

FFOG meeting- Decisions & Actions

Location: Tite & Locke

Date: 12.03.26

Time: 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Attendees: Hilary Short (chair), Graham Brandwood, Dave Brookes, Rick Gould, Anne Greenwood, Ian Procter, Mark Tanner, Chris Workman.

Apologies: Steve Bullen, David Elliott, Clio Graham, Cen Kaighin, Rebekah Mulligan, Sue Nieduszynska, Mick Short.

ITEM	ISSUE	DECISION	ACTION	OWNER
2. Previous Minutes	Accepted.			
Matters Arising 3.1.	Feedback on the management of the dead ash tree on Pads path and those by the double gate: GB reported that the dead tree had been removed. The overhanging branches on the trees by the double gate near the Pony Wood will be done in a Wednesday volunteer session by Craig.			
3.2.	Tree dedication certificate: 3 samples were provided by AG & one was selected.		AG will upload to the google drive.	AG
3.3.	Dogs on Lead signs for Fauna Path: HS reported that these had been ordered.		Volunteers to remove the existing wooden Dogs on Lead signs on Fauna path	RM
3.3. cont.	Signs for Cyclist Dismount: IP had prepared materials for children to enter a drawing competition to design signs at the Apple Day event which was subsequently cancelled. IP proposed that this could now take place at the Easter Egg hunt on Easter Sunday on 5 th April.	It was agreed to run a competition for design of cyclist dismount signs at the Easter Egg hunt.	IP to contact Bethany for equipment (gazebo & table)	IP
3.4.	Update on Tree Numbering & mapping: CW reported that the tree tags and screws have been purchased. Tree numbering has many different options and CW & MT are currently working on this and the creation of a database. The playground trees and triangle trees will be included after the fauna and orchard areas are done.			
3.5.	Wildflower patch: IP & RM proposed that the site for this years patch could be the outer circumference of the oak circle between the cherry trees, in the area where the soft fruit bushes used to be. Next years could be a circle around the Millenium oak.	Volunteers will commence the preparation of the wildflower patch in the proposed site next week.	RM to order wildflower seed & to consult with SB re a suitable mix in view of the shade.	RM

4.6.	<p>Work on the paths: Sue Holden has applied for a grant for repair of the paths. The application had required 2 quotes which had come in very differently. MT enquired if we should get a more specific breakdown of the quotes so they could be compared for value for money.</p> <p>HS proposed that the mud could be taken off the path sides and the paths widened by volunteers. IP & GB felt this was a very strenuous activity that would not be welcomed by volunteers. RG & MS have been creating drainage channels along the path which have helped with areas of flooding.</p>	<p>If the application is successful MT will prepare a list of questions for the potential contractors.</p>		
4.7	<p>Review of the health & safety policy: The Health and Safety policy has been forwarded by HS to Michael Sheppard for his review and feedback. IP disseminated a sample risk assessment (RA) pertaining to chainsaw usage. AG inquired about the number of completed site-specific or task-specific risk assessments; this information remains unclear. IP indicated that a green Health & Safety folder located in the shed likely contains these documents.</p> <p>It should be standard procedure for all new volunteers to be provided with Health & Safety information during their induction and directed to the relevant section of the website for further reference.</p> <p>IP & AG suggested that an annual presentation regarding Health & Safety procedures—similar to the current First Aid discussion—may be instituted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing RA documents need to be found & updated. In subsequent years, the RAs should be signed off annually by trustees. All documents to be stored on the google drive and be available on the website. 	<p>AG will discuss with RM. RM to find existing RAs To add to the agenda for the July FFOG meeting. HS to seek further guidance from Michael Sheppard.</p>	<p>RM AG HS</p>
5.1.	<p>Volunteer Activities for January & February: see report RM.</p> <p>IP clarified that additional tree guards were collected from Andy Lee as these were required for the saplings in West Field.</p> <p>HS had observed large piles of brash in the Orchard, especially near the willow domes in the north and at the southern end. IP and GB noted brash piles provide habitats. HS suggested relocating the brash to the hedgerow or field since they would be less visible the public.</p>	<p>IP agreed to discuss with RM that brash in the Orchard area could be moved to more discrete areas.</p>	<p>RM to task volunteers to relocate the brash</p>	<p>RM</p>
5.2.	<p>Volunteer job report. See report GB.</p> <p>RG asked for clarification on the “experimental” hedge laying of the willow near the view to School Pond. GB said that this had been discussed and accepted at previous FFOG meetings. The old willow stumps had been deteriorating. Some stumps have been cut back, and others have been laid to see if they re-root and throw up new shoots. Additionally, some individual willow has been planted behind in case the experiment is unsuccessful.</p>			

5.3.	Proposed tasks for March & April. See report RM. AG thanked GB for submitting his volunteer job report earlier so that RM could use the information in her proposed task report.	The tasks were agreed.		RM
6.1	Monitoring Report. See report GB. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The notice board by Cromwell Rd is in needs of refurbishment. The board had been taken down as it was assumed it would be taken away for repair, however it now seems this will now take place on site. Hedge flailing. The hedges alongside the Fauna path & Carr House meadow have been flailed. Also, the farmer has flailed the hedges/trees in Little wood alongside the farm track. DB thought this was likely to be a communication failure. Several bird & bat boxes have fallen to the ground in Pony wood. RG agreed with GB about the poaching in School Pond and also proposed that the gate between Hay Meadow and Big Meadow should be closed. Fraser had asked about draining the pond in Big Meadow because the ground is so wet. There was concern that this might cause a sudden rush of water from the draining pipe which could cause further deterioration in the bund 	Choice of contractors for jobs on the Reserve was discussed but no decision was made. Alder pond should not be drained.	HS to contact Craig about reinstating the notice board. (other jobs include the post on the gate opposite the ash tree & a section of boardwalk needs repair) AG to contact SB/CG about the fallen Boxes HS to contact the graziers about closing the gate between Hay Meadow and Big Meadow.	HS AG HS
6.2	Survey update. Snipe Survey: SB/CG suggested conducting annual snipe surveys each January due to difficulty in recruiting enough volunteers. They felt that monthly counts were no longer useful, since Big Meadow reliably hosts significant numbers of overwintering snipe. GB said this needed further discussion and that there could be a wider call for volunteers.		AG to add snipe counts to the agenda for the July FFOG meeting.	AG
6.3.1.	Livestock report. See report RG. RG stated that if the grass quality and abundance is not sufficient for grazing in the LGGS field, then there is sufficient latitude to permit the herd to graze in the H10 fields for the rest of March. Additionally, there is poaching in School Pond and Hay Meadow, so these areas should be restricted to enable these areas to recover, as well as some rotational, controlled grazing in the H10 fields. GB noted that the water trough was no longer present in Gun Range. HS clarified that the pond belongs to LGGS (not us) & is part of Robin's grazing agreement with LGGS.		HS to provide information from the report to Robin and Fraser.	HS
6.3.2.	Fencing. See report RG. HS/IP said that the report was comprehensive & professional. The report included recommendations. IP agreed with the recommendations in principal but said there were aspects that were not straightforward and required further discussion. GB made the point that fences on the reserve served different purposes and a fence whose main purpose was to keep dogs out would not need to be built to the same	IP/GB to feedback to RG regarding his draft recommendations outside of this meeting.	RG, IP & GB to consult and bring back to the May on-site meeting and to the following July meeting. RG to distribute a procedure for fence inspection and repair (via AG)	RG/IP /GB RG

	standard as a fence to keep cattle off public paths. The fencing along Fauna path would need to be repaired by a contractor rather than volunteers. DB highlighted that the fencing strategy would be changed in some locations by the presence of hedges where posts and wire fencing could be used rather than the more expensive post and rail.			
7.1	Standing Items Arrangements: HS agreed to take responsibility for items in the arrangements earmarked for SN			
7.2	Financial Control: Latschbacher Arbo Tag- tree tags £298.44 Tree screws £71.16			
7.3	Organised Events: Easter Egg hunt-Sunday 5th April. RG agreed to be responsible for organising a team to erect and disassemble equipment, in the absence of Pavlos and DB.			
7.4	Feedback from FA (SN/HS) Link to the minutes of the last FA meeting below: https://fairfieldassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/FA-Minutes-2026-02-17.pdf			
7.5	Items to report from Trustees (SN) Nothing to report.			
8. AOB	MT reported that he had injured his head on a branch overhanging the path in the south end of the Orchard.		Removed by GB the following morning.	GB
	RG had suggested the purchase of a projector for use in meetings. This was thought to be useful but difficult to use in the current venue at Tite & Locke.	The purchase of a projector put on hold for now.		
	GB mentioned that volunteers built willow domes for other organisations, a project highlighted on Beaumont College's Facebook page. GB suggested promoting it on Fairfield's Facebook page as well.		HS to contact Andrew Brennand to request that the Beaumont college FB post about dome building is featured on the FA Facebook page	HS
	AG reported that the Tite & Locke have live music on the first Thursday of the month and therefore future indoor meeting will take place on the 2 nd Thursday of the month			

Next meeting: 7th May 5.30pm on-site

