

Friends of Oakley Wood

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2015  
AT BISHOPS TACHBROOK SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB  
AT 7.00 PM**

Present: Wendy Barlow (Chairman)                      Rod Scott (Treasurer)  
Phil Dalton (Membership Secretary)                      Rosemary Dalton  
Judy Cooper (Secretary)                      Graham Leeke  
Chris Hastie (Web Manager)                      Susan Watt  
Liz Sheehan                      David O’Sullivan  
Geoff Cooper

and 22 members of the public, with apologies from Jon Holmes, Cllr Margave, Anne and Michael Kirby, Michael Bunny

Minutes of the AGM held on 4 March 2014 were approved and adopted. Proposed by Graham Leeke, seconded by Fizz Forbes-McGlen.

Chairman’s report:

This is our 7<sup>th</sup> AGM and I would like to remind members that the purpose of The Friends is to ensure that the Wood remains as natural as possible for all to enjoy now and in the future. One of the committee’s jobs is to try and assess members’ views and communicate them to all parties involved in managing the Wood. Whilst we may not always appreciate the on-going management work we understand the need for it. To this end we are considering running a simple survey this year so that we can better represent our 400 members. The ride felling has been completed for this year by Phil Betts of PB Forestry and he has been very knowledgeable and interesting to the many Wood users who have stopped to talk to him and find out more. WWT’s working parties have continued through the year coppicing, hedgerow planting and dealing with brash and I would like to encourage people to go along and help on the next workday. Many thanks to WWT, especially to Karl and Ben, not only in the activities they have arranged but also in their input at meetings, their excellent ideas and much appreciated communication skills. I would urge anyone who is not yet a member of WWT to join - you get all the local information plus superb informative magazines.

We have had some input into the new interpretation boards which WDC are preparing and look forward to them being installed at the entrances to the Wood. WDC will also be putting in way-marked trails which are intended for first-time Wood users and people who don’t regularly use the Wood to provide a safe route and, combined with the information boards, should provide a good woodland experience.

The work on the Crematorium has started but has not impacted on us except for some very nice new gates and pathways which has added to the current walks.

Last spring we held our popular Woodland Craft Day which was very well attended by over 250 people. A big draw was the ‘Bioblitz’ run by WWT. Also many thanks to Matt Jarvis for organising the craftsmen. We collected around 60 new members and some had even come from other parts of the country.

The August Bat Walk had a very good turnout but it was raining so we didn't get quite the range of species we have had in the past. The pipistrelles however made a lot of noise which no-one could miss thanks to the bat detecting machines.

The October Fungi Foray had another very good turnout on a really nice day. I have never seen such a range of fungus and our WWT experts were excellent at identifying and telling us more.

Many thanks to Chris Hastie for writing up these events in such an interesting and informative way on our website. The site is easy to use, informative and good looking. Thanks again to Chris who manages it and to Rod and Phil who trained as part of the website team.

The Friends' committee is all about team work, from Judy who keeps us up to date and sorts us out when we need it, to Rod who manages our funds as Treasurer, Phil who holds all the membership information, Susan whose ability on the graphic side is second-to-none and to our other committee members Geoff, Liz, Graham, Rosemary and David who put time energy and thought into what is a labour of love.

Please let us know if you are interested in joining the committee.

Future events: Woodland Day, 25 April to include a bluebell walk. The format is yet to be arranged but we are thinking of something different from our previous Craft Days. Butterfly Walk to be led by David Brown, Moth Walk in September and Fungi Foray on 10 October to be led by Ben Devine.

#### Adoption of Accounts:

Rod produced the Accounts as shown to the meeting (copy attached) which included the last 3 years with this year's final total of £670.97. £1,060 received from WDC Small Grant Fund to cover costs of running the Woodland Craft Day, payments made of £875 leaving a small additional amount, which explains the increased balance from last year. He asked that the Accounts be adopted, proposed by Geoff Cooper, seconded by Liz Sheehan.

#### Membership Secretary's report:

Phil was pleased to announce that membership figures had risen year on year and currently there are 424 members. The new website had provided a number of new members. Thanks go to Chris for emailing members notifying them of events etc.

#### Election of officers:

Nominations were received as shown to the meeting (copy attached). Wendy kindly agreed to continue as Chairman with other officers and committee members remaining the same. Proposed en bloc by Geoff Cooper and seconded by Keith Wellsted.

#### Any other business:

Fizz Forbes-McGlen complimented The Friends on the revised website which makes it very pleasing to use.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

(Refreshments)

Address by David Brown, local moth and butterfly expert and author of a book on Warwickshire Moths:

David gave a very interesting presentation and slide show on butterflies and moths to be found in Oakley Woods. He informed us that Oakley Woods had played a large part in his becoming interested in moths and butterflies when he visited the Wood as a young boy and learnt from his mentor Bill Floyd who lived in the bungalow at Guide Dogs for the Blind. He had been studying moths for over 50 years. He explained that butterflies had benefitted from the opening up of the rides in the Wood. David continued to show us wonderful slides of many different varieties of both butterflies and moths, explaining what time of year each can be found, what they feed on and how high they fly. He had the audience enthralled by his knowledge and enthusiasm and all marvelled at his dedicated study over many years. A list follows on varieties of butterflies and moths which David explained can be found in Oakley Woods.

BUTTERFLIES

(Out of 36 species recorded in Warwickshire, 29 species have been recorded in Oakley Wood)

SILVER WASH FRITILLERY - see in 3<sup>rd</sup> week of June to August, only appeared in last 20 years due to climate change.

WHITE ADMIRAL - new in Oakley Wood since the 1980s. Feeds on honeysuckle. July to early August.

PURPLE HAIR STREAK - canopy species, lives in tops of oak trees and feeds on oak. Best seen around 8 pm in evening in July. Descends to lower levels to feed on honeydew on leaves.

SPECKLED WOOD BUTTERFLY - now also found in gardens.

WALL BROWN CONGENA - disappeared since 1974 when 20-30 were counted from the Crematorium to the Banbury Road. None now left in the Midlands but can be found on Cornish coast. Feeds on grass.

ESSEX SKIPPER - appeared since ride widening. Uses M40 corridor.

BROWN ARGOS - feeds on doves-foot cranesbill (geranium-like plant)

COMMON BLUE - feeds on clover, flies at knee height

HOLLY BLUE - lighter coloured and flies above head height.

SMALL COPPER - feeds on dock and sorrel.

PEACOCK - may be seen around now as weather warming up.

MOTHS

(There is evidence of moths found in fossils dating back millions of years.)

CLOAKED CARPET - rarest, spreading north due to climate change. Feeds on stitchwort

RED NECKED FOOTMAN - moved into Warwickshire in the last 20 years. Feeds on lichens.

PINE HAWK MOTH - moved into Warwickshire in 2006. Feeds on Scots pine.

BUFF FOOTMAN - moved north into Warwickshire in 1978. Feeds on lichens.

POPLAR HAWK MOTH - one of the rarest in Oakley wood. Small, feeds on poplar.

BRINDLE BEAUTY - feeds on oaks. Female moths cannot move away as they have no wings. They have a pheromone to attract males and a chemical like anti-freeze. They can crawl and outlive the males. In copulation a male can carry a female to another tree. There are another 8 or 9 wingless species of females in Warwickshire.

OAK BEAUTY - appears in March.

BLOSSOM UNDERWING - in Warwickshire only found in Ryton and Oakley Wood.

SILVER BIRCH - appears in March and April during the day, flies above head height on a sunny day.

YELLOW HORN, THE MILLER, THE SCALLOP HOOKED TIP - appear in June and July.  
PINE BEAUTY - appears in March/April, flies at waist height to 20 ft.  
BORDERED WHITE - appears in late May/June at the tops of Scots pine  
BROWN SILVERLINE - appears from May to mid June. Feeds on older bracken.  
HEDGE RUSTIC - has now disappeared from Oakley Wood.  
DOTTED CHESTNUT - lives on the ground.

To differentiate between moths and butterflies, the feelers on moths are string-like and on butterflies they have clubs on the ends of the feelers.