

Minutes of annual general meeting of Greenham and Crookham Conservation Volunteers

20 Jun 2010

Members present: Derek Cutt, Dave Kenning, Laurence Parker, John Parker, Pam Pickett, Judith Qualtrough, Neil Rickman.

Apologies

Derek Emes presented his apologies. In his absence, the meeting was chaired by Derek Cutt.

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the AGM on 21 June 2009 were agreed subject to the correction of one typing error.

ACTION: Derek Cutt to correct the error, including in the copy on the website, and get Derek Emes to sign an amended hard copy for the record.

Actions from the previous minutes

John Parker to (a) open the new Barclays account, (b) organise the signing authorities, (c) transfer all funds, and then (d) close the Co-op account. **(a) and (b) completed, (b) and (c) ongoing.**

Action: John Parker to complete the transfer of the entire remaining balance from the old account to the new one.

Election of officers for year 2010-11

When making his apology for absence, Derek Emes had indicated his willingness to stand as Chairman again. There being no alternative nomination, Derek was proposed, seconded and unanimously re-elected. Derek Cutt and John Parker were also re-elected by a unanimous show of hands.

Due to professional commitments elsewhere, Laurence Parker will be unable to devote substantial time to the post of tools officer. Dave Keening agreed to take on this role in his place.

Officers for the coming year are therefore...

Chairman: Derek Emes
Secretary: Derek Cutt
Treasurer: John Parker
Tools Officer: Dave Kenning

ACTION: Dave Kenning to take over the cupboard key from Laurence, liaise with Ade re storage, and conduct an inventory.

Derek Emes had also offered to continue to serve as our appointee on the Greenham and Crookham Commons Commission. Again, there being no alternative nomination, Derek was proposed, seconded and unanimously re-elected. Derek Emes therefore remains our appointed Commissioner.

Dave raised the question of whether we should appoint a substitute to attend GCCC meetings on occasions when Derek Emes is unable to attend.

ACTION: Derek Emes to raise this with the Commission to find out whether (possibly non-voting) substitutes are able to attend Commission meetings. **Completed (see Chairman's Report below).**

Chairman's report on activities since the previous AGM

The Chairman, not having been present at the meeting, subsequently provided the following report.

First I must apologise for my absence at the A.G.M. This was due to an unfortunate mishap at home whilst away on holiday and needed several days of clearing up.

Events and Tasks

Attendances at our regular monthly tasks have, as always been varied but overall have been very good. We have averaged about 11 plus one or two useful lads on a number occasions carrying out community service in charge of their Probation Officer. (Whom we also put to work!)

Tasks on the whole have been rather mundane, largely scrub bashing and coppicing, but carried out with enthusiasm however. We did a couple of path restorations in the spring and in May a walk around some of the "Living Landscape" zone was held. The December task was followed by the Christmas BBQ (Which I regret once again I was unable to attend.)

There was the annual nightjar count in May 2009. The numbers were disappointing.

The big event of the year was the 10th anniversary of the Commons' fence coming down. We had a stand with several displays, also a treasure hunt and children's quiz. The children were awarded a small packet of sweets for entering and the prize for the treasure hunt winner was a bird feeder and peanuts to go with it. The whole day was a big success with large numbers attending the event, most of whom came to our stand. Amongst our visitors was Richard Benyon M.P. who showed a good deal of interest in our operation.

Report from the Greenham & Crookham Commons Commission

The Chairman, not having been present at the meeting, subsequently provided the following report.

There have been three meetings since our last AGM: July, November 2009 and May 2010. At the November meeting it was agreed that due to various members having found meeting calls often clash with other events a fixed timing system should be instituted. In future meetings will be fixed on dates 9 months ahead alternating Wednesdays and Thursdays starting in May, then continuing August, November and following on February and so on. Members are now allowed to nominate a non voting stand-in should they wish, in the event they were unable to attend a particular meeting. The Chair, Mr Chris Austin, should be notified of a stand-in not later than 7 days prior to a meeting.

The Volunteers wish to nominate a stand-in for my attendance as raised by Dave Kenning at the AGM. I am happy to accept anybody willing to take on this task.

Rabbit culling is still being reviewed and no decision taken. I registered our objection as made in last year's AGM in the June meeting. Various suggestions on how and where to get expert advice on natural balance in numbers and impact on grazing, as yet the hiatus remains.

It has been agreed that action be taken on the reduction in gorse particularly at the western end of the common. Possible burning or cutting and mulching is being considered.

Invasive New Zealand stonecrop *Crassula helmsii* in the ponds is to be controlled to attempt to stop its spread. Spraying will probably be used.

The Silver Studded Blue butterfly project appears to be progressing satisfactorily. There is a large colony of Small Blue Butterflies on the common. It is apparently unusual to have both species in one area as the Silver Studded is a heathland species and the small Blue a chalk downland resident.

If members want anything raised at any future Commission meeting, please let Derek Emes know.

Treasurer's report and financial matters

John circulated a balance sheet as of 20 June 2010, which was accepted as a true statement of our financial position.

There followed a general discussion of finance, and particularly of possible expenditure items. It was noted that we generally expect WBC to provide tools and materials for conservation tasks, but that we have in the past purchased items (e.g. the dining shelter, banners etc.) which it seemed reasonable to provide ourselves. Training has in the past been funded by WBC and by grants from the Greenham Common Trust. See below under other business.

Other business

Following from the discussion of expenditure on training which arose from the Treasurer's report, it was noted that with Laurence probably being unable to attend frequently, we will be losing our principal first-aider. Judith and Dave both offered to undergo first aid training. It was generally felt that WBC should pay the cost of training first-aiders.

ACTION: Derek Cutt to contact Simon Barnett at WBC to enquire about progressing this.

Dave suggested that minutes etc. on the website would be better in .pdf rather than .doc format.

ACTION: Derek Cutt to convert existing and future documents to pdf format.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 19:00.