

FFOG meeting- Decisions & Actions

Location: Tite & Locke

Date: 15.01.26

Time: 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Attendees: Sue Nieduszynska (chair), Graham Brandwood, Steve Bullen, David Elliott, Rick Gould, Clio Graham, Anne Greenwood, Hilary Short, Mark Tanner.

Apologies: Dave Brookes, Cen Kaighin, Rebekah Mulligan, Ian Procter, Chris Workman.

| ITEM | ISSUE | DECISION | ACTION | OWNER |
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| 2. Previous Minutes | Accepted. | | | |
| 3 Matters Arising | <p>Forest School: The schools withdrew from the event scheduled for 1st December due to their involvement in Christmas activities. Dan is negotiating with various schools and liaising with Tony. We hope to start in the autumn.</p> <p>Chainsaw Training: Craig M. has completed the chainsaw training.</p> | | | |
| 3.1 | <p>Update on contractor activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Craig has been asked to fix a further problem with the boardwalk. HS says there needs to be regular checks on the stock fencing. SN said she had difficulty using the pedestrian access into Upper Sowerholme. | | AG to confirm with RM that all volunteers requiring access to upper Sowerholme are satisfied with the current setup. | AG/RM |
| 3.2 | <p>John Muir Awards: GB had shared information about the Wild Places Guardian award with volunteers but was disappointed by the lack of interest. It was suggested that young volunteers who attend Saturday sessions might be interested, as adding the award to their CVs could benefit them. GB had spoken with some young volunteers during Saturday's sapling planting, and they had been unaware of the award.</p> <p>SN mentioned that there is a goal to recruit more Saturday volunteers and suggested including a section about the John Muir award in the information distributed to them.</p> <p>SN requested that a copy of the application to run the award be sent to her and to Mark for archiving</p> | To include details of the John Muir award in the recruitment drive aimed at young Saturday volunteers. | <p>SN will set up a group including GB, RM & MT to liaise on the recruitment strategy.</p> <p>SN to get feedback from the FA on volunteer recruitment</p> <p>GB to send a copy of the JM application to MT (copy in SN) who will upload to the document archive.</p> | <p>SN</p> <p>SN</p> <p>GB/MT</p> |

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| | | | Subsequent to the meeting it was decided to discontinue the award. | |
| 3.3 | Update on new apple tree planting in the orchard: AG said the 4 replacement trees have been planted. Varieties include Katy (one known to thrive in the orchard environment), two Bardsey trees which are known for being hardy and an Ashleigh Kernal (recommended by Keith Taylor). | | | |
| 3.4 | Memorial Trees: SN said that the current procedure involves receiving a £25 donation, selecting the tree species, planting the tree, and informing the donor of its location. SN questioned whether any additional steps are necessary. The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust provides certificates to individuals who dedicate trees. | A tree dedication certificate to be considered. | AG will produce a sample certificate for the next meeting. | AG |
| 4.1.1 | Arable Field: HS & SN had measured the areas between the beetle banks, and it was approximately the same as the bird friendly mix margins. MS will order the seed. Aubrey has put down manure at the bottom of the field ready for spreading. | | The brash from the hedge laying to be moved off the margins i.e. moved closer into the hedge or a different location. Also to take the bird seed bin buried under the brash to the shed. | RM RM |
| 4.2.1 | Update on sapling planting: RG said the planting was completed and the remainder of the mulching was done by volunteers on the following Wednesday session. | | | |
| 4.2.1 | Andy Lee's Tree survey: Refer to report from CW summarising the survey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South of the Orchard near the millennium oak, the centre one of the tree ash trees has die back & needs to be felled or pollarded. • Row of ash trees near double gates of Flora field/Little Wood. Some of the branches overhanging the path are dead & potential risks in high wind. • There is a standing dead willow in Hay Meadow at the Cromwell Rd end of the tree line which does not pose a danger. Our assumption is that as we own the brook we are responsible for the line of trees alongside the brook. • The ash trees in Pony Wood require no action at present. • Andy Lee's had asked CW if the FA is to continue with annual tree surveys. The surveys were historically less frequent but had been annual for the past 4 years. GB said it had been agreed at a previous meeting that we would request annual surveys (IP confirmed this after the meeting) | CG, IP & Craig will assess if they can manage the ash tree with die back in the orchard & the row of ash trees near the double gate The willow tree can be left as dead wood. | GB to report back to FFOG following the assessments. SN will discuss frequency of tree surveys with CW & DB | GB SN |

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| 4.2.3 | <p>Tree numbering system & mapping: Refer to report from CW. The intention is for each tree to have a physical numbered label. The numbers would be in blocks of 100 for the different areas and would be plotted on a map via GPS coordinates. The nest boxes could be referred to by the number of the tree.</p> <p>SN queried 6** where path trees over the culvert were included with Lucy Brook trees rather than the footpath.</p> <p>MT asked why the tree numbering system did not include the playground.</p> | It was agreed that Latschbacher Arbo Tag- tree tags could be purchased (£300 + vat plus screws) | <p>SN to discuss 6** of the report with CW.</p> <p>MT will discuss numbering of playground trees with CW</p> | <p>SN</p> <p>MT</p> |
| 5.1. | <p>Volunteer Activities for November & December: see report RM.</p> <p>SN commended the hedge laying along the top of the Pony Wood path.</p> | | | |
| 5.2. | <p>Volunteer job report. See report GB.</p> <p>Re-instating "Dogs on lead" signs on the Fauna footpath at both ends</p> <p>GB proposed cutting down willow, which is of poor quality, behind the hedge down to stump.</p> | It was agreed that the willow alongside the boardwalk on Fauna Path would be cut down to stump & the willow at Ash tree corner to be laid maintaining the screen. | To source 2 signs similar to Pony Wood signs for Dogs on lead/concessionary footpath (provided none in shed) | HS |
| 5.3. | <p>Proposed tasks for January & February: See report RM.</p> <p>CG reported that the bird boxes in Pony wood had been inspected. The result was disappointing as most were not being used. The stock dove box had one egg which was cold. Some had fallen apart. There may be more success when the wood and understorey become denser.</p> <p>Bird boxes in other locations will be inspected by volunteers.</p> <p>There have been 4 cow excursions recently including into the paddock from the Grammar School field. The age of the fencing is becoming an issue.</p> | <p>The volunteer Job report from GB need to feed into the proposed task report from RM.</p> <p>For future meetings RM to submit her report <u>after</u> she has seen GBs report.</p> <p>A regular inspection regime of all the fences is required</p> | <p>Tasks for volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take down the old "Dogs on Lead signs at the end of Fauna Path & replace with new signs. To check if there are any "Dogs on Lead signs in the shed & inform HS Fence breached by cattle at the bottom of Cromwell Rd needs assessment & repair. RM to order fencing posts (paddock alone requires 20). RM to run the cost past SN <p>AG will speak to RM about the timing for submitting the proposed tasks report</p> <p>CG & SB to consult Dan Haywood on bird boxes in Pony Wood.</p> <p>RG to carry out regular fence inspections.</p> <p>SN to consult with RM as to whether the fence repairs can be managed by volunteers.</p> | <p>RM</p> <p>AG</p> <p>CG/SB</p> <p>RG</p> <p>SN</p> |

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| | | | HS to ask Robin if the access from the Grammar School field to the Paddock can be left open. | HS |
| 6.1 | Monitoring Report. See report GB. The gate post first on the right along Fauna Path into Big Meadow is rotted at the top and wobbling. It needs repair by the contractor. Poaching in Hay Meadow seems to be significant in specific areas but SN said it was not an issue in the bulk of the Meadow. | | SN to contact the contractor about the gate post into Big Meadow Re poaching-SN to attach photos of the Hay Meadow to this report | SN SN |
| 6.2 | Survey update (SN). Graham Skelcher has submitted his survey & this will be on the next agenda. Dan is carrying out a winter bird survey. | | | |
| 6.3.1. | Grazing. See Cattle Monitoring report RG. There will be a breeding bull this year. GB said that poaching of school Pond is inevitable if the cattle are in Grammar School field. | | | |
| 7.1 | <u>Standing Items</u> Arrangements: GB requested removal of clearing of Anna's stone from the April arrangements & keeping the paths in upper Sowerholme clear as these are done on a regular basis by volunteers. SN requested removal of the item related to over-sowing of the wildflower margins & the one related to associate volunteers. | | AG to make the amendments to the arrangements. | AG |
| 7.2 | Financial Control: Contractors bill (SN)- £3130.80 Graham Skelcher survey (SN) -£550 Tree guards, ties, tree labels (AG) -£97. Annual Tools budget (RM) -£574.15 | | RM to add the total allowance of £600.00 to the Tools Budget statement. | RM |
| 7.3 | Organised Events: Easter Egg hunt-Monday 6 th April. | | | |
| 7.4 | Feedback from FA (SN/HS) Link to the minutes of the last FA meeting below: https://fairfieldassociation.org/meeting-information/fairfield-association-minutes-20-january-2026/ Sue Pope is looking into the registration of the permissive paths. (Pony Wood & Fauna paths) | | | |

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| | The paths are to be upgraded & will be more disability friendly. | | | |
| 7.5 | Items to report from Trustees (SN) HS, SN, Cen Kaighin & Kerry met Steve Cowell from LWT to progress the Lucy Brook project now there is confirmation of funding from LEF. SN has applied for match funding. Steve Cowell has to apply for Waterboard consent & the work will commence early autumn. Cen will do a botanical survey of the area -in discussion with Hills. | | SN to discuss the timing of the work and the over-wintering bird season with LWT. | SN |
| AOB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wild-flower patches: SN proposed the area by the boardwalk near Ash Tree corner. CG & GB were of the opinion that it would be too shady unless a suitable seed mix could be sourced. • Bat Survey: SB said that 4 bats were using 3 of the boxes in Pony Wood. • Health & Safety policy: HS - This needs to be reviewed on an annual basis. • Willow: GB reported that work at St Peters School in Heysham was completed during the Christmas period. A dome will be constructed at Beaumont College. GB is also meeting Geraldine, SN's neighbour, who has extensive experience with willow. | | AG to add review of H&S policy to March Arrangements & add to the agenda of the next meeting. | AG |

Next meeting: 12th March. 7pm Tite & Locke.