

# FFOG meeting- Decisions & Actions

Location: on-site

Date: 02.03.23

Time: 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Attendees: Sue Nieduszynska (chair), Graham Brandwood, Steve Bullen, David Elliot, Clio Graham, Anne Greenwood, Rebekah Key, Ian Procter, Hilary Short.

Apologies: David Brookes, Rick Gould, Mick Short, Chris Workman.

ITEM	ISSUE	DECISION	ACTION	OWNER
previous Minutes	Accepted by email			
Matters Arising	The contract with Aubrey has been returned and Aubrey will shortly put down manure (SN)			
<i>Actions carried over from previous minutes</i>				
4.3.3	<b>Big Meadow-</b> To promote research into what causes this area to be so successful. Rick has contacted Lancaster University to see if there are students interested in research of the area		Ongoing: liaising with lecturer at Lancaster university	RG
4.8	Treacherous paths in winter	The trustees to investigate the legal situation re the use of warning notices.	HS will take to the trustees and bring back to the next meeting.	HS
6.2.1	<b>Meadow Survey.</b> To enquire about Green Hay-from Heysham Nature Reserve		Defer action until SN has discussed Meadow survey with Hils	SN

7.1	<b>Associate Volunteers</b>		Produce a brief review of AV's and their roles for May FFOG	IP
2.1.1	<b>Orchard:</b> Bat boxes- Will Walton had inspected the bat boxes and found the seven need replacing. SB recommended replacing with the Greenwood styrocrete ones which are very durable and approx. £25 per box	Broken bat boxes to be replaced. IP said volunteers could put them up if given exact guidance on where to put them.	SB to organise replacement bat boxes and liaise with Will Walton about the positioning.	SB
2.1.2	<b>Northern End of Orchard:</b> HS had distributed information prior to the meeting. This gave details of the agreement with the Countryside Commission when the Millennium Orchard was created. This agreement was reaffirmed in 2019 in a Deed of Adherence. The agreement included: <i>to keep and maintain the Green as an open space for the benefit of and use by local inhabitants as an area for informal recreation, play, other leisure-time occupations and a meeting area for community events.</i> SN clarified that it was previously agreed by FFOG in April '21 that the unofficial path in the wild area would be closed off and that this was <u>not</u> an agreement to fence off the whole area to prohibit public access.	The internal space of the wild area needs to remain accessible to the public. To move some of the brash barrier to provide an entrance to the area. Willow dome to remain. To leave the area to become overgrown and provide a wildlife habitat.	SN to send out relevant information from the minutes of April 21 when the issue of closing off the unofficial path was previously discussed.	SN
2.1.3	<b>Ivy Management</b> has been previously discussed by IP, MS and Andy Lee in March 2022 which is a 3-year rotational cut back.	To continue with this.		
2.1.4	<b>Cobra brace:</b> this bracing system was put in the large sycamore with multiple stems several years ago by Andy Lee	Andy Lee to check on the brace	Ian will contact Andy to action this.	IP

2.1.5	<b>Orchard house boundary:</b> The neighbour has cut the hedge on the orchard side of the boundary. HS is to talk to the neighbour about the boundary as volunteers manage our side of the hedge.		HS to discuss with the resident.	HS
2.1.6	<b>The vine entangled in the beech at Townley Close entrance.</b>	To co-ordinate with the resident over the management. If the plan is to cut back the vine, this can be done by volunteers. If the beech tree needs to cut, then IP will ask Andy Lee to liaise with the resident.	HS will have initial discussions with the resident.	HS IP
2.1.7	<b>Leaning Wall:</b> In the vicinity of the oak circle a resident's wall is leaning into the Orchard. Expected repair to cost about £2000. The resident has had previous correspondence with the City Council in 1993 and the outcome was that the wall was the responsibility of the lease holder (FA)		Hilary to discuss with the resident	HS
2.1.8	<b>Hedge between Sunnyside Lane path and the wild area:</b> The hedge hasn't flourished. There had previously been discussions about building a fence behind it, however the use of a dead hedge has created a boundary. Holly has thrived in the hedge, and this could be extended.	Next winter, to extend the holly hedge using brash behind the holly saplings to maintain the boundary.		
2.1.9.	<b>The leaning silver birch in the playground</b>		IP to contact Andy Lee to inspect the birch.	IP
2.2.1	<b>School Pond:</b> GB had written a willow screen report in July '22 with a proposal to review the strategy in April '23. Numbers of snipe remain small but have increased in the past two years. This may be related to the gate being closed. In addition, poaching has diminished since the number of cattle reduced to 7. GB proposed that the gate remain closed for a further year and the scything group create a few more rides in the summer months. SB stated that teal had been sighted in the area and that when	The willow screen to be trimmed gradually to keep the screen in place for as long as possible. Some willow (i.e.at the northern end) will be left till July or August. The occasional stand will be left in place at the southern end.	Graham to provide an updated willow report for May FFOG	GB

	scything the rushes, it would be important to avoid the margins of the pond. SB requested that willow should not be cut during the bird nesting season (April - June).			
2.2.2	<b>Fauna Path boardwalk.</b> Joinery work required to repair the fence. This is already in IP's proposed tasks			
2.2.3	<b>Alder Pond/Big Meadow.</b> Discussion of "undesirables". Previous practice has been to start digging out ragwort in April. Last year ragwort was allowed to grow in wet pastures but not in the Hay Meadow and IP requested that we reaffirm that we continue to manage similarly in 2023 unless it became prolific in which case, some would be dug up. SB expressed concern about breeding reed buntings if the ragwort was dug up in April. However, IP & GB said the areas where the ragwort had been most profuse were not the nesting areas. Both SB & GB were of the opinion that scything to create rides was not required in this area.	To observe the growth of ragwort in wet pastures. if the ragwort becomes prolific in April, IP will send an email to FFOG and digging out will commence before the plants become very large. Sporadic ragwort will be left for insects. Thistles & Nettle Management to be discussed at May FFOG.		
2.3	<b>West Field: planting of Trees/Shrubs west side of West Field.</b> The thorn hedge at the western boundary of West Field was laid in 2013-14 and has not thrived and is providing a restricted habitat. IP proposed the creation of a wider and diversified habitat by planting in the area in front of the existing hedge. This would be achieved with a mix of conventional "Lancashire" double planting & low growing bushes e.g. hazel, buckthorn at varying distances from the existing hedge. An electric fence with a secure battery was proposed to protect the saplings. (Subsequently, SN followed up with an estimate of the area to be removed as approx. 500m2). Would permission from NE be required?  It was noted that the hedge on the northern boundary planted 2 to 3 years ago was slow to grow.	The proposal was agreed. DB, via email, felt extension of the hedge did not require permission but agreed that a future mapping change would be needed.	IP to work out the species mix & quantities and report back to May FFOG	IP

	<p>There is a pump with a pipe that goes into Lucy Brook. The filter that goes on the end of the pipe has been lost.</p> <p>At the southern boundary of West Field volunteers have laid the hedge.</p> <p>There are a series of hedging &amp; tree planting courses (Tree Council) Next one is 15<sup>th</sup> March at FMH &amp; the hedge laying in West Field is being used as the practical example</p>	It was agreed that the pipe can be used without the filter		
3.1	<b>Volunteer Reports</b> for January & February- See reports x2 (IP)			
3.2	<p><b>Work plans</b> for March &amp; April -See report IP</p> <p>An addendum to this report is the re-sowing with yellow rattle of the grass area adjacent to Pony Wood, at the top of the path. This was agreed at the September 2022 FFOG (Minutes 2.5.1) when it was scheduled for March 2023 but now rescheduled for April,23. SB suggested sowing in small plugs. These are beginning to germinate but won't be ready until April.</p>	No objections to these proposals were received and they are thus approved. In addition, the addendum to the report was agreed by HS & SN via email.		
4.	<b>Maintenance:</b> See report (GB). Graham's report highlighted the understandable frustration felt over the building, rebuilding and final removal of the fence which had been agreed by FFOG. SN pointed out that proposed work which countered previous FFOG decisions should be put to FFOG as a separate proposal.			
5.1	<b>Organised Events:</b>	Easter Egg Hunt 10 <sup>th</sup> April (Easter Monday)		
5.2	<b>Items to report from FA:</b>	Nil to report		
5.3	<b>Items to report from trustees:</b>	Nil to report		

Next meeting: FMH 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023. FMH 7.00pm to 9.00pm