the cleared barrows was used to continue the dry hedge along the path beside the stream on the east side of the Heath. This path had become overgrown and is now much appreciated particularly by the residents of Rival Moor Road who now use it regularly. The group also participated in the Queen's Litter Pick in aid of her 90th Birthday celebrations.

We of course welcome any members who would like to participate on alternate Sundays from September to March just get in touch if you would like to join us.

The Xmas supper at the Plump Duck for volunteers and Ctte members is now a well-established get-together. Thank you to Ian and his crew for making us so welcome.

This summer we plan to do better at bracken control and have laid plans for mechanical cutting and hand scything. The SDNP have offered their volunteer heathland team and a number of our own volunteers, led by Alf, will be hand pulling and cutting the tricky bits amongst the heather patches.

In conclusion I would just like to thank our hard working Ctte and all volunteers and members who together continue to make the Friends a successful organisation. Also thanks to the support and encouragement from PTC and the loan of the Rose Room tonight and the Council Chamber for Ctte meetings.

Richard Warton

May 3rd 2016